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A Gramscian Analysis of Roman Bathing in the Provinces

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A Gramscian Analysis of Roman Bathing in the Provinces

by

Diana Davis

A thesis submitted in the partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Department of Humanities
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University of South Florida

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Abstract

This paper argues the institution of Roman bathing was an instrument of cultural hegemony, which allowed the Roman Empire to maintain hegemony over the Roman provinces. Numerous frameworks have been suggested in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Rome and the provinces. Roman imperialism has been a topic of debate for over one hundred years and the vicissitudes of scholarly thought are highlighted by the changes in the characterization of the theory of Romanization. In the recent past, scholars have sought a framework that could progress beyond the problematic concept of Romanization in order to better understand acculturation in the Roman provinces. In this paper, I provide an alternative method for examining the somewhat hackneyed issue of Roman imperialism. I argue the relationship between Rome and the provinces can be examined through the Gramscian theory of cultural hegemony. Using cultural hegemony, I explore the political consequences of direct change acculturation of the provinces of the Roman Empire. I argue that Roman culture was an efficacious mechanism for the dissemination of Roman ideology and diffusion of the Roman worldview was politically advantageous for Rome. Furthermore, I argue the custom of public bathing was a Roman cultural phenomenon that aided the Empire in preserving their hegemony in the provinces.

Introduction

“You, Roman, remember by your empire to rule the world’s people, for these will be your arts, to impose the practice of peace, to be sparing to the subjected, and to beat down the defiant”

- Virgil, Aeneid, 6.851–53

The government of ancient Rome began accumulating provinces over the course of the Punic Wars, originating in 240 BCE with the appropriation of Sicily. At the closing of the Republican period, they had annexed fifteen territories, and expansion continued with varied regularity through the Imperial period. At the end of the Principate, in 284 C.E., Rome had amassed almost fifty provinces spanning three continents. Rome maintained this enormous, unwieldy empire, comprised of multilingual, ethnically diverse territories, with limited military intervention and a comparatively small military. Their ability to maintain an empire under problematic and constantly changing circumstances is a testament to the efficacy of Roman hegemony.¹

Ancient cultures are seldom considered through the lens of modern cultural theories, however the relationship between Rome and the provinces can be usefully studied in the framework of the Gramscian theory of cultural hegemony. Antonio Gramsci (1891-1934) was an

¹ “Hegemony: the dominance of one group over another, often supported by legitimating norms and ideas. The term *hegemony* is today often used as shorthand to describe the relatively dominant position of a particular set of ideas and their associated tendency to become commonsensical and intuitive, thereby inhibiting the dissemination or even the articulation of alternative ideas. The associated term *hegemon* is used to identify the actor, group, class, or state that exercises hegemonic power or that is responsible for the dissemination of hegemonic ideas,” hegemony. By: Rosamond, Ben, Encyclopædia Britannica, September, 2014.

Italian social activist and theorist that developed and challenged ideas proposed by Karl Marx. He maintained that dominant groups must obtain consent from subordinate groups to maintain a successful hegemony. Rather than control through coercion alone, dominant groups must create consensus by imposing their ideological worldview on the subordinate group. In Gramsci's writings the definition of cultural hegemony is vague, however the concept is described as "spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed in social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is historically caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production."² In order to maintain consent, the subordinate group must feel that while they are oppressed, this oppression is in some way beneficial. By these means, subordinate groups consent to their oppression.

In order to assess the political effects of Roman cultural material, I will examine the evidence through the theory of Romanization. Romanization involves the processes by which communities in recently integrated territories were acculturated or absorbed into the Roman Empire and how their culture was influenced and modified by Roman culture. The long-running theory has undergone several paradigm shifts in its history, and critics have challenged the ideology and methodology of presiding viewpoints. In his treatise *The Romanisation of Roman Britain*, Francis Haverfield proposed that scholars examine the Roman Empire with a positive stance towards Roman development. For over 80 years, the perspective was the leading paradigm in the field. However around 25 years ago, academics started to view the Empire in a different way. Post-colonial perspectives began to influence the study of Romanization and rather than

² Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci: Ed. and Transl. by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith*. Edited by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, and Quintin. International Publishers, 1971, 12.

maintain a positive view towards Roman development, scholars considered the Romans to be oppressive and Roman expansion to be negative. Some scholars believe that the dialogue has been hindered as a result of the swings in perspective and the loss of objectivity among researchers. Disagreements and subsequent shifts in methodology have delayed advances in the field of Romanization.³

While the theories of Romanization may be controversial, it is apparent that Roman culture had an impact on the occupied populations of the provinces. Throughout the provincial history of Rome, Roman ideology and cultural material were dispersed to the annexed territories and adopted by the indigenous people. As Romans moved from the city to the provinces and trade increased even further, Roman social customs and cultural material gained popularity outside of Rome. I believe that dissemination of Roman culture to the provinces aided the Romans in their domination of the provincial territories and acceptance of Roman culture is a demonstration of consent given to Rome by the provincial populations. Though acceptance of Roman ideology and culture varied according to the temperament of the indigenous population and the degree of exposure, few groups were impervious to the influence of Rome.

Within the debate on Romanization, some historians, including Janet DeLaine and Inge Nielsen, have designated particular features of Roman culture that may be seen as indicators of Romanization in the provinces.⁴ Cultural characteristics, such as paved road systems, the atrium-style *domus*, the Latin language, and Roman public bathing, were dispersed to the provinces by

³ Versluys, Miguel John. "Understanding objects in motion. An archaeological dialogue on Romanization," *Archaeological Dialogues* 21, no. 01 (2014): 1-20.

⁴ DeLaine, Janet, and David E. Johnston, eds. *Roman Baths and bathing*. Journal of Roman archaeology, 1999; Inge Nielsen, *Thermae et Balnea: The Architecture and Cultural History of Roman Baths*, 2 vols. (1990).

active and retired military personnel, colonial Romans, and traders, and the indigenous populations often adopted Roman culture.

Furthermore, Roman-style bathing culture can be viewed as a defining characteristic of Romanization in a provincial community.⁵ The architecture, technology, and social implications of Roman bathing were unique in the ancient world. Romans expended untold quantities of money constructing some of the largest, and most extravagant and technologically advanced buildings in the ancient world. Rome was the only society, among its contemporaries, in which bathing became a significant component of cultural identity. In addition, other private elements of Roman culture that were adopted by the provincial natives, such as atrium houses and Roman style education, varied from family to family. Conversely, the baths were primarily public facilities. They were open to and used by every social class, from the elites down to the lower classes and slaves.

Adoption of this significant institution was an element of the web of consensus generated by the Romans. The custom of Roman bathing reinforced hegemony of the ruling class in Rome by communicating Imperial ideology to the indigenous provincial people. In addition, construction of the baths provided an opportunity consolidate the relationship between local elites in the provinces and the imperial elites in Rome, which also strengthened the hegemony of Rome. My research examines the custom of Roman bathing as a facet of consent to Roman hegemony. More significantly, I examine how and why Roman bathing served as an efficacious mechanism of cultural hegemony in the provinces.

Chapter one surveys the history of the paradigm of Romanization, a dialogue that examines cultural exchange between the Romans and the territories of the Empire. The theory frames the

⁵ DeLaine, Janet, and David E. Johnston, eds. *Roman Baths and bathing*. *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 1999.

transmission as a one-way transfer of cultural material and customs, from the Romans to the indigenous provincial natives. Subsequently, new evidence has surfaced, which has caused scholars to reexamine the widely utilized theory. An alternative approach, which utilizes a post-colonial perspective became a competing paradigm and was accepted by numerous scholars. Over the last thirty years, researchers have attempted to redefine Romanization, using new perspectives and methodologies, outside of colonial and post-colonial Romanization. However, a consensus on a new paradigm has not been reached, causing Romanization theory to remain in crisis.

In chapter two, I propose Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony as a parallel approach to Romanization, in order to reconcile the concerns of the primary divide in the field. A Gramscian analysis explains the exercising of power by the dominant class of the Roman Empire, over the various subordinate classes of indigenous natives in the provinces. In addition, the methodology can explain, not only why the natives adopted Roman culture, but also in what ways the various classes of Rome and the provinces negotiated power relationships through dissemination and adoption of the ideology of the Roman elite class.

The scholarly history of Roman bathing and baths is examined in chapter three. Romanization scholars appear to have overlooked the importance of the adoption of bathing in the Roman territories. Scholars who study the baths in depth have primarily explored the topic in terms of a Roman cultural phenomenon and tend to focus on the development of Roman bathing architecture and customs. Their discussions on baths in the provinces often neglect the political implications of acculturation of provincials into the Roman Empire.

Moreover, in chapter three, I utilize Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony to analyze Roman public bathing within the provinces. I assess the various ways in which the ideology of Roman and the Empire was embodied in the baths, including architecture, and social and economic

institutions. By taking part in the bathing habit, the subordinate provincial populations supported and reproduced the social structure of the Romans. Therefore, bathing became an element of consent given by the indigenous inhabitants of the territories to Roman dominance, and dissemination of the custom aided the hegemony of the Roman ruling class.

Chapter One: Issues in Romanization

“Unfortunately the habit of passing judgments leads to a loss of taste for explanations”

-Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*. 1953⁶

In his 1962 treatise, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn challenged the prevailing understanding of the manner in which scientific knowledge is advanced. Rather than a gradual accumulation, growing larger with incremental additions of minor fragments of information, he proposed that scientific advances actually come through innovative breakthroughs within a field, when the prevailing model has become ineffective.⁷ Kuhn described a cycle that takes place within an academic field, in which a theory originates with identification of a new problem space, designated as “prescience”, and a framework, with which the problem may be examined, is accepted, a stage in the cycle termed “normal science.”⁸ However, as the field progresses, new questions arise that cannot be answered by the preponderant theory, and when enough “anomalies” have been identified, the recognized model begins to drift.⁹ The paradigm then cycles into crisis mode.¹⁰ In order to progress beyond the dilemma, the theory must be revolutionized.¹¹ Acceptance of the often contradictory, new model represents a genuine paradigm shift in the field, what Kuhn called a scientific revolution, and allows scholars to examine old

⁶ Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 116.

⁷ Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of scientific revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1, 3.

⁸ Kuhn, *The Structure of scientific revolutions*, 10.

⁹ Kuhn, *The Structure of scientific revolutions*, 52.

¹⁰ Kuhn, *The Structure of scientific revolutions*, 68.

¹¹ Kuhn *The Structure of scientific revolutions*, 76.

information in a new way.¹² The shift will move a theory out of crisis and back into the “normal science” stage of the cycle.¹³

Within the field of Ancient Roman studies, the dialogue of Romanization demonstrates the relevance of Kuhn’s theory.¹⁴ For more than one hundred years, scholars of Roman studies, Latin language, and Mediterranean and European archaeology have attempted to clarify and classify the historical processes by which the culture and societies of non-Roman vassals, living in the provincial communities, were affected and altered through contact and cultural exchange with the Roman Empire. Initially, scholars believed this was a straightforward, one-way transmission of culture material, customs, and institutions from the Romans to the provincial populations. More recently, various researchers have proposed that the communication of usefully culture was more complicated, involving two-way transmissions of culture between the natives and Romans, often resulting in hybridized or syncretized material culture. The processes of cultural adjustment have subsequently been established to be an exceptionally complex and multifaceted affiliation, involving various issues, including geography, political power, cultural identity, and economic class. In order to illustrate their complex relationship, scholars have adopted various frameworks and methodologies in their quest to construct a suitable paradigm.

Francis Haverfield is considered an innovator in the field of Roman studies and is widely credited as one of the first historians to examine issues in Romanization.¹⁵ In his book, *The*

¹² Kuhn, *The Structure of scientific revolutions*, 77, 92.

¹³ Kuhn, *The Structure of scientific revolutions*, 90.

¹⁴ It should be noted that Kuhn was interested in the “pure sciences and not the social sciences or applied sciences,” however the theory can be suitably applied to the issues in the Romanization paradigm. "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions," *World Philosophers & Their Works*. Salem Press. 2000. Salem Press Biographical Encyclopedia, January, 2015

¹⁵ Philip Freeman, *The best training-ground for archaeologists: Francis Haverfield and the invention of Romano-British archaeology* (Oxford: Oxbow Books Limited, 2007), 2.

Romanisation of Roman Britain, Haverfield analyzed provincial acculturation in the context of Romanization, a term which he defined as the historical process by which the culture, of the native populations of Britain, was modified in response to exposure to Roman ideology and cultural material.¹⁶ In his estimation, these processes urged the Britons towards a Roman identity, as Roman culture was disseminated through the provinces.¹⁷ Richard Hingley indicates that Haverfield's paradigm was teleological and "it assumed a simplistic and directional transition from native to Roman that reflected social views of social evolution from a state of primitiveness to civilization."¹⁸ Haverfield operated from the premise that Roman colonization in England was an advantageous project and he regarded Roman influence on the Britons as generally progressive and beneficial.¹⁹ He systematically examined the influence of Roman occupation on the culture of native British populations by evaluating aspects of culture such as language, material civilization, art, and local government and land systems. His book became a seminal work in the discipline of Roman studies and the framework maintained dominance in the field for over eighty years.²⁰ Through his writings and scholarly activities, Haverfield helped establish and develop Romano-British studies, an energetic and fecund field of study within Roman history.²¹

¹⁶ Francis Haverfield, *The romanisation of Roman Britain* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1915); Richard Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen: the imperial origins of Roman archaeology* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 112.

¹⁷ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 112; Jane Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," *American Journal of Archaeology* (2001): 209-225.

¹⁸ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 112.

¹⁹ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 117, 115.

²⁰ Freeman, *The best training-ground for archaeologists*, 2.

²¹ Freeman, *The best training-ground for archaeologists*, 2.

Prior to the paradigmatic dissertation of Haverfield, the general view of imperialism was one of disapproval.²² However, due to the nature of European territorial and political expansion during the 1800's, connotations surrounding the term 'imperialism' were changing.²³ Colonization and imperialism were no longer understood to be inherently destructive and historical analysis began to reflect the political ideals of the period.²⁴ Haverfield's work was not exempt from the influence of the latest outlook concerning imperialism and his book is decidedly pro-Roman.²⁵ Haverfield himself commented on the general shift in opinion of Roman imperialism: "The old theory of an age of despotism and decay has been overthrown, and the believer in human nature can now feel confident that, whatever their limitations, the men of the Empire wrought for the betterment and the happiness of the world."²⁶ Haverfield worked from the contemporary models of social development, which often viewed colonizing forces as progressive and beneficial, and native colonized populations as culturally underdeveloped.²⁷ He reasoned that the Britons were civilized when they adopted Roman cultural material. When discussing Roman expansion in the West, Haverfield wrote, "Here Rome found races that were not yet civilized, yet were racially capable of accepting her culture."²⁸ According to Haverfield, the cultural temperament within the provinces transformed to become more Roman.²⁹ The paradigm of Romanization was cemented

²² Haverfield, *The romanisation of Roman Britain*, xv; Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 19, 20.

²³ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 22.

²⁴ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 22.

²⁵ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 115.

²⁶ Haverfield, *The romanisation of Roman Britain*, xvi.

²⁷ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 117.

²⁸ Haverfield, *The romanisation of Roman Britain*, xix.

²⁹ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 115.

into the praxis of countless Roman archaeologists and historians for over eighty years.³⁰ However, beginning in the 1970s, the theory began to be challenged by various scholars with new ideas regarding acculturation in the provinces. Subsequently, the field has been inundated with criticism and alternatives, discussed below.

The field of Roman provincial studies began to be influenced by ideas from within the social sciences, specifically post-colonialism. In 1990, Martin Millett published *The Romanization of Britain*, which challenged the colonial paradigm established by Haverfield.³¹ According to Jane Webster, “Romanization thus does not conceive of a two-way exchange of ideas: rather, it presupposes a linear transfer of ideas from the center to the provinces, in the course of which provincial society becomes cumulatively more Roman in its ways.”³² Millett asserted that, rather than a one-way transmission of culture and ideology from the Romans to the natives in the provinces, cultural material was actually transmitted back and forth between the Roman colonizers and the indigenous populations.³³ “‘Roman’ culture was by definition a cosmopolitan fusion of influences of diverse origins rather than purely the native culture of Rome itself. We must thus see Romanization as a process of dialectical change, rather than the influence of one ‘pure’ culture upon others.”³⁴

Millett was not the first scholar to question the prevailing methodology of Romanization, however his book is considered a forerunner to the classification of post-colonial Roman studies.³⁵

³⁰ Broughton 1929; DeWitt 1938; Gilliam 1964; Harris 1971; Woods 1964; Cunliffe 1973; Herrling 1943; Brockmann 1951.

³¹ Martin Millett, *The Romanization of Britain: an essay in archaeological interpretation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

³² Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 210.

³³ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 1,2.

³⁴ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 1.

³⁵ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 212.

His work examines the issue of Romanization from a local archaeological perspective, rather than the perspective of Roman Imperialism and Roman high culture.³⁶ Instead of relying on textual evidence, which had ignored non-elite culture, Millett began to examine archeological evidence of indigenous Britons, examining pre-Roman Celtic history, military invasion, the emergence of Roman style urbanization, and changes in the economy.³⁷

The shift in focus away from the Roman cultural core and towards the provincial cultural periphery was an attractive methodology for numerous scholars that found Romanization theory to be inadequate.³⁸ The Haverfield Romanization paradigm had a tendency to view both Roman and indigenous cultures as uniform and focused primarily on Roman high culture, such as cities, monumental architecture, literature, emperors, and elite culture.³⁹ The scholars who adhered to the new post-colonial paradigm sought to acknowledge differentiations within Roman imperialism and between colonized cultures. These scholars concentrated on the experience of the native provincials whom they perceived as having been oppressed by the Romans and then ignored in Roman scholarship.⁴⁰

Other scholars joined Millett in his utilization of a new perspective. David Mattingly's approach exemplifies the post-colonial paradigm. His works, including *An Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire* and *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire*, challenge the notion that Roman influence was popular or beneficial, and he emphasizes

³⁶ Miguel John Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion. An archaeological dialogue on Romanization." *Archaeological Dialogues* 21, no. 01 (2014): 2.

³⁷ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 2.

³⁸ Webster 2010; Millett 1991; Mattingly 2006; Hingley 2005

³⁹ Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen*, 117.

⁴⁰ Kevin McGeough, *The Romans: New Perspectives* (Abc-clio, 2004), 300; Millett 1991; Mattingly 2004, 2006, 2010; Webster 2010.

Roman exploitation of provincial resources and populations.⁴¹ Mattingly applies the bottom-up methodology and focuses on indigenous Britons.⁴² He concluded that fundamental differences in the experiences of groups within the province preclude the possibility of a distinct “Romanized identity.”⁴³ According to Mattingly, experiences and identities diverge between colonizer and the colonized.⁴⁴ He also inferred that Roman occupation was thoroughly disliked and identification with Rome occurred on a trivial scale.⁴⁵ Mattingly wrote with a transparent motivation; he plainly states that his work focuses on the destructive and coercive qualities of Roman occupation.⁴⁶ Within the preface, he quotes a reviewer of his book, “a key element of my view is that the ‘Romano-British episode was nasty, brutish, and long.’”⁴⁷ Mattingly states, “There is still a broad consensus in favor of the benefits of Roman rule outweighing the negative impacts.”⁴⁸ He aims to convince others that the Romans should not be regarded favorably.⁴⁹

Jane Webster offered a novel framework from within the realm of post-colonial scholarship. She suggested that the theory of creolization, the process of “multicultural adjustments” that create new communities through cultural exchange, might be usefully applied to the issue of acculturation in Roman territories.⁵⁰ Webster explicitly repositions focus away from the top-down method of researching elite culture, and suggests moving toward evaluation of

⁴¹ David Mattingly, *An imperial possession: Britain in the Roman Empire, 54 BC-AD 409* (Penguin, 2008), 3.

⁴² Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 5.

⁴³ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 17.

⁴⁴ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 17.

⁴⁵ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 539.

⁴⁶ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 1.

⁴⁷ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, xiii.

⁴⁸ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 4.

⁴⁹ Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 8.

⁵⁰ Webster, “Creolizing the Roman provinces,” 217.

everyday cultural material belonging to the underclasses in the provinces.⁵¹ However, Webster challenged the efficacy of the post-colonial method because the method “polarized the Roman and native identities and material cultures.”⁵² The approach regarded native culture and Roman culture as discrete and therefore failed to account for the possibility of cultural hybridity.⁵³ She offers creolization as an alternative theory, which acknowledges the possibility that a new hybrid culture may arise as a result of contact between people of distinct cultures.⁵⁴ Religion is utilized as a focus of study because, in a colonial setting, it is often space of defiance or rebellion against colonial culture.⁵⁵ Webster proposes that Romano-Celtic religion was a “product of the post-Roman negotiation between Roman and indigenous beliefs and iconographic traditions.”⁵⁶ She examines the Romano-Celtic goddess Epona, who was worshipped in Gaul, as an example of a truly Romano-Celtic deity.⁵⁷ Webster states that a shift towards the “materiality of everyday life” will provide a more accurate representation of colonial life in the Roman Empire.⁵⁸

The modification in foci and condemnation of the old paradigm was constructive in the 1990s.⁵⁹ Postcolonial scholars began with a genuine interest in gaining a more profound understanding of the cultural synthesis between Romans and native provincial populations.⁶⁰ By examining archaeological evidence related to the lower classes and slaves, they sought to construct a more complete picture of the lives of non-elites in the provinces. Yet, they continued to reason

⁵¹ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 209.

⁵² Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 212.

⁵³ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 212.

⁵⁴ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 217.

⁵⁵ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 219.

⁵⁶ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 221.

⁵⁷ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 221.

⁵⁸ Webster, "Creolizing the Roman provinces," 223.

⁵⁹ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 4.

⁶⁰ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 127.

from the same framework of the old colonial model, never really moving past the traditional dichotomies.⁶¹ David Mattingly states in the opening lines of his book, “This book tells the story of the occupation of Britain by the Romans.”⁶² Similarly, Jane Webster openly employs a “bottom-up” approach in her treatise in which she proposes the theory of *creolization* as a replacement for Romanization.⁶³ She utilizes religion as a case study “because in many colonial contexts, religious belief has either been the focal point around which overt rebellion has crystallized, or it has been the aspect of indigenous cultural life most resistant to acculturation.”⁶⁴ By examining the interactions through the perspective of colonialism, the Roman versus native dichotomy tends to supersede other forms of connection or differentiation between groups. The bottom-up approach does not attempt to breakdown the static classification of Roman versus native. In the opinion of some scholars, this issue is a central problem that Romanization studies must resolve.⁶⁵

The post-colonial scholars continued to work from the ‘Roman vs. native’ perspective instead of attempting to redefine the relationship between different groups in the provinces.⁶⁶ As a result, the new model began to encounter similar issues as the old perspective.⁶⁷ Michael Versluys states that part of the issue lies within framing the Roman Empire in the context of a “19th century imperialistic nation state.”⁶⁸ Though that “comparison is always implicit in our thinking”, Rome in many aspects, did not reflect that governmental structure.⁶⁹ Additionally, Versluys maintains that

⁶¹ Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 5.

⁶² Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 1.

⁶³ Webster, “Creolizing the Roman provinces,” 209.

⁶⁴ Webster, “Creolizing the Roman provinces,” 219.

⁶⁵ Woolf 1998; Versluys 2014; Hingley 2005.

⁶⁶ Greg Woolf, “Beyond Romans and natives,” *World archaeology* 28, no. 3 (1997): 339.

⁶⁷ Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 6.

⁶⁸ Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 6.

⁶⁹ Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 6.

value judgments have negatively affected both key frameworks of Romanization.⁷⁰ The colonial paradigm viewed Roman rule as beneficial and progressive, while the post-colonial approach tends to view the Romans as occupiers that disrupted the societies and cultures in the provinces.⁷¹ Versluys suggests that excessively ideological motivations may hinder objective research and innovations in the field.⁷²

By the late 1990s, the problems within Roman provincial studies were becoming apparent to researchers in the field. Various scholars, such as Richard Hingley and Greg Woolf, were beginning to contribute to a body of literature, which interceded into the history of provincial Roman acculturation research and attempted to address the stagnant nature of colonial and post-colonial Romanization theory.⁷³ Subsequently, in the early 2000s, the anomalies were accumulating and multiple historians were calling for another scientific revolution.⁷⁴ Though various scholars had questioned the collection of Romanization paradigms for many years already, in this time period there was a proliferation of criticisms of past theories and recommendations for new directions. Countless scholars have offered alternative theories over the last twenty years, illustrating widespread dissatisfaction with the inflexible methodologies of colonial and post-colonial Romanization.⁷⁵

In his 1997 article, “Beyond Romans and natives”, Woolf examines the shifting perceptions of Roman imperialism within modern scholarship and suggests a “de-colonized” perspective of the cultural change in the Roman provinces, which rejects the colonial paradigm of

⁷⁰ Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 6.

⁷¹ Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 6.

⁷² Versluys, “Understanding objects in motion,” 6.

⁷³ Woolf 1998; Hingley 2005.

⁷⁴ Woolf 1998; Hingley 2005; Webster 2010.

⁷⁵ Woolf, "Beyond Romans and natives," 48.

Romanization and the subsequent “revisionist” replacements.⁷⁶ Utilizing Gallic groups as a case study, he argues that both Roman and native culture were replaced by a “new imperial culture”, rather than the Gauls becoming Romanized.⁷⁷ He argues that the Gallic cultures were not acculturated into a “pre-existing social order” that was entirely Roman.⁷⁸ Instead, Woolf maintains that both the Romans and the Gauls participated in the creation of a new culture.⁷⁹ Both Roman and Gallic merged to become something new. As other provincial cultures were absorbed, the imperial culture continued to transform.⁸⁰ Woolf maintains that this understanding of cultural transformation removes the “conflict, completion, or interaction” among discrete societies.⁸¹

Richard Hingley has extensively examined the issues surrounding Romanization theory and cultural identity in the Roman provinces. In his book, *Globalizing Roman Culture: Unity, diversity and empire*, Hingley discusses the influence of modern sensibilities on the scholarly assessment of history.⁸² He asserts that in the past, the dialogue on Romanization was closely connected to nationalism and support for modern imperialism and he emphasizes the need to abandon the theory for a less ideological approach.⁸³ Hingley suggests globalization theory, as an alternative to Romanization, to examine cultural exchange and cultural identity in the Roman Empire. He defines the approach as using a “global perspective”, while acknowledging “regional cultural diversity”, to examine cultural identity and cultural exchange in the roman provinces.⁸⁴ He intends to progress

⁷⁶ Woolf, "Beyond Romans and natives," 339, 341.

⁷⁷ Woolf, "Beyond Romans and natives," 341.

⁷⁸ Woolf, "Beyond Romans and natives," 341.

⁷⁹ Woolf, "Beyond Romans and natives," 341.

⁸⁰ Woolf, "Beyond Romans and natives," 341.

⁸¹ Woolf, "Beyond Romans and natives," 341.

⁸² Richard Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture: unity, diversity and empire*. (New York: Routledge, 2005), 14-48.

⁸³ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 38, 2.

⁸⁴ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 2.

beyond Romanization's static and flat framework, and move towards a more dynamic understanding of cultural identity and social change.⁸⁵

Discussions on the state of Romanization theory began in earnest around 30 years ago, and various scholars have asserted alternative theories and methodologies to replace the old tradition. Despite these contributions, the debate continues. The 2014 article *Understanding objects in motion. An archaeological dialogue on Romanization*, Miguel John Versluys asked the question: "What on earth has happened to the Romanization debate?"⁸⁶ He also suggests adoption of globalization theory as a way to move beyond all notions of colonialism and imperialism.⁸⁷ Versluys maintains that by examining archaeological objects outside of historical context, the divisions between cultures dissolve. What may then be observed is a "reworking and redistribution" of various styles (Celtic, Mediterranean, Greek, Near-Eastern, and Egyptian), which connect and combine on different levels.⁸⁸ In his words, "it would be impossible to distinguish center from periphery, colonizer from colonized, and, indeed, Roman from Native."⁸⁹ Versluys' solution is to understand the Roman world in terms of one "cultural container."⁹⁰ From that premise, scholars may view cultural transmission as exchanges within one single group.⁹¹ For Versluys, "Rome" does not indicate a single cultural style or society, but rather a "period of remarkable connectivity and its material/human consequences."⁹²

⁸⁵ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 2.

⁸⁶ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 1.

⁸⁷ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 5.

⁸⁸ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 15.

⁸⁹ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 15.

⁹⁰ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 13.

⁹¹ Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 15.

⁹² Versluys, "Understanding objects in motion," 19.

Notwithstanding the debate within Roman studies, not all scholars reject old ideas of Romanization. In 2000, Ramsey MacMullen published *Romanization in the time of Augustus*, which continues to work from within the colonial paradigm.⁹³ His book examines provincial territories of the Empire, while concentrating on one time period, that of the Emperor Augustus. His discussion on the dissemination of Roman culture to the local populations in the provinces is focused on the idea of imitation.⁹⁴ He regards the locals as alacritous participants in the adoption of the cultural material of Rome.⁹⁵ In his opinion, the indigenous inhabitants of the provinces had the capability, motivation, and opportunity to assimilate culturally with the Romans, and Roman cultural was aptly imitable.⁹⁶ For MacMullen, there seems little need for adjustments within the paradigm of Romanization, because it continues to correspond to his assessment. MacMullen states, “Baths and wine and so forth recommend themselves to the senses without need of an introduction. They felt or they looked good. It is thus possible to speak of a higher civilization coming in contact with a lower one.”⁹⁷

Despite the abundance of dissatisfied scholars, analyses and historiographies of Romanization, and newly proposed theories, a consensus on a new paradigm has yet to be reached. When the colonial model of Romanization began to fail, the post-colonial approach was utilized as a replacement. The post-colonial scholars challenged the old approach by redirecting focus away from elite culture towards the culture of the underclasses through examination of everyday archaeological material. However, the new perspective failed to challenge old notions of

⁹³ Ramsay MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

⁹⁴ MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*, 134.

⁹⁵ MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*, 134.

⁹⁶ MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*, 134.

⁹⁷ MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*, 134.

acculturation, cultural identity, and cultural transmission. The old dichotomy of “Roman versus barbarian” was merely covered over, rather than abolished completely. Subsequently, various scholars have written numerous critiques of the colonial and post-colonial paradigms. Over the preceding fifteen years, various historians have suggested new approaches, however many of these prospective paradigms have garnered little attention in the field and none have been comprehensively adopted. The framework has been stuck in crisis mode over twenty years and a model that would be accepted as normal science has not been reached.

Chapter 2: The Roman Empire and Cultural Hegemony

The paradigm crisis outlined in chapter one illustrates the necessity for new methodologies within the field of Roman provincial studies. Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony can be usefully applied to understand the power of the Roman Empire and the dissemination of Roman cultural material in the provinces. Gramsci's approach can provide an alternative cause for cultural dissemination and transformation of cultural identity in the provinces. The framework describes the way in which a dominant group maintains power in a culturally diverse society, and the function of culture in the propagation of the ideology of the ruling class. For Gramsci, hegemony is maintained not only through the imposition of the dominant group's worldview on the rest of society, but also through consent from the subordinate class to the prevailing social structure. Cultural hegemony is a useful approach because the theory attempts to explain, not only who retains power in society, but also how ideas affect social organization and why subordinate groups allow themselves to be dominated.⁹⁸ Gramsci's ideas of cultural hegemony part from the Marxist preoccupation on conflict between the classes, and propose a method by which dominant groups circumvent class confrontation, perhaps through dissemination of culture.⁹⁹

Utilization of Gramscian theory can resolve some of the issues that have forced the study of cultural exchange in the Roman provinces into paradigm crisis. The colonial and post-colonial traditions of Romanization can be reconciled by the theory of cultural hegemony. The traditional approach to Romanization is primarily concerned with the adoption of Roman cultural material and

⁹⁸ TJ Jackson Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities." *The American Historical Review* (1985): 568.

⁹⁹ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 572.

customs by the indigenous provincials. Furthermore, the approach utilizes textual evidence and examines high culture, such as philosophy and law. The methodology of Romanization compels the theory to remain focused on elite culture, which excludes much of the lower classes because they adopted high culture at a lower frequency. Conversely, the post-colonial approach is primarily concerned with the native cultures in the provinces, and how they were affected by Roman occupation. This approach diverges from the colonial paradigm and makes use of archeological evidence, which is often the only record of non-elite people. Primary source texts frequently ignore lower class groups and cultures and, therefore, depict an incomplete record of the ancient Roman populations.

Cultural hegemony can bridge the divide in subject between the two paradigms by addressing the concerns of both, as outlined in chapter one. Gramsci's theory attempts to explain not only, why the subordinate group embraces the ideology of the dominant group, which focuses on the actions of the lower classes, but also who benefited from the exchange, which involves the elite classes in Rome and the provinces. Through cultural hegemony, negotiations of power can be viewed on various levels. In the context of Rome and the provinces, the theory can help explain the exchange between the underclass native populations and the native elites, the exchange between the local elites and the Roman elites, and the exchange between the Roman elites and the great masses of the Roman territories.

The Roman Empire can be usefully examined through the following reading of Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony, as outlined by T.J. Jackson Lears. Gramsci developed Marxist ideas of how ideology is formed. Rather than a simplistic reflection of class interests, Gramsci views

ideology as a multifarious system, which reflects a wide range of feelings and values.¹⁰⁰ According to Gramsci, ideology is developed through “spontaneous philosophy.” This philosophy is contained in “notions and concepts” embedded in language, “common sense” and “good sense”, and the “entire system of beliefs, superstitions, opinions, ways of seeing things and of acting, which are collectively bundled together under the name of folklore.”¹⁰¹ A particular group or class will find that some values resonate more than others and will selectively create a new ideology from the available one.¹⁰² The new ideology binds the group together in what Gramsci called a “historical bloc.” Unlike Marx’s ideas of class, a historical bloc can traverse economic ties and promotes analysis of groups that are connected by religious or ideological links as well as economic.¹⁰³ To successfully transform a historical bloc into a hegemony the group must appeal to a wide range of social classes and convince society that the interests of dominant group are also the interests of the subordinate groups, which may include “selective accommodations” to the needs of the subordinate group.¹⁰⁴

Gramsci discussed the functions social hegemony as “the spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed in social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is historically caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.”¹⁰⁵ The ideas of hegemony and consent are related to ideas of domination.¹⁰⁶ Gramsci

¹⁰⁰ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 570.

¹⁰¹ Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," 323.

¹⁰² Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 571.

¹⁰³ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 571.

¹⁰⁴ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 571.

¹⁰⁵ Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," 12; Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony," 568.

¹⁰⁶ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 568.

described government coercion as “the apparatus of state power, which legally enforces discipline on those groups who do not consent either actively or passively.”¹⁰⁷ However, domination alone cannot compel the maintenance of a hegemony; coercion must coexist with consent, in order for the hegemony to be successful.¹⁰⁸ The ideology of dominant culture that necessitates consent of subordinate groups includes “values, norms, perceptions, beliefs, sentiments, and prejudices that support and define the existing distribution of goods, the institutions that decide how this distributions occurs, and the permissible range of disagreements about those processes.”¹⁰⁹ The nature of consent, however, is somewhat more difficult to define. Gramsci indicated that the belief that leaders are legitimate would lead to commitment to the established social structure.¹¹⁰ According to Gramsci, generating consent through selective accommodations, can give domination a feeling of moral authority, which confers legitimacy on the rule of the dominant class.

Within the *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci expanded on the idea of consent and discussed the conflict of consciousness that may arise in the mind of an individual in a subordinate group. Gramsci developed this idea out of the Marxist notion of “false consciousness”, which Daniel Little describes as, “the systematic misrepresentation of dominant social relations in the consciousness of subordinate classes. Members of a subordinate class (workers, peasants, serfs) suffer from false consciousness in that their mental representations of the social relations around them systematically conceal or obscure the realities of subordination, exploitation, and domination those relations embody.”¹¹¹ However, Gramsci advanced the theory by acknowledging the role of

¹⁰⁷ Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," 12.

¹⁰⁸ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 568.

¹⁰⁹ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 569.

¹¹⁰ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 569.

¹¹¹ David Little, University of Michigan Dearborn, <http://www-personal.umd.umich.edu/~delittle/iess%20false%20consciousness%20V2.htm>.

the subordinate classes in the maintenance of the hegemony of the dominant class. The subordinate class has its own conception of the world but has also accepted one from another group. The result was the concept of “two consciousnesses” or “one contradictory consciousness”.¹¹² One consciousness is, “implicit in his activity” and “unites him to his fellow workers in the practical transformation of the real world”.¹¹³ The other consciousness is “superficially explicit or verbal, which he has inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed.”¹¹⁴ The verbal consciousness guides “moral conduct and direction of will” and is influential enough to create a situation in which the contradictory world conceptions prevent action and produce “moral and political passivity.”¹¹⁵ Consequently, subordinate groups do not need to commit to the hegemony in order to preserve it.¹¹⁶ Some members of the subordinate group may feel disillusioned by the system and may revolt or even generate counter-hegemony.¹¹⁷ However, the consequences of conflicting consciousness will likely prevent such an outcome.¹¹⁸

Within the Roman Empire, the process of cultural hegemony is manifest in the wielding of power, by the ruling class in Rome, over the populations of the provincial territories. Rome exercised dominance over a vast, culturally diverse empire, comprised of discrete groups that represented a wide range of worldviews and ideologies. The provincial populations possibly numbered in excess of 60 million people, and the influence of Rome was demonstrated by the

¹¹² Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," 333.

¹¹³ Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," 333.

¹¹⁴ Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," 333.

¹¹⁵ Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," 333.

¹¹⁶ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 569.

¹¹⁷ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 569.

¹¹⁸ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 569.

ability to establish and preserve such a large, disparate, unwieldy group of territories.¹¹⁹ While the annexation of a territory originated through military action and warfare, the extent of Roman coercion was limited. The entire empire was regulated with a comparatively small military of approximately 300,000 soldiers.¹²⁰ Rather than use force, the elite class successfully consolidated the social classes of Rome and the provinces under the directive of Roman ideology, thereby forming a historical bloc.

The ruling class, who benefited the most from dominance over the populations of the Roman territories, was comprised of Romans, who maintained an extraordinary level of influence and power in the community. According to Michael Mann's IEMP model, the dominant group maintained ideological, economic, military, and political power.¹²¹ Mann maintained, "Societies are constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting networks of social power."¹²² According to this framework, the ruling class was comprised of educated, male, freeborn citizens of the Roman Empire. More specifically, they were the wealthiest men in the Roman Empire, who maintained aristocratic status, economic power, political power, and religious authority. By consolidating various authoritative positions in society into the hands of a small group, the elite class was able to control laws, administration, and ideology of the Roman Empire. The most elite men in Rome moved between these spheres of influence and maintained control over the subordinate groups in the Empire.

¹¹⁹ John D. Durand, 1977. *Historical Estimates of World Population: An Evaluation*. Population and Development Review 3 (3): 253, 269.

¹²⁰ Paul Erdkamp, *A companion to the roman army*. (Malden, MA: Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 410.

¹²¹ Daniëlle Slootjes "Local elites and power in the roman world: modern theories and models." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 42, no. 2 (2011): 242.

¹²² Slootjes, "Local elites and power in the roman world: modern theories and models," 240.

An institution, which wielded ideological authority over the subordinate classes of Rome, was the state religion. Religion is viewed as an important element of culture and ideology of a society, and in Rome it was also closely linked with politics.¹²³ Cultic officials were chosen from members of the government and were viewed as administering the relationship between humans and the gods. The most powerful of the religious colleges were the *Pontifices*, which were accountable for ensuring the preservation of the state cult. Under the Empire, the emperor acted as the *Pontifex Maximus*, the highest-ranking religious figure in Rome.¹²⁴ These men, who were already in control of the government, also maintained control over one of primary institutions that was a repository of Roman ideology.

The dominant group included members of the economic upper class. Their families maintained high level of wealth, owned large landholdings across the Empire, and engaged in economic activities related to agriculture.¹²⁵ However, wealth alone was not sufficient to gain elite status in the Roman community. These men were also members of a closed group of Roman aristocracy, called *patricians*.¹²⁶ Wealthy non-*patricians*, called *plebeians*, meaning common people, were ineligible for entry into the social order of the aristocrats.¹²⁷ Military power was somewhat restrained in the early empire, under Augustus. Command of the military was consolidated under the emperor for the purpose of safeguarding the authority of the administration and maintaining the borders of the Empire.¹²⁸ Augustus instituted a professional military and limited the number of overall number of soldiers in order to prevent the army from generating

¹²³ McGeough, *The Romans*, 192.

¹²⁴ McGeough, *The Romans*, 193.

¹²⁵ McGeough, *The Romans*, 138.

¹²⁶ McGeough, *The Romans*, 139.

¹²⁷ McGeough, *The Romans*, 139.

¹²⁸ McGeough, *The Romans*, 167.

effective opposition to his authority.¹²⁹ The emperors Flavius Vespasian and Septimius Severus demonstrate the ability of the most powerful generals to translate military power into political power.

The elite class also contained citizens who had earned personal honor and political influence by means of holding various elected or appointed public offices, including consulship, censorship, and provincial governor. Under Augustus, political power was further consolidated into the hands of the aristocracy.¹³⁰ To gain a seat on the Senate, an individual was required own property valued at one million sesterces, which created economic barriers for the lower classes.¹³¹ They were the sole legislative body, and the primary financial administrators of the Roman Empire.¹³² Furthermore, the Senate maintained judicial powers and functioned as an electoral body, most notably electing the emperor.¹³³ Therefore, the wealthiest aristocratic men in Rome also had the greatest amount legal control over the rest of the population of the Empire.

By means of Mann's model, the dominant group in the Roman Empire can be identified. Accordingly, which group was able to profit from the exchange of culture and ideology in the Roman provinces can also be ascertained. Romanization theory focuses on a dichotomy of "Romans versus natives". However, the distinction does not explain how Rome benefitted from acculturation because it doesn't allow for stratification of groups within the "Romans" or "natives" categories. The ruling class benefitted from provincials becoming Romanized, yet the non-elite Romans did not. They were not able to consolidate power because of acculturation in the same way

¹²⁹ McGeough, *The Romans*, 167.

¹³⁰ McGeough, *The Romans*, 162.

¹³¹ Frank Frost Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions* (Ginn & company, 1911), 386.

¹³² Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 386.

¹³³ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 386.

as the elites. Therefore, Gramscian analysis can complicate the groups of analysis and identify which group in Roman society profited from domination of the other groups.

The following section examines the channels through which the ideology of the dominant class was disseminated to the local communities in the Roman territories; first and most directly, through local government restructuring and military presence, and subsequently through the behavior of the local elites. The local governments in the provinces frequently transformed to reflect the Roman system. The military propelled the dissemination of ideology by means of urbanizing the provincial towns, connecting them with roads, and settling in towns themselves. Furthermore, the local elites aided in urbanization, and adopted and perpetuated Roman culture and customs, which were also imbued with the ideology of the Roman elites.

In the provinces, the Roman elite class adjusted the social organization to conform to its own. The Roman social structure, which reified Roman ideology, was imposed on the provinces first and most unambiguously, through direct Roman governance. Each province in Rome was administered by a governor that was chosen by the Emperor or the Senate.¹³⁴ Although the governor of each province was bound to a body of regulations that were instituted by the senate, he was given a great deal of autonomy from the administration in Rome.¹³⁵ Cities of the Empire were classified into categories, which indicate the type of governance that was established, level of citizenship that was conferred, and the variety of tribute that was surrendered. The systems of local governance of the communities within the provinces varied and were also given a degree of independence in administrative mechanisms.¹³⁶ Free cities maintained their own senates, popular assemblies, magistrates, and judicial systems and were permitted to administer community

¹³⁴ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 90.

¹³⁵ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 90.

¹³⁶ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 90.

affairs.¹³⁷ However, they did so under the supervision of the Roman governor, who had the authority to approve the elections of senators, ban individuals from assemblies, and supervise the city's finances.¹³⁸

The system of governance over the provinces illustrates the element of Gramsci's theory, which discusses the concessions made by the dominant group in order to serve the welfare of the subordinate group. Rather than compelling submission through force, the Romans allowed the communities of the provinces a level of autonomy.¹³⁹ Allowing the populations of the cities to govern themselves illustrated to the provincials the benevolent nature of the Empire. However, authority over the community, exerted by the local population, was limited and ultimately subject to the will of the Roman governor.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, while the locals may have felt as though the control of Rome was politically limited, fundamentally, the Empire retained supreme authority.

The local elites within the communities of the Empire played an important role in the process of cultural hegemony in the provinces. The expression 'local elites' refers to "the trans-empire group identity evolving in the early Empire of persons bound together by ties of privilege, education, culture, and connections with the imperial center and by the shared self-identity these ties constituted."¹⁴¹ The group frequently adopted and perpetuated the ideology of the ruling classes in Rome through various avenues. Elites who participated in the political systems within the provinces, regardless of perceived self-governance, were aiding the hegemony of Rome by working within the Roman system. Rather than attempting to oppose the governmental arrangement, the local politicians ruled the indigenous people of the provinces for the Roman

¹³⁷ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 91.

¹³⁸ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 91.

¹³⁹ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 90.

¹⁴⁰ Abbott, *A history and description of Roman political institutions*, 91.

¹⁴¹ Judith Perkins, *Roman Imperial Identities in the Early Christian Period* (Routledge, 2008), 5.

authorities. Therefore, the imperial ruling class was able to control the provincial communities with limited government intercession.

Participation in the system of euergetism is another aspect of elite behavior that demonstrates cultural hegemony. As the empire expanded, Roman style urbanization spread throughout the territories.¹⁴² Public utilities, such as systems of roads and aqueducts, public buildings and spaces, such as temples and baths, and private buildings, such as guild buildings and homes, all became elements of the changing landscapes in the provinces.¹⁴³ Many cities of provinces transformed to look more Roman and the local elites were often behind the changes.¹⁴⁴ Wealthy families within the provincial communities frequently provided the capital for buildings and amenities because of the widely recognized social contract between the upper and lower classes. One element of this contract was the ideology of *fama* among the upper classes, and the other was that the lower classes expected generosity from the wealthy.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, public benefactions were utilized in political campaigns, in order to demonstrate the munificence of the campaigner.¹⁴⁶

The elements of urbanization, which were constructed by the funds of the elite class in the provinces, reified Roman ideology. The construction of roads, temples, bathhouses, and private homes encouraged transformation of social structures to conform to Roman values and cultural norms.¹⁴⁷ For example, adoption of the atrium style house exposed the inhabitant to the complex

¹⁴² Nielsen, "Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths," 35.

¹⁴³ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

¹⁴⁴ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

¹⁴⁵ *Fama*: public opinion; reputation, Simpson, Donald Penistan, ed. *Cassell's Latin-English, English-Latin Dictionary*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 1968; Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 170.

¹⁴⁶ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 170.

¹⁴⁷ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

nature of the ideology of Roman space. The *domus* embodied various Roman cultural norms, such as architectural and decorative expression of social hierarchy, and the custom of conducting patron/client business at home.¹⁴⁸ Living like a Roman encouraged adoption of the Roman worldview through the legitimating symbols expressed within Roman material culture. For example, monumental architecture, which was a common feature of Roman urbanization and often used as public spaces, communicated the power of the Roman Empire, over the material world and the environment.¹⁴⁹ The local elites were the often catalyst for the construction and adoption of elements of culture, which were instilled with Roman ideology.¹⁵⁰

Additionally, local elites were often the first in the provinces to adopt Roman cultural material and customs.¹⁵¹ Many began to dress and behave like Roman citizens, including, wearing the toga, receiving Roman education, speaking Latin, living in atrium houses, drinking wine, and spending leisure time at the baths.¹⁵² Expressing a Roman identity in their own communities connected the native elites to the authority of Rome.¹⁵³ The symbolic nature of Roman identity allowed the local elites to negotiate personal power in the context of their local communities and the larger context of Empire.¹⁵⁴ For example, when indigenous elites adopted Latin language, they created a social difference between themselves and the lower class natives. Simultaneously, the local elites bind themselves to the culture and authority of the Empire. Furthermore, the elites of

¹⁴⁸ Wallace-Hadrill, Andrew. *Houses and society in Pompeii and Herculaneum* (Princeton University Press, 1994): 4-5.

¹⁴⁹ Natascha Zajac, “The *thermae*: a policy of public health of personal legitimation?” (paper presented at the first international conference on Roman baths, Bath, England March 30 –April 4, 1992), 100.

¹⁵⁰ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

¹⁵¹ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

¹⁵² Tacitus, *Life of Agricola*,

¹⁵³ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 47.

¹⁵⁴ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 47.

Rome encouraged provincial elites to adopt the culture and customs of Rome, thereby by ensuring the stability of Roman ideology on the local level.¹⁵⁵ The lower classes frequently emulated the elites in their communities, which also urged social change among the lower classes.¹⁵⁶

The element of cultural hegemony, which illuminates the power negotiations between local elites and Roman elites, correspondingly addresses the concerns of the colonial Romanization paradigm. Romanization theory emphasizes provincial imitation of Roman cultural material. Because lower class provincial populations adopted the majority of Roman customs at a lower rate than the upper class, the theory primarily addresses the behavior of the elite classes in Rome and the provinces. Cultural hegemony, likewise, addresses in what way the non-Romans in the provinces became more Roman in identity by embracing the worldview of the Roman elite. Gramsci's theory can expand Romanization by acknowledging the behavior and motivations of multiple subordinate groups, rather than the elites only.

The relationship between the elite class of the Roman Empire and lower-class population of the provinces further demonstrates Gramsci's theory. Roman cultural material and technology were disseminated through the provinces by various means including, trade, the military, native elites, and Roman colonists. Construction of public buildings and public spaces, such as bathhouses and *fora* transformed the physical landscape of the provincial communities, and public utilities, such as paved roads and aqueducts, became more widely available.¹⁵⁷ By providing provincials with technology, security, and other institutions that appear to improve welfare, the government of Rome illustrated the authority of the emperor on a moral level and gave Roman dominance the appearance of virtuous authority.

¹⁵⁵ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 47.

¹⁵⁶ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

¹⁵⁷ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

The presence of the Roman military was one of the first manifestations of Roman rule in the provinces. The institution had positive and negative aspects, representing first the coercive security apparatus of the state and subsequently the locus of protection and development. After a province was subdued, the military, not only policed the frontiers, but they also took part in engineering the infrastructure needed for supply and transport systems.¹⁵⁸ The extensive road system, primarily built by the Roman army, created an intricate network throughout the territories and enabled fast and immediate military movement. Additionally, they enabled the spread of Roman ideology by connecting government officials, allowing far-reaching trade of Roman goods, and facilitating travel among the populations.¹⁵⁹

Furthermore, the system of roads aided the building of Roman cities and development of native communities into Roman-style cities.¹⁶⁰ The Roman system of city building was characterized by urbanization, which included organized communities, centered around specifically constructed features.¹⁶¹ Roman colonial communities and military installations included public spaces and buildings that were instilled with Roman ideology. The Roman worldview guided the expectations, interactions, and behaviors within each space. Therefore, when the lower classes utilized the spaces provided by Roman urbanization they were exposed to and participated in Roman social structures.

Participation in governance, utilization of Roman benefactions, and adoption of the Roman lifestyle, by the provincial populations, were elements of consent, which would have led the residents of the territories to develop “two consciousnesses,” as described by Gramsci. Lears

¹⁵⁸ Erdkamp, *A companion to the Roman Army*, 688.

¹⁵⁹ Logan Thompson, "Roman roads," (*History Today* 47, 1997), 48.

¹⁶⁰ Thompson, "Roman Roads," 48.

¹⁶¹ Nielsen, "Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths," 35.

explores the notion of double consciousness through the subjects of the book *The Hidden Injuries of Class* written by Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb. He states, “Their respondents knew quite well that there were class inequalities in America, that rewards were distributed unfairly. And they had their own sources for dignity and solidarity. Yet they could not escape the effect of dominant values; they deemed their class inferiority as a sign of personal failure, even as many realized they had been constrained by class origins that they could not control.”¹⁶² Likewise, the communities in the provinces, which were subordinated to the Roman Empire, likely understood their subjugation. However, many had been influenced by the ideology of Rome, which created feelings of ambiguity towards Roman domination.

Gramsci’s theory of double consciousness describes the motivations behind the behavior of subordinate groups and aims to explain why subjugated groups consent to their domination. This element of cultural hegemony addresses the concern of the post-colonial Romanization scholars, who endeavor to investigate the under classes in the Roman territories and the consequences of Roman ascendancy over indigenous cultures and social structures. Like post-colonial scholarship, and unlike traditional Romanization, cultural hegemony acknowledges unequal power structure between the Romans and the inhabitants of the provinces. The concept of double consciousness goes further and attempts to explain the mental state of the subjugated provincial natives and in what ways the indigenous provincials were indoctrinated into the worldview of their oppressors, the Romans. This clarifies how the provincial natives could have opposed Roman domination and yet still behaved as a Roman.

The condition of double consciousness, manifest in the subjects of the Empire, is illustrated in various ways, including the manner in which entire provinces were quelled. In *Agricola*, Tacitus

¹⁶² Lears, “The concept of cultural hegemony,” 577, 578.

discussed the manner in which his father-in-law, Gnaeus Julius Agricola subdued the populations of Britannia.¹⁶³ Agricola instituted strategy to maintain peace through indoctrination of the indigenous people into a Roman way of life.¹⁶⁴ He encouraged the Britons to construct temples, courts, and houses, provided education for the sons of the elite families, and inspired the locals to learn Latin.¹⁶⁵ While Agricola's directives were essentially mandatory, honoring the first few to conform gave the Britons motivation to submit to his instructions and would have somewhat obscured the calculating nature of his governance. Agricola's plan was successful and, according to Tacitus, the Britons developed a predilection for Roman material culture, including styles of dress, such as the toga, types of architecture, such as porticoes, and Roman customs, such as banqueting.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, for the Britons, the consciousness "implicit in his activity", which "unites him to his fellow workers in the practical transformation of the real world" understood the injustice of their servitude. However, the other consciousness that is "superficially explicit or verbal, which he has inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed" was expressed through adherence to the dictates of Agricola and acceptance of Roman ideology. The double consciousness of the Britons led to "political passivity" and the hegemony of the Roman Empire was maintained in Britannia for another 300 years.

Strabo was an additional ancient source that discussed the far-reaching effects of Roman cultural material in the provinces. He considered how several groups of indigenous cultures that lived in the provinces had become more Roman through exposure to Roman material culture. Strabo examined the Turdetani, descendants of the Carthaginians, who had settled in the south of

¹⁶³ Tacitus, *Life of Agricola*, 19.

¹⁶⁴ Tacitus, *Life of Agricola*, 21.

¹⁶⁵ Tacitus, *Life of Agricola*, 21.

¹⁶⁶ Tacitus, *Life of Agricola*, 21.

the Iberian Peninsula.¹⁶⁷ In his book, *Iberia*, he stated the indigenous natives “have completely changed over to the Roman mode of life, not even remembering their own language any more. And most of them have become Latins, and they have received Romans as colonists, so that they are not far from being all Romans. And the present jointly-settled cities, Pax Augusta in the Celtic country, Augusta Emerita in the country of the Turdulians, Caesar-Augusta near Celtiberia, and some other settlements, manifest the change to the aforesaid civil modes of life.”¹⁶⁸ Strabo likewise discussed the Massiliote tribes, in southern France, “coming under Roman domination, the barbarians living beyond became more and more tame as time went on and instead of carrying on war have by now turned to civil institutions...and agriculture.”¹⁶⁹ In these passages, Strabo described the ways in which Roman ideology had infiltrated the everyday lives of non-Romans in the territories, by means of Roman customs and culture, specifically language and agriculture.

Gramsci’s theory of double consciousness is similarly illustrated in the lives of various provincial natives who adopted Roman customs, such as Latin language and Roman naming customs. For example, Marcus Cornelius Fronto was a Latin orator and philologist, born in the province of Numidia, present day Algeria, around 100 C.E.¹⁷⁰ He described himself as being of nomadic Libyan descent, and he was educated in Carthage, Alexandria, and Rome.¹⁷¹ The provincial native excelled within the educational system of the Romans, and his use of Latin language became a school of writing, called “Frontoniani.”¹⁷² Fronto is an apt example of an

¹⁶⁷ Strabo, *Geography*, 3.II.15.

¹⁶⁸ Strabo, *Geography*, 3.II.15.

¹⁶⁹ Strabo, *Geography*, 4.II.5.

¹⁷⁰ Jo-Maries Claassen, “Cornelius Fronto: A ‘Libyan Nomad’ at Rome,” 48.

¹⁷¹ Claassen, “Cornelius Fronto: A ‘Libyan Nomad’ at Rome,” 47.

¹⁷² H.W. Wilson, “Fronto, Marcus Cornelius.” *Greek & Latin Authors 800 B.C.-A.D. 1000* (January 1, 1980): Biography Reference Bank.

indigenous native who embraced the ideology and social structure of the Romans, specifically through Latin language, parallel to his native Libyan identity.

Born in Thagaste, in present day Algeria, Aurelius Augustine (354 – 430 C.E.) was a provincial Roman, who was born into a family that likely spoke one of the local African dialects.¹⁷³ Augustine’s father ensured that he received a classical Latin education and he studied Latin language. Because Latin was not his first language he spoke with an accent and was mocked by Italian Romans. In his book *In De Ordine*, he stated, “even I, for whom a thorough study of these matters (of pronunciation and diction) has been a dire necessity, am nevertheless censured by the Italians for my pronunciation of many words.”¹⁷⁴ While Augustine’s insistence on speaking Latin illustrates his desire to identify as a Roman and not an African, the reaction of the Romans to Augustine’s provincial accent reinforced his subordinate status in the Empire.

Joseph ben Matthias was born in the province of Judea, around 37 C.E.¹⁷⁵ He was involved in the revolt against the Romans in 66 CE and was subsequently defeated and captured by Flavius Vespasian, who would later become Emperor. He developed relationships within the system of Roman elites, became a client of and adviser to the General. Matthias eventually changed his name, to Flavius Josephus, in order to reflect his relationship to Vespasian. However the change also demonstrates his acceptance of the Roman social structure, through Roman naming practices and the patron-client system. Josephus was a historian and wrote accounts of the Jewish war against Roman occupation and the incident at Masada. His preoccupation with Jewish history,

¹⁷³ “Saint Augustine (Bishop of Hippo.). Augustine in his own words. Edited by William Harmless. Catholic University of America Press, 2010.

¹⁷⁴ Harmless, “Augustine in his own words,” ix, xi; *In De ordine* 2.17.45.

¹⁷⁵ Roy Arthur Swanson, "Flavius Josephus." *Salem Press Biographical Encyclopedia* (January 2014).

while simultaneously adhering to the Roman social ideology demonstrates the notion of two conflicting consciousnesses.

The following paragraphs explore possible criticisms of this thesis, including issues regarding application of modern theories to ancient cultures and locations of resistance within the provincial territories. Roman studies scholars might contend that a cultural theory, based around modern economic theories, should not be applied to an ancient civilization, primarily because the study of ancient economies is limited.¹⁷⁶ This due, in part, to the fact that ancient historians do not often include the economy in their research, and economists rarely examine ancient civilizations.¹⁷⁷ This is also due to the dearth of information that is available to investigate.¹⁷⁸ In the case of the Roman Empire, the vast majority of information regarding the economy did not survive and scholars must use primarily indirect evidence.¹⁷⁹ However, based on what evidence is available, economists, such as Peter Temin, have argued that the economic organization of the early Roman Empire reflects a market exchange and had many of the tendencies of a capitalist economy.¹⁸⁰ Based on the three-tiered system of economic models put forth by Karl Polanyi, Temin argues that the Roman economy moved beyond the models of reciprocity and redistribution, and instead utilized the system of market exchange.¹⁸¹ Owing to the existence of product markets in combination with well-functioning labor and capital markets, linked domestic and international markets, and the utilization of sophisticated financial instruments, such as insurance, labor contracts, and business loans that financed trade, production, and investments, Temin argues that

¹⁷⁶ Peter Temin, "The economy of the early Roman Empire," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* (2006): 133.

¹⁷⁷ Temin, "The economy of the early Roman Empire," 133.

¹⁷⁸ Temin, "The economy of the early Roman Empire," 133.

¹⁷⁹ Temin, "The economy of the early Roman Empire," 133.

¹⁸⁰ Temin, "The economy of the early Roman Empire," 149.

¹⁸¹ Temin, "The economy of the early Roman Empire," 137.

economic system under the Roman Empire would not be equaled in Europe for two thousand years.

Various critical theorists maintain that Gramscian theory was constructed within a particular historical and cultural tradition within Italy, and should only be applied within those parameters. Adam Morton discussed the dialogue among scholars who address the issues of historicizing Gramsci's work.¹⁸² He states "Thinkers of the past are constrained by their contemporary definitions and understanding of politics, and this then limits the contemporary relevance of past thinkers situated in specific historical context"¹⁸³ According to Skinner, "Consequently, the classic texts cannot be concerned with our questions and answers, but only with their own."¹⁸⁴ Bellamy states that Gramsci did not know about and would have been unable to anticipate contemporary problems, therefore, utilizing the methodology outside of the historical period in which it was produced can create problems. It could be argued that Gramsci was aware of the historical circumstances of the Roman Empire. Therefore, utilizing the framework in the context of an ancient society, especially the Roman Empire, might be considered suitable. Gramsci examined the circumstances of Italy's past, including an explication of "Caesarism", a political condition rooted in events that took place during the reign of Julius Caesar.¹⁸⁵ Gramsci applied the situation to modern rulers, such as Napoleon, Cromwell, and Bismarck.¹⁸⁶ Not only does this imply that Gramsci was well aware of the historical and political circumstances of ancient Rome, it also might suggest that he understood the value of exploring possible continuities in historical conditions and

¹⁸² Adam Morton, "Historicizing Gramsci: Situating Ideas in and beyond Their Context," *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Feb., 2003): 118-146.

¹⁸³ Morton, "Historicizing Gramsci," 128.

¹⁸⁴ Morton, "Historicizing Gramsci," 127.

¹⁸⁵ Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks*, 219.

¹⁸⁶ Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks*, 219.

events between time periods. Furthermore, the Italian tradition from which Gramsci worked may be viewed as having been forged out of cultural tradition established by the ancient Romans.

Post-colonial Romanization scholars might point to some cultures or individuals as loci of resistance against Roman domination, asserting that adoption of a Roman identity was not uniform throughout the communities of the province. Richard Reece stressed that native culture continued to thrive among the Britons during and after Roman conquest.¹⁸⁷ Richard Hingley noted that the preservation of native culture was a form of resistance.¹⁸⁸ David Mattingly discusses British cultural resistance to Roman domination, citing the low occurrence of Roman pottery styles and goods found among the lower classes and the rural populations.¹⁸⁹ Jane Webster examines Celtic-Romano religion as a place of resistance against Roman colonization. These scholars emphasize in what ways the natives in the provinces opposed Roman domination through cultural material. However, the notion of the double consciousness precludes the necessity of actively identifying with the dominant group. As Lears states, "maintenance of the hegemony does not require active commitment by the subordinates to the legitimacy of elite rule."¹⁹⁰ Subordinate populations may feel dissatisfied with the current social system and rebel against the dominant ideology, through strikes or mass movements. However, the state of two consciousnesses generates a combination of competing feelings of "resistance and resignation" that fluctuates between each person.¹⁹¹

This chapter has focused on how utilization of cultural hegemony can solve impasses in the field of Romanization and in what ways the Roman Empire may be analyzed through

¹⁸⁷ Richard Reece, *My Roman Britain*, (Cotswold Studies, 1988): 74.

¹⁸⁸ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 40.

¹⁸⁹ Mattingly, *The Romanization of Britain*, 472.

¹⁹⁰ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 569.

¹⁹¹ Lears, "The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities," 570.

Gramsci's ideas. The following chapter will examine the study of Roman baths and bathing and in what ways Roman bathing reflects the processes involved in cultural hegemony.

Chapter 3: Roman Baths

The possibilities of utilizing Roman bathing as a topic of study to further elucidate the relationship between the government of Rome and the territories of the Empire have not been sufficiently recognized by Roman scholars. Roman baths and bathing present a rare opportunity to gain insight into a myriad of issues, such as Roman social life and hierarchy, architecture and technology, trade and economy, and questions of the body and hygiene. Bathing is also a unique focus of study because the custom involved everyone in the community, including citizens and non-citizens, men and women, and people of various economic classes, religions, and nationalities. The idiosyncratic nature of the cultural phenomenon causes Roman bathing and bathhouses to be a particularly valuable topic of study.

Until around thirty years ago, Roman baths and bathing were underrepresented in Roman studies.¹⁹² Other than brief remarks in regards to other topics, a great deal of Romanization research has also neglected the baths as a central point for analysis. Romanization studies, Roman provincial studies, and Roman bathing studies have left the political implications of the adoption of Roman bathing customs in the provinces largely unexplored.¹⁹³ It appears as though the two widely recognized traditions within Roman provincial acculturation studies view the baths in opposite terms. Colonial Romanization literature does not often include a detailed discussion on Roman bathing. In 1988, Janet DeLaine considered why the baths had been omitted in Roman

¹⁹²Janet DeLaine, "Introduction: Bathing and society" (paper presented at the first international conference on Roman baths, Bath, England, March 30-April 4, 1992), 7.

¹⁹³Scholars that discuss political implications: DeLaine 1992; Nielsen 1992, 1993.

studies, in an article titled “Recent research on Roman baths.”¹⁹⁴ She proposed that the neglect might have been due to the fact that the baths do not qualify as elite culture in the same way as philosophy, religion, or government.¹⁹⁵ The bathing custom included the lower classes and slaves and was therefore not considered worth studying.¹⁹⁶ However, the Romans themselves believed that the baths were a civilizing feature of their society.¹⁹⁷ Yet, scholars in the past failed to recognize the strong sense of Roman cultural identity tied to bathing and how the habit was one of the customs that Romans felt differentiated themselves from non-Romans. She also suggests that discussions regarding the baths might have caused topics to arise that Victorian scholars were not comfortable discussing, such as coed public nudity or lavatory practices.¹⁹⁸

Scholars heretofore fail to recognize the potential of a closer examination of bathing customs and architecture, and their role in aiding social cohesion in the provinces. Francis Haverfield pointed to the adoption of Roman architecture as confirmation that in the western provinces, the “external fabric” was Roman.¹⁹⁹ Haverfield made no other mention of the baths or bathing as a source of research material. The failure to utilize Roman bathing habits, as a case study, continued beyond the breakdown of the Romanization paradigm. When the theory began to be challenged, post-colonialism was widely viewed as a viable candidate for a replacement. Because post-colonialists focus on non-elite culture, scholars using the approach should have noticed the omission of bath studies by the colonial tradition. Despite DeLaine’s commentary on the dearth of bath studies, the majority of post-colonial scholars in Romanization continued to

¹⁹⁴ Janet DeLaine, “Recent research on Roman baths” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 1 (1988): 11-32.

¹⁹⁵ DeLaine, “Recent research on Roman baths,” 11.

¹⁹⁶ DeLaine, “Recent research on Roman baths,” 11.

¹⁹⁷ DeLaine, “Recent research on Roman baths,” 11; DeLaine, introduction, 13.

¹⁹⁸ DeLaine, “Recent research on Roman baths,” 11.

¹⁹⁹ Haverfield, *The romanisation of Roman Britain*, 17.

avoid in-depth analysis of bathing culture. This is somewhat puzzling because Roman bathing, in particular, characterizes the issues that the post-colonialists are inclined to study. Bathing studies incorporates numerous issues related to non-elite and native culture, including cultural identity, changing landscapes, development of towns, and interactions of various economic and social classes of people. Though the baths appear to be a germane topic to the goals of post-colonial study of the Roman provinces, they continue to be widely overlooked. Part of the problem may be that within the post-colonial tradition there is a strong tendency towards broad discussions that cover multifaceted issues, rather than a comprehensive analysis of one aspect of acculturation.

A pattern that is manifest in the analysis of numerous post-Romanization Roman provincial scholars is bathing in reference to local elites in the provinces.²⁰⁰ These scholars who have challenged, or outright rejected the paradigm of Romanization, appear to view bathing as upper class culture and because their focus is on native and non-elite culture, the baths are treated minimally. Martin Millet discusses the adoption of Roman cultural material by the elites and in what way this behavior likely forced social change among the lower classes in the province.²⁰¹ As the elites in the provincial communities began to look and act more like Romans, the lower classes emulated their behavior.²⁰² In his book, *An Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire 54 BC – 409 AD*.²⁰³ David Mattingly dedicates a section to the “fashioning of elite behavior”, within his chapter on rural culture and identity.²⁰⁴ He examines rural elites in Britain who endeavored to present a Roman identity that “rested on a set of cultural norms in other parts of the empire.” And

²⁰⁰ Hingley 2005; Millett 1991; Mattingly 2006.

²⁰¹ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

²⁰² Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

²⁰³ David Mattingly, *An imperial possession: Britain in the Roman Empire, 54 BC-AD 409* (Penguin, 2008).

²⁰⁴ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 457, 453.

identified adopting Roman style bathing as a manner of displaying Roman identity²⁰⁵ Richard Hingley discusses “material elements of elite culture” in his treatise on the theory of Romanization, titled, *Globalizing Roman Culture: unity, diversity, and empire*.²⁰⁶ Hingley states “architecture, space and social life helped both to create and symbolize the internal organization of the local community and its relationship to the broader system of the empire.”²⁰⁷ In this context, bathing, which was seen as a civilizing habit, was a way of “projecting social relations.”²⁰⁸

Over the last three decades, selected Roman scholars have acknowledged bathing as a locus of social significance. Several scholars, such as Inge Nielsen, Janet DeLaine, Garrett Fagan, and Fikret Yegul, have generated bodies of work surrounding Roman bathing and bath architecture.²⁰⁹ These researchers have offered comprehensive explications of Roman bathing, examining various topics, such as architectural development and social implications. In several books and articles, including *Bathing and Baths in Classical Antiquity* and *Bathing in the Roman world*, Fikret Yegul provides detailed explications of the history and development of Roman bath architecture and bathing customs from an archaeological perspective, focusing on locations, architecture, and amenities primarily in terms of native Roman culture.²¹⁰ Yegul’s discussion on provincial bathing does not examine social or political aspects of baths in the provinces, or in what way adoption of the bathing custom may have aided Roman hegemony.²¹¹

²⁰⁵ Mattingly, *An imperial possession*, 471.

²⁰⁶ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture: unity, diversity and empire*. (New York: Routledge, 2005), 2.

²⁰⁷ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 81.

²⁰⁸ Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture*, 81.

²⁰⁹ Yegul 1995, 2010; Nielsen 1992; 1993; DeLaine 1988, 1992; Fagan 1999.

²¹⁰ Yegul 1995, 2010.

²¹¹ Fikret K. Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 133 – 178.

In his book, *Bathing in Public in the Roman World*, Garrett Fagan examines the motivations of the bath benefactors only and does not explain how participation in the bath custom aided Roman hegemony in the provinces. Rather than an architectural or technical focus, he concentrates exclusively on the historical, social, and cultural aspects of the pervasive custom.²¹² Fagan surveys benefactors of the baths in Italy and the provinces and uses epigraphic material in order to assess which members of society were providing funds to build, improve, or maintain bath facilities.²¹³ He concludes that the behavior of the provincial elites who built the baths is best understood through the widespread custom of euergetism.²¹⁴

Inge Nielsen investigates Roman baths and bathing, from a chiefly archaeological perspective, in her article “Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths” and her book *Thermae et balnea*.²¹⁵ Nielsen discusses the baths in terms of Romanization, specifically and states that urbanization was a key instrument of that process.²¹⁶ Because urban areas were better suited to the needs of Roman government, and baths were a ubiquitous feature of Roman cities, the existence of the baths must indicate the process of Romanization.²¹⁷ Nielsen surveys provincial baths in Spain, France, Greece, Asia Minor, and Israel.²¹⁸ In her estimation, the existence of baths is “one of the main manifestations” of the process of Romanization.²¹⁹ She states that in the West, baths were used intentionally in the process of acculturation, which was vital to the maintenance of

²¹² Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 5.

²¹³ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 128.

²¹⁴ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 170.

²¹⁵ Inge Nielsen, “Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths” (paper presented at the first international conference on Roman baths, Bath, England, March 30-April 4, 1992); Inge Nielsen, *Thermae et balnea: the architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths*. Vol. 1. (Aarhus University Press, 1993).

²¹⁶ Nielsen, *Thermae et balnea*, 60.

²¹⁷ Nielsen, *Thermae et balnea*, 60.

²¹⁸ Nielsen, “Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths,” 35.

²¹⁹ Nielsen, “Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths,” 35.

peace in the provinces.²²⁰ Nielsen is one of the few scholars of Roman baths and bathing that specifically states that the baths were an instrument of Roman hegemony.²²¹ She addresses both the culture of Roman bathing and the connection to Roman power in the provinces. Unlike many other scholars, Nielsen recognizes how the baths, which were found throughout the Roman Empire, imparted the ideology of the Roman elites to the indigenous populations in the provinces.

Janet DeLaine is another Roman scholar who considers the baths in the context of Romanization. In the introduction to the collection conference papers given at an academic symposium on Roman baths and bathing, DeLaine devotes a paragraph to the issues within the paradigm of Romanization.²²² In a section of the introduction titled “Baths and cultural accommodation”, she states that adoption of Roman bathing customs may be viewed as “one of the many indicators of the process of becoming Roman.”²²³ DeLaine cautions against understanding Romanization in a narrow sense. Instead, she favors the definition argued by Greg Woolf.²²⁴ He describes the process as “an imperial civilization, within which both the differences and similarities create a coherent pattern”, rather than “a single standard Roman culture.”²²⁵ This perspective moves away from the traditional colonial paradigm, and towards a more flexible view of acculturation in the Roman territories.

The field of Romanization has neglected to examine the Roman bathing in great detail. While some scholars have dedicated a large amount of research to understanding transmission of culture and customs between Romans and natives in the provinces, they have devoted a very small

²²⁰ Nielsen, “Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths,” 35.

²²¹ Nielsen, *Thermae et balnea*, 60.

²²² DeLaine, “Introduction,” 10.

²²³ DeLaine, “Introduction,” 10.

²²⁴ DeLaine, “Introduction,” 10.

²²⁵ Greg Woolf, “Becoming Roman: the origins of provincial civilization in Gaul” (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7.

portion of that research to understanding the custom of bathing and the role the baths played in supporting social cohesion in the provinces. Bath scholars often dedicate the largest portion of their research towards understanding the baths in the context of Roman culture, rather than acculturation of Roman provincials. They frequently focus on the development of the custom and the social significance of bathing to the Romans. A few bath scholars reference Romanization or cultural identity in relation to bathing in the provinces, but the discussion is often limited in scope. Throughout literature dedicated to Roman bathing, the examination of baths and bathing in the provinces is inconsistent. When considering the issue, the focus varies from archaeology, to architecture, to social implications, depending on the scholar.

Cultural Hegemony and Roman Bathing

The concerns discussed above, regarding the study of provincial adoption of Roman bathing customs, might be resolved through utilization of Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony. The theory can reconcile a major division within Romanization theory between traditional scholars and post-colonial scholars by addressing the concerns of each approach, as discussed in chapter two. Furthermore, utilization of baths, as a case study, can demonstrate the significance of bathing, an element of Roman culture that is often overlooked in Romanization studies, in the process of acculturation. The Roman bathing tradition reified Roman ideology by illustrating Gramsci's idea of spontaneous philosophy. As the bathing tradition became embedded within the culture of the Romans, the ideology of the baths as a civilizing and distinguishing feature of Roman culture, Roman civilization as the culmination of ancient culture, and Roman rule as the providence of the world, was cemented into the identity of the Romans. Furthermore, the conventional wisdom of the Roman ruling class, as the historical bloc, was disseminated through the architecture and customs

that characterized bathing. The habit spread throughout the territories of Rome and the elite class encouraged the natives to partake. Participation in Roman bathing produced spontaneous consent from the great masses and generated a contradictory consciousness within the subordinate provincials. Exposure to and absorption of Roman common sense displayed at the baths, directly conflicted with the native consciousness, and, consequently caused a state of political passivity, highlighted within Gramscian cultural hegemony.

The subsequent sections examine the custom of Roman bathing as an essential element of Roman culture and identity and the ways in which bath buildings and the habit of bathing imparted the ideology of the Roman elites.

The tradition of public bathing was unique in the ancient world and tremendously significant within Roman culture.²²⁶ Emperors and elites donated vast sums of money in order to construct, repair, and maintain bath facilities throughout the territories of the Empire.²²⁷ The baths were one of the highest achievements in monumental architecture and employed the some most innovative Roman technologies, such as concrete and hypocaust heating. The public bathing custom was deeply ingrained in the cultural identity of Romans.²²⁸ The average Roman lived a highly communal lifestyle and carried out the majority of their daily activities in public.²²⁹ Moreover, most Romans lacked basic amenities in their homes, such as running water. Community bathing provided a space where the average Roman could escape the crowded, dirty conditions outside and spend a few hours a day in a clean, well-appointed environment.²³⁰ Leisure time was

²²⁶ DeLaine, “introduction,” 7.

²²⁷ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 105-123, 137-142.

²²⁸ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 2.

²²⁹ Dupont, *Daily life in ancient Rome*. (Blackwell, 1994): 11-12.

²³⁰ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 6.

paramount to many Romans, and the baths were an ideal place to spend the unhurried hours of the afternoon.²³¹

Bathing was an agreeable pastime, which encouraged well-being, relaxation, and amiability.²³² During the Roman Empire, bathing was known for its soothing and hygienic effects.²³³ Visiting a Roman bath would likely have been a pleasurable, sensory experience, involving warm bathing and other pleasant bodily experiences, luxurious surroundings, artwork and music to enjoy, food to eat, and the company of friends with which to unwind.²³⁴ The baths offered various other non-bathing related amenities, including libraries, sun rooms, gymnasia, games, food and drink, and performances of all kinds, both professional and amateur.²³⁵ It was noted by Suetonius that Emperor Vespasian was particularly amenable after he bathed.²³⁶ Aside from the pleasurable effects of the baths, public bathing promoted a sense of community and belonging, by means of a shared experience.²³⁷

Imperial bath facilities represent one of the greatest accomplishments in the record of Roman monumental architecture.²³⁸ They were enormous and august urban wonders that utilized the foremost building, heating, and water-related technologies that the ancient world had to offer.²³⁹ The baths of Caracalla reflect the fully realized style of the imperial baths and was acknowledged as one of the “seven wonders” of the city of Rome.²⁴⁰ The facilities covered almost

²³¹ Paul Veyne, *A history of private life* (Harvard): 118.

²³² Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 6.

²³³ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 6.

²³⁴ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 6.

²³⁵ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 18.

²³⁶ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 6.

²³⁷ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 6.

²³⁸ Zajac, “The *thermae*,” 100.

²³⁹ Zajac, “The *thermae*,” 101.

²⁴⁰ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 110.

300 acres and included numerous amenities. The bath building was surrounded by an enclosure that included shops and business, colonnades and promenades, a library and study rooms, and outdoor space for exercise. The bath block was constructed in a bilaterally symmetrical plan with a middle row a large rooms that contained the main bathing amenities: the *frigidarium*, the cold room containing indoor swimming pools, the multi-leveled *nymphaeum*, a water feature consecrated to the water nymphs, and the *caldarium*, a warm room heated by a hypocaust. The caldarium was enclosed by a massive domed ceiling that almost as large as the dome on the Parthenon, and featured enormous windows that would have flooded the space with natural light. The larger bathing rooms were flanked by smaller steam rooms, dressing rooms, lounges, lecture halls, and *palastrae*. The bath complex was constructed to feature highly ornamental architectural features such as marble walls and floors, coffered, vaulted ceilings, and multi-story Corinthian columns. The baths were supplied with water from the Aqua Antoniniana and brought water to a massive reservoir that is estimated to hold 40,000 cubic meters of water, which was almost 1/24 of Rome's daily consumption.²⁴¹

While the array of amenities was undoubtedly viewed as enjoyable to the average citizen, the emperors may have understood that construction of bath facilities was valuable as a representation of the authority of the state.²⁴² Natascha Zajac states, "Within the language of architecture, buildings built on a monumental scale act as headlines, giving striking and succinct indications of social discourse within a society."²⁴³ It is, therefore, possible to read the imperial baths as symbolically, in order to decipher some of the messages that may have been

²⁴¹ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 116.

²⁴² Zajac, "The *thermae*," 100.

²⁴³ Zajac, "The *thermae*," 100.

communicated by the emperors, through the physical structures.²⁴⁴ The baths buildings themselves became a purveyor of ideology of the Roman elites.

The technology utilized in bathing structures was a crucial method of imparting the power of the empire.²⁴⁵ Water was a particularly unstable natural resource and the ability to harness the element was a remarkable expertise.²⁴⁶ Having the capability to provide fresh running water at all times required expensive and laborious technologies, such as aqueducts and water pipes. To a person in the ancient Mediterranean or Europe, suddenly having easier access to fresh water would be not only welcome but may also seem astonishing. An inscription found in Sardis, declared of the imperial bath “Wonder seizes me” and went on to describe the marvelous features of the “ever-living ornament”.²⁴⁷ Because of monumental architecture and dominance over nature, the physical environment of the baths had the ability to impart the ideology of the empire.²⁴⁸ The remarkable facilities reflected the preeminence of the Roman Empire and the greatness of its emperors.

The ideology of common Romans was imparted through the baths because the custom was closely linked with Roman cultural identity.²⁴⁹ The Romans believed that bathing was an aspect of their culture that was civilizing and urbane, and the tradition differentiated themselves from non-Romans.²⁵⁰ According to Florence DuPont, “the body that the citizen put on display should be clothed, scrubbed, and under control.”²⁵¹ In addition, the Romans connected hygiene and health, and ancient medical writers, such as Galen frequently recommended bathing for medicinal

²⁴⁴ Zajac, “The *thermae*,” 100.

²⁴⁵ Zajac, “The *thermae*,” 101.

²⁴⁶ Zajac, “The *thermae*,” 101.

²⁴⁷ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 126.

²⁴⁸ Zajac, “The *thermae*,” 105.

²⁴⁹ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 2.

²⁵⁰ Dupont, Florence. *Daily life in ancient Rome*. (Blackwell, 1994): 264; DeLaine, “introduction,” 13.

²⁵¹ Dupont, *Daily life in ancient Rome*, 240.

reasons.²⁵² Bathing became a democratized feature of Roman culture, and all classes of people were entitled to indulge.²⁵³ Because everyone was allowed at the baths, the custom established a common activity among various social classes. As a result, communal bathing encouraged community solidarity and belonging by way of a shared cultural experience.

Various ancient Roman writers demonstrate the significance of bathing and ubiquity of the custom. In a letter to a friend, Seneca described activity a bathhouse above which he lived. He complained about the distracting nature of the sounds emanating from the facility, including grunting weightlifters, vendors hawking sausages and cakes, the sounds of masseurs smacking their customers, and the cries of customers being depilated. While Seneca's intent was to disapprove of the noisy activities, his description provides detailed insight into activities at the baths. Furthermore, he demonstrates the popularity of baths by portraying a dynamic, congested location, full of raucous people going about their day-to-day routine.²⁵⁴ Additionally, Martial's *Epigrams* contain numerous references to the baths and bathing in the city of Rome.²⁵⁵ While he does not provide a comprehensive account of bathing practices, the epigrams that refer to the bath or bathing provide valuable insight into the commonplace nature of the practice in the Roman world. In book four, Martial implied that a trip to the baths was part of a typical Roman's daily activities when he remarked that in the eighth hour of the day an average Roman, "suffices for the games of the oily palaestra."²⁵⁶ Additionally, Martial dedicated an epigram to complaining about Ligurinus, a would-be poet, who followed Martial around, annoying him by reciting poetry.

Martial describes all the places that Ligurinus pursued him, declaring,

²⁵² Fagan *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 86.

²⁵³ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 189; Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 34.

²⁵⁴ Seneca, *Epistle*, 56.1-2.

²⁵⁵ Martial, *Epigrams*, 1.59; 2.14.11-13; 2.42; 2.52; 3.51; 4.8; 6.93; 7.82; 9.75; 11.75; 12.82.

²⁵⁶ Martial, *Epigrams*, 4.8.

“You read to me as I stand
you read to me as I sit,
you read to me as I run,
you read to me as I shit.
I flee to the baths, you boom in my ear.
I head for the pool: I’m not allowed to swim.
I hurry to dinner, you stop me in my tracks.
I arrive at dinner, you drive me away as I eat.”²⁵⁷

Martial’s inclusion of bathing among the other activities seems to imply that he was being followed while he conducted his daily business.

The importance of cleanliness, to the Romans, is further demonstrated in the poetry of Catullus. In poem number ninety-seven, he comments on a man named Aemilius,

“I didn’t, god help me, think it mattered whether
I put my nose to Aemilius’ mouth or ass,
Neither being cleaner or dirtier than the other”²⁵⁸

In the next poem, he described a man named Vettius as “rot-mouthed” and in poem number twenty-three he satirically praised another man named Furius for his cleanliness, implying he was unhygienic.²⁵⁹ Catullus’ derisive references to various individual’s lack of hygiene denote a preference for cleanliness among the Romans.

²⁵⁷ Martial, Epigrams, 3.44.10-15.

²⁵⁸ Catullus 97; Catullus, Gaius Valerius, and Peter Green. The Poems of Catullus. [electronic resource] : (University of California Press, 2005): 199.

²⁵⁹ Catullus 199; Catullus, Gaius Valerius, and Peter Green. The Poems of Catullus. [electronic resource] : (University of California Press, 2005): 69.

Public bathing was a space in which the social hierarchy was reinforced.²⁶⁰ One of the characteristics of Roman life was the adherence to hierarchies within the community, expressed through avenues such as government structures, socio-economics, and gender.²⁶¹ Self-presentation was a way for Romans to express the hierarchies that dominated their lives.²⁶² They could their conduct, their bodies, and their homes as an advertisement for the *dignitas* and *gravitas* of themselves, their families, and their ancestors. At all times, a sensible Roman considered how they were perceived by others. Romans lived the majority of their lives in public and seldom experienced even a small amount of privacy.²⁶³ Consequently, their very lives were a perfect canvas on which they could present themselves. Regardless of what activity they were engaged in, Romans used self-presentation to reinforce their place in the social hierarchy.

This significant aspect of Roman life and Roman identity was also observable at the baths.²⁶⁴ Bathing was an occasion that various classes of Romans had the opportunity to engage in social interactions.²⁶⁵ Consequently, it was an ideal space in which Romans could exhibit their place in the social hierarchy. Wealthy Romans came to the baths with several indications of their affluence. An entourage of slaves, a retinue of clients, and expensive bathing implements and personal items were all indicators of wealth and prominence and were displayed within the baths.²⁶⁶ Romans with disposable income could pay for massages, depilation, food, drinks, and gambling, further displaying their status.²⁶⁷ Behavior, topic of conversation, and vocabulary were

²⁶⁰ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 215.

²⁶¹ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 212.

²⁶² Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 213.

²⁶³ Dupont, *Daily life in ancient Rome*, 11.

²⁶⁴ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 213-219.

²⁶⁵ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 206.

²⁶⁶ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 216.

²⁶⁷ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 216.

additional evidence of social stratification. The plebeians could easily recognize their wealthier counterparts; therefore the baths became an environment in which the social order was reproduced.²⁶⁸

Within the provinces, participation in Roman bathing customs exposed non-Romans to the social culture, as discussed above, that took place within the baths. Bath facilities can be found throughout the territories of the empire and within the provinces, the custom was widely adopted. Extant inscriptions demonstrate that some baths in provinces were constructed at the behest of the community, which illustrates the popularity of the practice.²⁶⁹ Bathing was a characteristically Roman custom therefore the existence of Roman bathing facilities may be viewed as an indicator of the presence of Roman influence.²⁷⁰ Because the ideology of Roman emperors and common Roman citizens was palpable within the baths and surrounding bathing activities, indigenous provincials likely would have been inculcated by taking part in the practice. At the baths, the indigenous provincials were introduced to important aspects of Roman social culture and institutions. The seemingly preternatural power and abilities of the Emperors, munificence of the elite class, and the expressions of social hierarchy, were elements of the conventional wisdom of the Roman dominant class.

Glocalization of bath facilities in the provinces was an indication of consent given by the indigenous populations of Roman territories.²⁷¹ As bath culture was disseminated through the

²⁶⁸ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 218.

²⁶⁹ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 165.

²⁷⁰ Nielsen, "Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths" 35; Nielsen, *thermae et balnea*, 60.

²⁷¹ Blatter, Joachim. 2014. "Glocalization." Encyclopædia Britannica "The notion of glocalization represents a challenge to simplistic conceptions of globalization processes as linear expansions of territorial scales. Glocalization indicates that the growing importance of continental and global levels is occurring together with the increasing salience of local and regional levels. Tendencies

provinces, the styles of bath buildings were adapted to the needs of the local populations. The bath benefactors likely tailored the customs to conform to the particular preferences of the community.²⁷² While public bathing was always inherently Roman, the provincials fine-tuned the architecture in order to suit their desires. Instead of viewing baths and bathing as a custom that was forcefully imposed by the elites in Rome. This may indicate that that bathing culture was desirable to the indigenous provincials, and the community may have had an active role in deciding what type of baths they wanted. For example, in the Greek east, Roman style baths, such as Bath II 7A at Anemurium in Cilicia and Bath 12A at Antiochea-ad-Cragum also in Cilicia, were constructed with central corridors that allowed bathers to select their preferred amenity.²⁷³ This parted from the typical Roman plan, which guided bathers from room to room, in a predetermined order.

The behavior of the local provincial elites, discussed below, provides an opportunity to examine the complex concessions and power negotiations that took place between various groups in Rome and the territories. The local elites gained influence under the Empire by aiding dissemination of Roman ideology to the local communities. In the context of Roman bathing, the local elites frequently provided funding for the facilities and were often the first to adopt the custom. In return, they gained authority in their communities by means of a tangible connection to the Roman elites.

toward homogeneity and centralization appear alongside tendencies toward heterogeneity and decentralization. But the notion of glocalization entails an even more radical change in perspective: it points to the interconnectedness of the global and local levels. Most users of the term assume a two-level system (global and local), citing phenomena such as hybridization as the result of growing interconnectedness. Local spaces are shaped and local identities are created by globalized contacts as well as by local circumstances.”

²⁷² Nielsen, “Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths,” 43.

²⁷³ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 7.

The indigenous upper classes within the annexed territories of the Empire frequently provided the funding for community bath facilities.²⁷⁴ An inscription found on a bath building in Spain states that a man and his son, who held various magistracies, “gave it to the town at his own expense.”²⁷⁵ Patrons donated the funds for projects such as bathing because of the practice of euergetism. The tradition of *noblesse oblige* was a foundation of Roman civic life and the custom offset the lack of funding for public buildings and utilities from the government.²⁷⁶ The custom was epitomized by the patron-client relationship, which characterized business practices among the Romans. Therefore, the one of the motivations behind bath benefactions was to comply with the obligations of their social class and the demands from the community.²⁷⁷

Additionally, monumental building had representational value as an expression of the Roman state.²⁷⁸ Beginning in the second century, communities across the territories of Rome were furnishing their cities and towns with public buildings in the Roman style.²⁷⁹ It was prudent for an ambitious community to incorporate Roman style public facilities, and bathhouses were an amenity that they could point to, to show the value of the community.²⁸⁰ Building baths facilities allowed local communities to curry favor with the Roman elites and associate themselves to the authority of the Empire.²⁸¹ Ancient evidence can be found which illustrates how bath buildings were viewed as valuable and a source of pride for the city.²⁸² Inscriptions found in various Roman archaeological

²⁷⁴ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 165.

²⁷⁵ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

²⁷⁶ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 170.

²⁷⁷ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 165.

²⁷⁸ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 165.

²⁷⁹ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

²⁸⁰ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

²⁸¹ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

²⁸² Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

sites in the provinces attest to the glory associated with bath facilities.²⁸³ A bathhouse in Numidia was pronounced as “the most splendid ornament of the colony”.²⁸⁴ Another in Antium was restored and subsequently referred to as a “better emblem of the city”.²⁸⁵

The bath benefactors understood the prestige that could be obtained by transforming their community into a Roman style town. Looking and behaving like a Roman allowed the local elites to connect themselves to the Roman elite class. Local elites in the Roman territories frequently took full advantage of the connection to the empire that could be forged through constructing public bath facilities in their communities.²⁸⁶ They often provided the funding for bathhouses and other Roman style public buildings, in an attempt gain honor from the central government.²⁸⁷ Additionally, the local elites provided funding for these facilities in order to bolster the reputation of their family.²⁸⁸ If a provincial citizen wanted to run for political office, they could strengthen their chances of winning if they could point to benefactions in the community.²⁸⁹ Bath inscriptions often include encomium directed towards individual citizens, containing phrases such as “for his everlasting fame” and “to amplify his memory”.²⁹⁰ Provincial magistrates, who held offices such as *the duumvir*, *quinquennial*, and *patronus coloniae*, frequently bankrolled the bathhouses in their communities, and the benefactions undoubtedly strengthened their reputations among the people of

²⁸³ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

²⁸⁴ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

²⁸⁵ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

²⁸⁶ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

²⁸⁷ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 166.

²⁸⁸ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

²⁸⁹ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

²⁹⁰ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

their town. It is realistic to assume that these donations helped secure the political careers of their sons and grandsons, in addition to their own.²⁹¹

The desire for the local elites to participate in the political and social culture of the Roman Empire illustrates the concessions made by both the dominant and subordinate groups related to the provinces of Rome. The Empire allowed the local provincials the opportunity to be governed by their own local elites. They could stand for office, and use their benefactions as part of the platform for their political career.²⁹² In response, the elites in the provinces offer loyalty to the elites in Rome. Political office then became a compromise given by the Roman elites to the local elites, in return for maintaining their subordinate status.

The behavior of the local elite class facilitated the spread of Roman ideology to the general populations of the provinces. The upper classes provided the amenities that Romanized the indigenous under classes because of the Roman social contract.²⁹³ Without the ideology of euergetism, the bath facilities would not have been made available to the provincial communities. Additionally, the elites in the territories were some of the first provincials to adopt Roman habits and cultural material.²⁹⁴ Augustine of Hippo's father Patricius is an example of an indigenous upper class provincial, who conducted himself like a Roman. In his book, *Confessions*, Augustine recalled a trip to the baths with his father, an incident that illustrates the popularity of Roman bathing among the local elites.²⁹⁵ Presenting a Roman identity encouraged the under classes to emulate their behavior. Adoption of bathing by the under classes represents negotiation of power and consent to domination. Because Roman bathing was embedded with ideology, incorporating

²⁹¹ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

²⁹² Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

²⁹³ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 168.

²⁹⁴ Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69.

²⁹⁵ Augustine, *Confessions*, book ii.

various Roman values and norms, participation in the custom was a manifestation of the acceptance of Roman social institutions by the subordinated populations. Therefore, the indigenous provincials gave consent to domination by the Empire.

The spontaneous consent generated by provincial participation in bath culture resulted in contradictory consciousness, as outlined by Gramsci. The implicit consciousness of the subordinated classes in the provinces recognized the repressive nature of Roman domination and bound the people of the provincial cultures together. However, the imposition of Roman ideology and social institutions through cultural material, specifically bathing, became an expression of the explicit consciousness, which was tied to the dominance of the Roman elite class. The condition of double consciousness, created by the two conflicting worldviews, created ambiguous feelings, and, therefore, political passivity, in the local provincials and prevented them from escaping their domination. As demonstrated through the behavior of the both the local elites and the great masses, various classes within the indigenous provincials were susceptible to the effects of the double consciousness.

Within the study of Roman bathing in the provinces, scholars may have questions regarding what groups of people actually used the bathing facilities. Without direct evidence, it can be difficult to know exactly who utilized Roman facilities or adopted Roman cultural material. Marko Jankovic has discussed this issue in his article “The social role of Roman baths in the province of Moesia Superior” which examines Roman baths and bathing culture in present day Croatia.²⁹⁶ He states that the timing of Roman baths construction indicates that they were built for use by Romans, working for the military or government administration, who had been transplanted

²⁹⁶ Marko Jankovic, “The social role of Roman baths in the province of Moseia Superior,” *BAR International Series 2414* (Archaeopress, Publishers of British Archaeological Reports, Gordon House: Oxford, 2012), 27-39.

to the province.²⁹⁷ Consequently, the presence of baths does not automatically indicate that the indigenous populations used the facilities. Jankovic suggests that the local populations likely would have been employed to provide support for Roman institutions and were subsequently exposed to Roman customs.²⁹⁸ Beyond his assessment, it is apparent from inscriptions, which identify bath benefactions, that at least some of the local communities requested bathing facilities from the local elites.²⁹⁹ Furthermore, because Roman bathing was an exceptionally enjoyable pastime, associated with community and leisure and was also primarily free, the baths would have undoubtedly been an attractive custom. Unlike other Roman cultural material that was disseminated to the provinces, such as Latin language, philosophy, or styles of housing, bathing does not require money or education to participate. They were constructed in the urban centers of provincial communities and were therefore easily accessible to the local inhabitants. It is also unlikely that the hundreds of baths which have been found throughout the Roman territories would have been constructed for Roman transplants alone. The city of Rome had a small population compared to the populations in the provinces, and it seems unlikely that Romans could have filled hundreds of bath facilities alone.

Utilizing the theory of cultural hegemony can allow scholars to examine the social and political significance of the implementation and adoption of Roman style bathing in the provinces. The majority of researchers who have studied bathing culture have viewed the cultural phenomenon from the perspective of native culture of the Romans. Alternatively, a Gramscian analysis of Roman bathing shifts the emphasis away from the Romans and the city of Rome, and places focus on the habit of bathing in the Roman territories. Additionally, the preponderance of

²⁹⁷ Jankovic, "The social role of Roman baths in the province of Moseia Superior," 36.

²⁹⁸ Jankovic, "The social role of Roman baths in the province of Moseia Superior," 36 – 37.

²⁹⁹ Fagan, *Bathing in public in the Roman world*, 165.

bath research neglects the political implications of bathing in the provinces and in what manner bathing may have helped the Roman Empire sustain hegemony. Post-colonial Romanization scholarship has touched on the possible issues of power exchange and acculturation, often discussing the baths in terms of local elites and cultural identity. However, Gramscian theory explores issues of power negotiation, between various groups, in depth, rather than in passing.

Conclusion

Over the last thirty years, the Romanization paradigm has transformed from a widely accepted and relatively uniform approach to a fractured theory comprised of various competing methodologies. The colonial approach to Romanization examines in what ways the cultural identity of the non-Romans in the provinces became more Roman through the adoption of Roman cultural material, such as philosophy and law. The paradigm is often condemned for failing to take in to account topics of study that focus on the lives of the indigenous locals, such as rural culture and local religions. The post-colonial method sought to resolve the missteps of the older paradigm, and overturned the methodology of the colonial approach by shifting their attention onto the lower class provincial natives. Subsequently, scholars have questioned both methodologies and criticized each for failing to move beyond the static dichotomy of Roman versus native, for framing the Empire as a 19th century imperial nation, and for making excessive value judgments regarding the nature of Roman colonization.

Utilizing the framework of cultural hegemony can reconcile the major divide within the field of Romanization. The theory can complicate the impractical dichotomy of Roman versus native and identify which group in Roman society benefited from acculturation in the provinces and which groups were subordinated to the dominant group. Similarly, cultural hegemony can bridge the divide between the colonial and post-colonial models within Romanization by addressing the concerns of each approach. The process of cultural hegemony involves both elite and non-elite groups within a society. Therefore, the circumstances of cultural exchange can be viewed from the perspective of various classes in Roman society. Gramsci's theory can broaden an

examination of cultural exchange between Romans and provincials by also addressing the political implications the adoption of cultural material by non-Romans.

The tradition of Roman bathing is a particularly appropriate case study because of the nature of the custom. Roman style public bathing was unique in the ancient world and was a significant element of Roman cultural identity. The ideology of the Roman elite was expressed within the baths and therefore imparted to provincials that took part in the custom. Bath buildings had the potential to impart Imperial ideology to bathers by means of the symbolic nature of monumental architecture. Nicknamed “the people’s palaces,” the architecture and technologies of the imperial baths were impressive and luxurious.³⁰⁰ The munificence of the emperors was embodied in the facilities, which were frequently free to the public. The social structure of the Romans was reinforced in the provinces by means of creating a shared activity among various social classes and recreating the social hierarchy of Roman society, in general.

The tradition of bathing demonstrates the various levels of concessions and consent that can be analyzed among the classes of the Roman Empire. The provincial elites frequently adopted the customs of the Romans first in the local communities and often provided the funding for construction of the elements of Roman urbanization, such as bath buildings. The euergetism of the provincial bath benefactors illustrates how the local elites were able to gain prestige within their communities and within the larger Roman world. However, adoption of a Roman cultural identity, by means of embracing Roman cultural material and social structures, was an element of consent to the hegemony of Rome, given by the local provincial elites. The cognitive dissonance expressed in the behavior of the provincial upper class demonstrates Gramsci’s notion of the double consciousness. When the non-elite groups in the provinces adopted the bathing habit, and

³⁰⁰ Yegul, *Bathing in the Roman world*, 8, 102.

consequently absorbed the ideology of Roman elites, embodied in the baths, they likewise expressed the condition of contradictory consciousnesses and gave consent to the hegemony of the Roman ruling class.

The elite group of Roman men who shared political, military, economic, and ideological power maintained a hegemony by means of convincing the entire Roman world that their rule was legitimate and beneficial. They did so by disseminating their ideology, by way of cultural material and customs, to the various other groups and classes within the Empire. All of these groups, in turn, gave consent to the domination of the Roman ruling class through adopting the worldview of the imperial elites.

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