Grants of citizenship have long been recognized as an important factor in the integration of the Roman empire. The state was continually seeking to replenish and increase its citizen body by offering membership as something of value. Citizenship provided status and entry into patronage networks as well as more tangible benefits. It gave the somewhat theoretical right to vote, at least for men, and to pursue a career in the legions. But more importantly, it allowed access to the full extent of the Roman legal system. From access to the courts and the capacity to own land in Italy, to marry other citizens in recognized marriage, to pass citizenship on to children, to make wills and inherit, all the way to the right of appeal to the emperor – citizenship meant full participation in the empire. Nominally, any Roman citizen could take part in law, commerce and politics on an equal footing to any other citizen. And though citizenship alone did not ensure access to power, which also depended on birth, wealth, opportunity and ability, it was advantageous enough to be desirable.

_Ciuis Romanus sum_ is the famous expression that ought to, and in theory would ensure favorable treatment throughout the empire. Yet it did not detract from other identities. An example is offered by the apostle Paul. Born in Tarsus, on the southern coast of Turkey, in a Jewish community, he addressed a crowd in Jerusalem in Aramaic after asking permission to do so in Greek. But when he was arrested, he claimed the status
of a Roman citizen and impressed upon the local commander that he was born as one, while the commander had paid a large amount of money for the privilege. In a bronze tablet found at Banasa (Morocco),\(^4\) citizenship is bestowed on a tribal leader and his family at his express request. The emperor, Marcus Aurelius in this case, stresses that although such requests are not normally granted, a reward for the leader’s prominence and loyalty may inspire others to emulate his example. Even so, the citizenship is awarded *saluo iure gentis*, without prejudice to tribal law.\(^5\) Whether or not such Roman citizens in the provinces felt themselves ‘Roman’ is an interesting question, but a moot point here. As members of their tribe, they may have been ruled by tribal law; but as Roman citizens, they were by necessity integrated into the machinery of empire.

A modern analogy may be useful. In 1992, the Treaty on the European Union was signed at Maastricht, creating a single European polity that embraces the national citizens of many Western European countries. Article G sub C states: “Citizenship of the Union is hereby established. Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union.”\(^6\) This phrasing led to such antagonism, including the rejection of the Maastricht Treaty by Denmark,\(^7\) that a further clause was added five years later: “Citizenship of the Union shall complement and not replace national citizenship.”\(^8\) All citizens of EU countries are also European citizens, which entitles them to work and travel freely, and to vote and stand for municipal or European office throughout the EU.\(^9\) They may feel themselves German, French or Dutch, and remain so at law, but they exercise a


\(^5\) Dual citizenship was well established by the reign of Claudius. A.N. Sherwin-White, ‘The Roman citizenship. A survey of its development into a world franchise’, *ANRW* I.2 (Berlin/New York 1972), 46–53; but also see D. Nörr, s.v. ‘Origo’, *RE Supp.* 10 (1965), 431–473. The Banasa grant was notably also made without prejudice to the tributes and vectigals due to the *aerarium* and the *fiscus*.


\(^7\) The Edinburgh Agreement of December 1992 (C 348, 31 December 1992) granted Denmark an exception, following its rejection of the Maastricht treaty by referendum, to the effect that European citizenship in no way replaced national citizenship (section A).
