

In orbe Romano qui sunt ex constitutione imperatoris Antonini civis Romani effecti sunt. Thus Ulpian (D. I 5, 17) summarizes in his typical manner what seems to us the most important constitution ever issued by a Roman emperor. As an ancient historian Buraselis (= B.)—who is already known from Das hellenistische Makedonien und die Agaïs (München 1982)—is interested in the political background and the social impact of the constitution by which Caracalla granted Roman citizenship to every inhabitant of the empire, most likely in A.D. 212. Unfortunately most ancient sources are in this respect even less eloquent than Ulpian—with the possible exception of Cassius Dio, who claims that Caracalla wanted to increase the income from the inheritance tax (LXXVII [LXXVIII], 9, 5), a suggestion rightly rejected by B. in his introduction (p. 11-24). This leaves us with the fragmentary text of the constitution itself, preserved on a papyrus first published in 1910 as P. Giss. 40 I and assiduously studied ever since. B. contributes little to the text—he does not even refer to J.M.-Modrzejewski’s edition in Les Lois des Romains (Camerino 1977), 478-490; see now also J.H. Oliver, Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri (Philadelphia 1989), 496-505. But B. furthers our understanding of the text by stressing first and foremost its theological character and making this the focus of his subsequent discussion on the background of the constitution. In short, Caracalla presents his

Mnemosyne, Vol. XLV, Fasc. 2 (1992)
grant of citizenship in P. Giss. 40 I as an act of political proselytizing by making all new citizens worship the gods of the Roman empire. In this way he is thanking the gods for their help in overcoming his foes (or, some might prefer to say, incriminating as many people as possible in the murder of Geta).

B.'s contribution consists of linking the universal grant of citizenship at this particular time with the theological and political background of the reign of the Severans. He recognizes the fact that some such grant was long overdue, but that does not in itself explain why Caracalla made the decision, nor why he presented the grant in the way he did. First, B. explores (p. 25-37) a passage in Galen, which he convincingly interprets as a major testimony of the political ideology of the Severans, and some Pythagorean tracts on kingship, which seem less directly relevant than B. thinks. These badly need to be studied afresh in more detail (L. Delatte's edition of the fragments dates from 1942). Galen praises the Severans for making Marcus Aurelius' famous drug, the so-called θηρωάχη, available to all (XIV 217 Kühn). This pro-drug campaign on the part of the Severans shows that their idea of kingship is, believe it or not, ἡ τοῦ καίνοῦ σωτηρία. This they achieve by bestowing blessings on all their subjects, much as the gods bestow their blessings on all men. Although this is also a theological motif, it seems less original than B. thinks. The connection with the far more original concept of political proselytizing propounded by Caracalla in P. Giss. 40 I is entirely B.'s.

Next, B. scores some good points in discussing (p. 38-51) the role model provided by Alexander the Great, the monarch κατ' εξοχήν of an empire very similar to Caracalla's in its wide variety of cultures. Apart from exploiting the fact that Caracalla liked to identify himself with Alexander, B. also stresses a passage in Q. Curtius Rufus (X 3, 13-14: eiusdem iuris esse debent, qui sub eodem rege victuri sunt) that seems to provide a very apt parallel to the universal grant of Roman citizenship by Caracalla and would gain in aptness if we would follow B. in redating the author to the time of Septimius Severus. I have not seen B.'s contribution on this point referred to on p. 50, n. 32.

B. also makes an interesting observation (p. 52-64) on a passage in Tertullian (Ad Scap. 4, 5-6) which, if correctly restored and interpreted, shows that Caracalla's τροφεύς was a Christian. The tenuous link between a measure of influence from Christian theology on the young Caracalla and the theological background of