
This collection of papers is the result of a conference held at the Centre Gustave Glotz in May 2004. Their common point of departure is the question of the justification for the distinction between early and late Hellenism, from the second half of the second century BC onwards. Louis Robert observed an obvious change of style in the decrees, which may, or may not, reflect also a change of the social and political relations within the hellenistic poleis. This might imply the concentration of their administration in the hands of an elite of ‘notables’, who simultaneously presented themselves as public benefactors (*euergetai*). That leads to the question what the nature of this ‘euergetism’ exactly was, and how it was related to common citizenship and office-holding. The next question is whether the emergence of Roman domination did stimulate or even cause this evolution, and thus whether it was simultaneous or not in the whole Greek world and whether Roman domination also brought constitutional changes in the individual poleis.

The articles in this collection give different answers. I will begin with a few general observations. First, the developments in various parts of the Greek world were apparently not simultaneous. Their pattern, however, suggests the growing influence of Roman domination. Concerning institutional continuity the shift from *boulê* to *synhedrion* as the central institution of decision making in Asia Minor only begins in the course of the first century BC (Hamon, p. 137-9), while the gradual change of what citizenship contained was apparently completed in mainland Greece in the preceding century (Hamon, p. 143-4). This evolution was “from a city that controlled its magistrates to a city controlled by its magistrates” (Müller, p. 119). The model of citizenship did not change, but was maintained against the current (Chankowski, p. 206). The gradual but certain changes in Priene (Fröhlich, p. 235, 256) conform to that view. But these occur in the course, and not at the beginning, of the late hellenistic period. An “image de munificence” is evident (p. 235), while a “munificence à la Veyne” cannot be seen in early Hellenism (p. 227). The group of notables, besides, may have been less small than we expect (p. 224). In the late hellenistic period new elements can be pointed out, like the prominent place given to benefactors in processions (Chiricat, p. 202-3) and public funerals (p. 205).

Another question is how the change of style in decrees and processions can be explained (Chankowski, p. 198). The behaviour and attitude of the *euergetai* themselves did have influence, but acts of euergetism stood apart from ordinary office-holding. There is no proof that the Greek cities were structurally short of financial means, which wealthy notables might provide and which might thus...
explain their privileged position (Fröhlich, p. 245, 252-3). Although they were increasingly expected to perform acts of euergetism, it were the benefactors themselves who took the initiative (p. 248). They, besides, created a distinction between the _boulê_ and the ordinary citizens at the banquets they offered (Hamon, p. 128-9).

The clearest expressions and manifestations of euergetism which appear in this collection are banquet-giving and undertaking embassies on one’s own costs. The benefactors thereby established special relations with the Romans, in particular during their embassies to Rome, as well as with notables in other _poleis_. In some areas the hard-handed intervention of the Romans left visible traces in the institutions of the _poleis_ (Boiotia; cf. Macedonia), but elsewhere the effects of Roman domination constitute a fluid and grey area.

The article by Fröhlich, who studies the differences between euergetism and the holding of normal offices in the honorary decrees of Priene, is thus at the thematic centre of this collection. Sève deals with the question how notables and office-holders can be distinguished in the Macedonian _poleis_. Although they are part of a particular situation because the cities and their original elites were heavily struck by two wars with and defeats by the Romans, and because their notables were initially, from 146 BC onwards, formed by immigrated Roman _negotiatores_, yet it can generally be observed that office-holders in the Greek _poleis_ did not necessarily come from the notables (and vice versa!). This also is demonstrated by Fröhlich. Yet the actual contents of citizenship gradually changed, Hamon argues. That is most evident from the disappearance of the traditional _boulê_, in which being a councillor was a normal task for every citizen. The traditional forms, however, are maintained as long as possible, in particular in the ways of self-representation of citizenries.

Actually, making proposals to the _dêmos_ was only gradually taken from the hands of individual citizens by collective institutions like ‘the _stratêgoi_’ or ‘the _prytaneis_’. Even proposals which were not supported by the council could be brought before the _dêmos_ by individual citizens and be accepted, as Gauthier shows from three examples (Teos: _I. Magnesia_ 97; Alabanda: _BCH_ 10 (1886), 299-306; Kotyrta: _IG V_ 1, 962). In Boiotia, where the Romans had imposed institutional changes, the formulae of the decision-making process show a gradual evolution. In his contribution on Boiotia, Müller departs from the problem of how to date the decrees exactly and shows convincingly that the use (entirely or partially) of the Boiotian dialect is not a proof of a date exclusively before 171 BC. Chankowski, in his article on “Processions et cérémonies d’accueil”, rejects a conclusion of Chaniotis by observing a clear and sudden change of style in this ‘theatre of politics’, which simultaneously also occurs in the literary style of the decrees, but which, he argues, does not reflect a change in socio-political reality. Essentially, the traditional representations of the citizenry were maintained.