

CHAPTER 34

IMPLICIT MODELS OF CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION: A QUESTION OF NOSES, SOAP, AND PREJUDICE

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In 1975, a study of the “Limits of Hellenization” by Arnaldo Momigliano began by noting that

The philosophic historian will never stop meditating on the nose of Cleopatra. If that nose had pleased the gods as it pleased Caesar and Antony, ... we would have more books on Tutankhamen and on Alexander the Great. But a Latin-speaking Etruscologist, not a Greek-speaking Egyptologist, brought to Britain the fruits of the victory of Roman imperialism over the Hellenistic System. We must face the facts.¹

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¹. Momigliano 1975, p. 1. Ironically, Momigliano’s pronouncements just preceded major museum tours of objects associated with both Tutankhamen and Alexander, generating a plethora of volumes on both rulers. From the Egyptological perspective, it is hard to imagine a need for yet “more books on Tutankhamen”; several new volumes and reeditions are appearing as this note is composed. Antagonism toward popular interest in Tutankhamen (at the expense of “proper” interest in classical Greece) also underlies the defensive inclusion of a sarcastic chapter on “The Treasures of Egypt” within Peter Green’s impassioned apologia for “classical (Greek and Latin) education,” *Classical Bearings* 1989, pp. 77–90. His presumption to critique the “value” of literary (p. 82) and religious (p. 90) writings, which he can neither read nor interpret, serves as a model of its kind. Egyptologists, who have only begun to penetrate the social, symbolic, and mythological complexity of these texts, will be struck to note that Green declares Budge’s obsolete translation of *The Book of the Dead* “exemplary,” and the same author’s unreferenced and inaccurate *Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary* “invaluable, but highly technical” (p. 86). Classicists’ discomfort with Egyptian culture stems in large measure from the fact that it was not simply the lower levels of Greek and Roman society who praised or espoused Egyptian thought, but the very “torch-bearers” of “classical” civilization: Plato (cf. *Laws* 656), Pythagorus, Plutarch, Apuleius, Iamblichus, Marinus, Proclus, etc. This is, to quote Oscar Wilde, “the rage of Caliban at seeing himself in the glass.” The fact that Egyptian philosophical speculation is expressed through complex symbolic *imagery*, rather than complex *vocabulary*, has frustrated expectations (held since the Renaissance) of discovering within Egyptian texts a simple confirmation of the universal validity of Greek philosophical categories and concepts. Egyptian discourse is not readily amenable to modern, “classically” trained rhetoricians, and the interest or devotion of a Pythagorus or Iamblichus is confusing, and not a little embarrassing. “This is the rage of Caliban at not seeing himself in the glass.” Modern discomfort notwithstanding, the third century author Heliodorus felt constrained to explain Homer’s knowledge of the gods by claiming that the father of Greek literature was really an Egyptian (*The Ethiopian Story*, III, §§ 14–15), and the same claim was made by the fourth century poet Olympiodorus of Thebes. Philosophical “significance” is a matter of taste and cultural predisposition.

Just precisely what facts are intended? The reference to Cleopatra's nose is an old cliché, appearing twice in the philosophical reflections of Blaise Pascal,² and even serving as the name of a new volume on “verbal shortcuts”: *Cleopatra's Nose, the Twinkie Defense, & 1500 Other Verbal Shortcuts in Popular Parlance*.³ Pascal uses the image only to reflect upon vanity and love, that is to say Caesar's chance attraction to Cleopatra, which had repercussions throughout the Roman world.⁴ Momigliano uses this “verbal shortcut” for very different purposes; the image of the defeated Cleopatra serves to introduce the reasons for his complete exclusion of Egypt from a study on Hellenization (Momigliano 1975, pp. 3–4).

Momigliano declares that there was “no dramatic change in the Greek evaluation of Egypt during the Hellenistic Period”; all concepts were taken from the fanciful Egypt of Homer and Herodotus.⁵ This is an extraordinary remark; Greeks now lived throughout Egypt, and whether they mingled extensively with the population or not, their experience will have been factual — not fanciful — and their concepts *will* have changed. When a Faiyomic gymnasium, the cultural guardian of Greek ethnicity, is dedicated to an Egyptian crocodile god, something has clearly changed.⁶ Momigliano's comments suggest the image of a Greek fourth generation resident in the countryside scanning his Herodotus as though a Baedeker's Guide, hoping to discover where he lives, and who are his neighbors — or, perhaps, who is his wife.

Another reason given for ignoring the question of Egyptian-Greek relations in this period is the supposed decline of Egyptian culture, “because it was under the direct control of the Greeks and came to represent an inferior stratum of the population” (Momigliano 1975, pp. 3–4). Such an assessment follows one of the most enduring patterns used to explain cultural history, which may be termed the “Biological Model,” or, if you will, culture as a plant: it sprouts, grows, flowers, and decays.

Whether expressed openly or merely implied, this notion underlies most discussions of Egyptian history to this day. The Old Kingdom equals the “sprout,” the Middle Kingdom represents “growth,” the New Kingdom is the “flower,” while the Late period constitutes “protracted decay,” and the Ptolemaic and Roman eras are certain “death.” Loss of political independence is interpreted as a loss of cultural independence and vitality. Any evidence of subsequent change is viewed in terms of degeneration or foreign influence.

The traditional, basic histories of Breasted and Gardiner stop with the Persian conquest. Breasted applied a biological model quite literally, describing post-Persian Egypt as the “convulsive contractions which sometimes lend momentary motion to limbs from which conscious

² See Davidson and Dubé 1975, p. 190; and the editions by Lafuma 1951, p. 232; and Stewart 1965, pp. 50–51.

³ Agel and Glanze 1990. The discussion of “Cleopatra's nose” is on p. 211.

⁴ Lafuma 1951, § 413-90, p. 232 (= Stewart 1965, §93, pp. 50-51): “Qui voudra connaître à plein la vanité de l'homme n'a qu'à considérer les causes et les effets de l'amour. La cause en est un je ne sais quoi. Corneille. Et les effets en sont effroyables. Ce je ne sais quoi, (*qu'on ne peut*) si peu de chose qu'on ne peut le reconnaître remue toute la terre, les princes, les armées, le monde entier. Le nez de Cléopâtre s'il eût été plus court toute la face de la terre aurait changé.” See also Stewart § 93 bis: “*Vanité*. La cause et les effets de l'amour: Cléopâtre.”

⁵ See Momigliano 1975, p. 3; and cf. p. 4: “But the Hellenistic Greeks preferred the fanciful images of an eternal Egypt to the Egyptian thought of their time.” The transmission of the Egyptian fable of the lion and the mouse to “Aesop” disproves this contention (West 1969, pp. 161–83), as does the presence of a translated Demotic romance on Nectonebo among the reading materials of Apollonios in *UPZ* I, no. 81. Momigliano also suggests that the Greeks never viewed Egypt as a political power, inexplicably ignoring the significant Saite-Greek political maneuvers against the Persians.

⁶ For the stele in Trinity College, Dublin (*OGIS* 176), see Bevan 1968, p. 333. The depiction is purely Egyptian, with no attempt to modify the animal god for “Hellenistic” sensibilities.

life has long departed.”⁷ Gardiner noted that it might seem “ludicrous” to stop Egyptian history without mentioning the major Ptolemaic temples, but offered the reader a *superior* trade in the form of a final chapter on Egyptian *prehistory* (Gardiner 1961, p. 382). The attitude extends not merely to histories but to historians. Note how few Demoticists there are in world, how few contemporary Egyptologists extend their interests past Tutankhamen and the New Kingdom “flowering.” In the past, Demoticists have been considered almost “suspect” to “mainstream” Egyptologists. It is perhaps worthy of reflection that Petrie did not commission a Demoticist to write the Ptolemaic volume in his series *A History of Egypt*, but instead turned to the Greek historian Mahaffy (1899). The presumption is, of course, that Ptolemaic history is *Greek* history; native Egyptian history was dead. Within Demotic studies, the response to such declarations of “premature death” has taken the form of numerous studies detailing and stressing the *vitality* of late, native culture, whether in terms of religion, literature, or even economics. In so far as cultural “vitality” is confused with cultural “purity,” however, we run the risk of devaluing important examples of cross-cultural interactions. For the Egyptian historian, it should be remembered that the “flowering” of the New Kingdom occurred within a truly “multi-cultural” context, with Semitic influence from the court to the countryside, with clear influence in the military, religion, and literature. Such cultural borrowings in the New Kingdom are seen not as decay, but as cosmopolitan adaptations indicative of vitality. Need Ptolemaic Egyptian adaptations be seen as anything less?

The biological model which has so dominated Egyptian historiography has also had its influence in the writing of Greek history. With the loss of political independence to Alexander, Greek culture was once thought to have lost its authenticity, a notion enshrined in the contrast posed by the names “Hellenic” (genuine Greek) and “Hellenistic” (“would be” Greek).⁸ Old notions of a Hellenistic “mixed culture” devalued the period in the eyes of Classicists. Like Demoticists, Greek Papyrologists have been viewed as “outsiders.” In 1920, the great Hellenistic scholar Rostovtzeff still had to appeal for interest in the period, and insist that Alexandria was a legitimate continuation of Athens.⁹ The necessity of the appeal is clear from the same scholar’s appointment at the University of Wisconsin in Madison in the *Ancient History* department — the Classics department would have nothing to do with him.¹⁰ Rostovtzeff stressed a vision of the Hellenistic world which was designed to win over the Classical historian, however. In this vision, a Greek “world culture” applied its “genius and innovation” to revivify older, withering civilizations. The *Greeks* were not in

7. Breasted 1905, p. 595. By a certain perverse irony, the official, posthumous portrait of Breasted poses the author with a statue of *post-Persian* date (Dynasty XXX).

8. For a concise discussion of the creation of the term “Hellenistic” by Droysen, and the concept’s basis in the presumed fusion of cultures, see Préaux 1978, pp. 5–9. For the continued use of the notion of “Mischkultur,” see the review of Maehler and Strocka, *Das ptolemäische Ägypten*, by W. J. Tait 1982, cols. 78–87.

9. Rostovtzeff 1920, pp. 161–78. Compare p. 161: “Such an epoch cannot be designated a period of decline. I take the liberty of affirming that people who know Athens and who are not thoroughly acquainted with Alexandria, Pergamon, and Antioch do not know Greece. They cannot fully realize the exceptional work of Greek genius.”

10. Rostovtzeff’s altercations with the local Classics Department are chronicled in Bowersock 1986, pp. 391–400, esp. p. 395. This reference was first brought to my attention by J. G. Manning.

a decline; they were the driving spirits of a new, if totalitarian, order.¹¹ The concept of bringing Western innovation to the withered East had long been a feature of the notion of “Hellenization,” and was clearly based on the model of Nineteenth century European imperialism. As Alan Samuel has remarked: “Perhaps American ideas of ‘manifest destiny’ made the idea of the spread of Greek culture as welcome in the U.S. as Kipling’s ‘white man’s burden’ made it understandable in Britain” (A. Samuel 1989, p. 1). This colonial “parallel” was explicitly recognized by Bevan, who felt it necessary to stress certain differences between Ptolemaic Egypt and British South Africa or India (Bevan 1968, pp. 86 and 89). Nonetheless, Greek culture was to be viewed as superior, with a distinctly patronizing attitude toward the locals. Thus, when Bevan briefly notes the existence of Demotic documents, he remarks that they furnish important data for *native* life; the possibility does not occur to him that they could be of importance for the country as a whole, and they play almost no role in his history of Ptolemaic Egypt.¹² If Greek culture was to be saved from the biological model, Egyptian culture was still seen as a withering plant.

The evolving theories of Rostovtzeff added a new element to the older colonial model, clearly derived from his own, personal experience. From the East, the Greeks supposedly adapted and perfected the notion of “Oriental Despotism”: a strong central power which demanded blind obedience, controlled private property, and desired to socialize or nationalize production.¹³ It is at times difficult to know whether he is speaking of Ptolemaic Egypt, or of Marxist Russia, from which he had recently fled. For Rostovtzeff, the Egyptian was no longer patronized by a benign superior, but ruthlessly exploited by a monolithic government — he was a cultureless, powerless, second-class citizen to be pitied.

Such an image easily led to the perception of racial animosity between Egyptian and Greek, and fostered studies of local resistance to Hellenism, such as that of Eddy in 1961 and Momigliano in 1975.¹⁴ The Egyptian was now seen as hateful, rebellious, and threatening, though still, of course, second class.

Our theoretical approach to Ptolemaic Egyptian society has changed much in the past fifteen years. Notions of racial animosity have been discounted, and, slowly, the vitality of local Egyptian tradition has been recognized.¹⁵ A recent symposium on Cleopatra’s Egypt in Brooklyn was

¹¹. Rostovtzeff 1920, pp. 161–78, esp. p. 161: “Such an epoch cannot be designated a period of decline”; and p. 162: “The Greek city states were gradually incorporated in the big monarchies of the East, infusing new forces into decrepit bureaucratic organizations. First of all, Greek genius supplied much constructive power in the building up of the Eastern political and economic system.” The same dogmatic belief in Greek “genius” at the expense of supposed Egyptian “decrepitude” yet dominates the interpretation by Bagnall 1981, pp. 5–21. Bagnall proclaims “a fundamentally exploitative attitude on the part of the Greeks” who “had little true respect for Egyptian civilization as a living entity” (p. 21). Compare also p. 15: “Egypt afforded the economic opportunities; but they were created by the application of Greek conceptions of management and entrepreneurship to the Egyptian situation, not by long-standing Egyptian economic traditions.” This conviction derives more from received convention than fact; see A. Samuel 1989, pp. 51–65. Bagnall’s zeal to deny Egyptian influence in any aspect of Ptolemaic life leads him to rather peculiar distortions. The pronouncement (p. 20) that the underlying cosmology of magical texts derives exclusively from contemporary Hellenistic philosophy is an untenable exaggeration; the fundamentally Egyptian character of the magical papyri was evident even to Nock (1929, pp. 219–35), who suggested that unknown philosophers may have compiled the material. The “philosophy hypothesis” is in any case false, see further Ritner (forthcoming).

¹². Bevan 1968, p. 159: “Numbers of demotic deeds have been found, which furnish important data for native life under Greek rule.”

¹³. Rostovtzeff 1920, p. 162: “The Eastern state seemed to be quite incompatible with that of the Greek. The foundations of the Eastern state were a strong central power, an army of appointed, responsible officials, the blind obedience of the population, a tendency to make private property serve the interests of the State, and a desire to socialize and nationalize production.”

¹⁴. For the impact of such thought in Egyptological writings, see Griffiths 1979, pp. 174–79.

¹⁵. An overview of these developments is found in A. Samuel 1989 and 1983.

entitled “Cultures in Conflict,” yet the question of cultural animosity was ignored by all speakers.¹⁶ Old concepts of cultural synthesis or subjugation are giving way to theories of cultural separation.¹⁷ While this separation should perhaps please everyone, allowing Greek and Egyptian culture to be “vital” independently, I fear that it can be taken too far, and am suspicious of the underlying motives in *overstressing* the absence of interaction, and wonder whether cultural “vitality” is again confused with cultural “purity.”

Consider the 1989 discussion by Heinrich von Staden on the question of the influence of Egyptian medicine on the Alexandrian physician Hierophilus.¹⁸ Von Staden admits certain similarities in terms of pulse taking, drugs, and disease theory, but his arguments are often carried by adjectives, not evidence: Egyptian pulse theory is dismissed as “struggling but insistent,”¹⁹ Egyptian disease theory is “not alien” to the Greek (von Staden 1989, p. 5), the Egyptian physician’s touch is “aggressive,” the Greek’s is “restrained” (von Staden 1989, p. 15). Egyptian enema treatments are said to represent “a pathological preoccupation with the anus ... bound to elicit an ethno-psychological study of Pharaonic Egypt sooner or later” (!!!)²⁰ It should be added that one Egyptian enema specialist is known to have had enough Greek patients to require the services of a well-paid interpreter; here at least there is cross-cultural preoccupation!²¹ Having accused the Egyptians of neurotic cleanliness,²² von Staden then faults them as dirty, for not knowing soap (von Staden 1989, p. 15). Soap, as we know it, was invented in 1787 by the French surgeon Nicolas Leblanc, prompted by an earlier offer of a state prize by Louis XVI.²³ Until then, “soap” had been imported from the Arabs, and had consisted of fats *and natron from the Wadi Natrun*. This was the “soap” that had been available to the Greeks — and before them to the Egyptians. Von Staden’s arguments show the survival of the old notion of the low class, cultureless Egyptian, whose influence on superior culture is *unthinkable*.

Old feelings of cultural superiority die hard, but what is important is that such prejudices are often the feelings of *scholars*, not those of the people they study. A good case in point is the famous quotation of Polybius on the Alexandrian population as excerpted by Strabo (XXIV. 14). According to Polybius, the mercenary troops are numerous, rough, and uncivilized, the Alexandrians are mongrels, but the native Egyptians are acute and civilized (οχυ και πολιτικον). This favorable characterization of the Egyptians has generally confounded Classicists, whose models of Egyptian culture were determined by contemporary stereotypes of natives as cultureless, rude, second-class

16. “Ptolemaic Egypt: Cultures in Conflict” held December 2–3, 1988 at the Brooklyn Museum. Lecturers instead emphasized cooperation and cross-influence between cultures. A direct question posed by this author regarding the validity of the notion of “cultures in conflict” generated complete disavowal.

17. See A. Samuel 1989, *passim*; idem 1983, especially pp. 105–17; and Bagnall 1988, pp. 21–27.

18. Reviewed by myself 1989, pp. 39–40.

19. Von Staden 1989, p. 10. Egyptian influence here is said to be “not inconceivable.”

20. Von Staden 1989, p. 12. This hyperbolic bombast derives from the author’s distortion of Egyptian disease theory, which prescribed enemas and emetics for internal complaints in preference to bleeding. A reasoned analysis is found in Steuer 1948 and Steuer and Saunders 1959.

21. Admitted grudgingly in von Staden 1989, p. 26. The author insists that this must be an isolated case in Alexandria since “evidence of this kind is very rare”; in fact, evidence *of any kind* from Alexandria is “very rare” and generalizations about medical interactions are mere speculation. Bagnall 1981, p. 18, attempts to find in this transaction “deeper and darker aspects” of the Greek “exploitative attitude” since it involves mercenary motives. Bagnall is unaware of the theoretical basis of the Egyptian treatment, which is dismissed as “primitive” and “a toy” (in contrast to “Hellenistic science”): “I forbear to offer modern parallels to exotic practices like this becoming fashionable.” Smirking remarks aside, the supposed “toy” of suppository and enema treatment remains a basic adjunct to modern medical practice; it is in no sense “exotic.” Where, however, is the “Hellenistic science” of bleeding?

22. Von Staden 1989, p. 12: “legendary obsession with personal cleanliness.”

23. A good, popular account of the tragi-comic development of modern soap is found in Bodanis 1986, pp. 206–09.

citizens. Though Mahaffy (1899, p. 191) and the Loeb editor Paton (1975, vol. 6, p. 335) kept the positive translation, Kunze emended the Greek to read “litigious” (πολυδικον),²⁴ while Bevan “charitably” assumed that Polybius meant: “The Egyptians at Alexandria might be rogues and cheats, but they did not violate the order of the city; they were civil rogues” (Bevan 1968, p. 100, note 3). Letronne kept the text and translated “submissive to the law,” Kramer changed πολιτικον to απολιτικον “uncivilized,” and most editors simply insert ου “not” before πολιτικον, yielding “not civilized.”²⁵

For Fraser, in his *Ptolemaic Alexandria* of 1972, emendation is said to be necessary (vol. 2a, pp. 144–45, note 184), and the Egyptians are described as “sharp-tempered and uncivilized” (ibid., vol. 1, p. 61 [italics mine]). Building upon this rewritten text, Fraser constructs his entire framework of Alexandrian history, attributing the city riots of later years to the violence “inherent in the character of the Egyptianized population of the city” (implied proof of this assertion being Polybius).²⁶ Superior Greek culture had been weakened and destroyed through “the adulteration of Greek by Egyptian blood” (Fraser 1972, p. 84). By an ironic and devious rewriting of the sources to meet expected prejudices, the one group *not* stigmatized by Polybius as a factor in civic unrest has become the scapegoat for the city’s demise. Fraser’s analysis of the Jews is also interesting; they are said to be on a higher cultural level than the Egyptians, not because of their own culture which is irrelevant, but because they better ape the fashions of their cultural superiors. They were able to “acquire Greek culture of a superior level” (Fraser 1972, p. 57).

For Bowersock in 1990, the theory of a separation of cultures is confirmation of the Egyptians’ “airless immobility” (p. 55),²⁷ overcome at last by the saving grace of Greek literature:

Since demotic was not about to fill the intellectual and religious needs of Egyptians, it was thus ultimately Greek, despite long centuries of resistance to assimilation, that became the language in which Egyptians expressed themselves (Bowersock 1990, p. 57).

Egyptians redeem themselves for Bowersock by their assimilation as wandering Greek poets. As an aside, one should contrast the attitude of Gilbert Murray to Demotic literature in 1911. Professing himself “fascinated” by the tale of Setna, and regretting that “my own education has been neglected in the matter of Demotic,” he went on to set the translation of Griffith into English verse as the poem *Nefrekepta*.²⁸

²⁴ Bevan 1968, p. 100, note 3. As Bevan notes, this emendation was accepted by Lumbroso.

²⁵ A useful summary of this editorial contrivance is found in Walbank 1979, pp. 182–83. Walbank accepts the fabrication “{not} civilized.” The image of the “exploited Egyptian” has influenced Egyptologists’ interpretations of this Polybius passage as well. Thus, while W. Max Müller does not emend the text, he assumes that it must reveal “the surprise of Polybius that the Alexandrines of Egyptian race were somewhat different from the dull and apathetic mass of the other Egyptian natives”; see idem 1920, p. 9, note 1.

²⁶ Fraser 1972, vol. 1, p. 800. Bagnall inverts the facts in 1981, p. 16, when he states that this passage in Polybius “has persuaded some moderns, most notably Peter Fraser, whose great *Ptolemaic Alexandria* is dedicated to the thesis that the Egyptian element was responsible for the decline of the city in practically all respects.” On the contrary, it is the thesis of Fraser et al. which has reshaped the quote of Polybius!

²⁷ Bagnall 1988, p. 24, also invokes the false image of a static Egypt, which could not adapt foreign elements without ceasing to be Egyptian. Such adaptations characterize Egyptian culture from the Predynastic Period. The unchanging nature of Egyptian culture is greatly over-emphasized by those who do not know it, and for whom everything Egyptian looks alike. A similar oversimplification can be directed to Greek and Latin materials, as embodied in the notion of “Greco-Roman culture.”

²⁸ Quotations on p. iii. Murray believed in the influence of Egyptian upon Greek literature, and his assessment of the Demotic novel is correspondingly flattering. Clearly, literary evaluation fluctuates with the bias of the critic, contra the absolute “truths” espoused in P. Green 1989, p. 82 and passim.

Consider finally the much-debated question of the “ethnicity” of Dryton’s wife Apollonia.²⁹ Though she explicitly styles herself a “Greek” in both Demotic and Greek legal documents, it has been stated by Bagnall in 1988 that she cannot be Greek, since the “milieu” in which she lives *seems* Egyptian (p. 23).³⁰ This “milieu” includes, of course, her Cretan husband Dryton. Because Apollonia makes use of Egyptian documents, occasionally uses an Egyptian version of her name, and acts in an independent manner which defies standard preconceptions, Bagnall assumes that her claims to be Greek must be lies (and lies accepted at face value in open court): “In the case of the women, we cannot detect any motive other than social for the claim of Greek status, which was for them higher and more prestigious” (Bagnall 1988, pp. 23–24). By implication, no Greek woman would lower herself to using Egyptian practices — even if it meant the freedom to engage in commerce without a “kyrios” as intermediary. Conversely, Egyptian women must have craved the status of a cloistered Greek woman.³¹ What then should one make of the lady Artemisia in one of the earliest preserved Greek papyri, *PGM XL* (see Preisendanz 1973, vol. 2, pp. 177–78)? Her Demotic-influenced petition to Oserapis is certainly reflective of an “Egyptian milieu.” Do we make Artemisia a “Hellenizing Egyptian” in the fourth century B.C.?³² Certainly not. When an individual is recognized as “Greek” to the satisfaction of both contemporary Demotic and Greek legal conventions, they *are* Greek to their contemporaries, whatever that ethnicity may have meant in Ptolemaic Egypt. Who are *we* to suggest that the ethnicity must be a fiction, just to meet *our* expectations?

Clear evidence of any sort of racial or cultural chauvinism is exceedingly rare for the Ptolemaic period.³³ In this regard, particular interest has been devoted during this conference to the preferential rate of assessing the salt tax for “Greeks” as attested in the Demotic Lille papyri from the Faiyum. This imbalance has been suggested by Dorothy Thompson to be a “benefit” for Greek-speakers, serving as an inducement for Egyptians to learn the Greek language. In contrast, Willy Clarysse has viewed the distinct rates as a form of institutionalized cultural “discrimination”

²⁹. Discussion and references in Bagnall 1988, pp. 21–27, specifically attacking my own analysis (1984, pp. 171–88), and that of Pomeroy 1984, pp. 103–24 (now reprinted, 1989). Bagnall (p. 21) faults unnamed authors for supposed “lack of clarity, lack of sophistication,” making itemized exception (p. 26, note 5) for those whom he assumes partake of his own interpretive bias. An excellent, spirited rebuttal by Pomeroy served as the plenary lecture for the annual convention of the American Research Center in Egypt held in Philadelphia on April 21, 1989. Bagnall rather misrepresents current assessments of the problem by suggesting that only Pomeroy accepts the notion of Greeks assimilating to Egyptian culture; see Lewis 1986, pp. 103 and 168, note 16 (a verbatim citation of my conclusions included as “an apt ending to the present chapter.”) See now the discussion of Goudriaan 1988, pp. 131–33; and the clear example of “Egyptianization” documented by Clarysse within this volume, *Chapter 6*.

³⁰. There is no great sophistication here; whether Apollonia were an “Egyptianizing Greek” or a “Hellenizing Egyptian” her “milieu” in rural Egypt would still be “predominantly Egyptian.”

³¹. Greek trial depositions of ethnicity are also reduced to mere farce.

³². The phraseology of this petition derives directly from contemporary (and prior) Demotic exemplars invoking “the god Oserapis and the gods who sit with Oserapis” (*Wsr-Ḥp ḥrm nḥ nṯr.w nt ḥtp ḥrm=f*); see further the remarks of John Ray in this volume, *Chapter 32*.

³³. See A. Samuel 1983, p. 106: “the tone of the documentation ... by and large seems to suggest a rather comfortable relationship on the day-to-day level, with surprisingly few allusions to ethnic difficulties”; and *ibid.*, n. 121: “it is important to note that derogation of the Egyptians is almost lacking from the Greek documentation, even in such texts as those of *UPZ 8* which do attest disputes between Greek and Egyptian on ethnic bases.” Nine examples (for 300 years) are listed in Goudriaan 1988, pp. 107–08, hardly justifying the remark that “the opinion the Greeks had of their Egyptian compatriots was often low.” Accusations of ethnic discrimination may hide other motives (and spur official intervention), as recognized by Dorothy Thompson 1988, pp. 229–30. This is not to deny the existence of cultural pride or preference on the part of Egyptian or Greek. Certain tendencies toward “clannishness” are inevitable, if only because of the barriers of language and custom. It is perhaps useful to recall contemporary stereotypes disparaging British cooking (from the French point of view), or French organization (from the British point of view). These hardly reflect pervasive cross-channel “racism.”

against Egyptians.³⁴ While the monetary distinction is fairly trivial (one obol, roughly a day's pay), the interpretive distinction between the designations "inducement" and "discrimination" is quite significant. The "facts" are noncommittal, falling ready prey to our theoretical biases. In either interpretation, however, the one obol difference need not reflect a sense of "racial superiority." If Greek-speaking Egyptians are admitted as "Hellenes" this is obvious. But I think that this need not reflect a sense of "cultural superiority" either, perhaps simply a recognition of cultural separation and numerical imbalance. If anything, it suggests a culture — or perhaps primarily a language — on the *defensive*; superiority does not need inducement.³⁵ The success of Greek administration in the developing Faiyum was to a large extent dependent upon bureaucratic scribes and interpreters fluent in that language. In any case, the Ptolemaic salt tax does not represent a consistent cultural policy, for the preferential rates were soon abandoned. Greeks and Egyptians were then taxed equally.

In the past, our theories have dictated our facts as often as our facts have dictated our theories. Theoretical bias has been unrecognized and its pervasive influence ignored. So long as we are willing to allow our preconceptions to structure our questions and answers, to rewrite the historians, or disbelieve the papyrus evidence, how will we ever find examples of positive cultural interaction between Egyptian and Greek? It will not matter whether we use Greek or Demotic evidence, or any evidence at all; we shall see only our long-ingrained stereotypes, and meetings like this one will have little purpose.

POSTSCRIPT

In discussions subsequent to the presentation of this paper, two issues were raised which are worthy of note and a brief response.

Diana Delia objected to the above characterization of racial antagonism as "rare," adducing the example of Juvenal, whose "anti-Egyptian" remarks are well known. Juvenal, however, is not relevant to the present discussion, since 1) he is of Roman — not Ptolemaic — date and quite different attitudes prevailed, 2) he is a satirist for whom ridicule — directed indifferently toward Roman, Greek or Egyptian — was an occupation, 3) he was in forced exile in Egypt and thus not disposed to be particularly charitable, and 4) he had been expelled from Rome precisely for his propensity to compose offensive remarks. Reasons of date and occupation also invalidate the (unmentioned) satires of Lucian, whose occasional Egyptian quips are evidence of the "Egyptomania" then popular in Rome. Relations between Greeks and Egyptians certainly deteriorated in Roman Egypt as a direct result of racial and economic distinctions imposed by Rome. This is a reversal of Ptolemaic policy, not an outgrowth of it.

Willy Clarysse's stated belief in the existence of "apartheid" in Ptolemaic Egypt ill accords with his own documentation of a governmentally-recognized "mixed" marriage between an Egyptian woman and a Greek Alexandrian citizen. Despite its basic meaning of "separateness" in Dutch and Flemish, the term "apartheid" in contemporary *English* usage conveys exclusively the nuance of South African practice in which mixed marriages or common use of fountains would be punishable by law. Nothing even vaguely similar existed in Ptolemaic Egypt.

³⁴ See de Cenival 1984 (P. Dem. Lille 99, col. IVa, details the favorable assessments regarding Greek schools, pp. 20–21), and the respective articles by Thompson (*Chapter 40*) and Clarysse (*Chapter 6*) in this volume.

³⁵ Preferential legislation for English in the United States, or French in Quebec, is not motivated by a sense of smug complacency, but by fear of ultimate cultural absorption within a larger foreign group.

Culture is a set of forms of human activity, without which it cannot be played, and therefore exist. Culture " a set of "codes" that require a person or that behavior, rendering it thus administrative influence. Therefore, researchers can not arise the question of which of them he should begin, on this basis to further understand then. Speaking about Intercultural communication in the professional dialogue and its problems, we can imagine to ourselves different kinds of interaction forms. But any interaction is associated with different problems and issues [7]. If we look at communication as a Cross-cultural communication is a field of study that looks at how people from differing cultural backgrounds communicate, in similar and different ways among themselves, and how they endeavor to communicate across cultures. Intercultural communication is a related field of study. During the Cold War, the economy of the United States was largely self-contained because the world was polarized into two separate and competing powers: the East and the West. However, changes and advancements in economic Cross-cultural communication Cross-cultural communication refers to interpersonal communication and interaction across different cultures. This has become an important issue in our age of globalization and internationalization. Effective cross-cultural communication is concerned with overcoming cultural differences across nationality, religion, borders, culture and behavior. The term cross-cultural generally used to describe comparative studies of cultures. Culture is the basic concept of cross-cultural communication. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines culture as 'the in Cross-Cultural Negotiation. A comparative study of business negotiation in Nepal and Finland. Deepak Khatiwoda Sabita Manandhar. Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of. 9 traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action. " All social interaction is affected by the physical container in which it occurs". (Bennett, 1999). Australian Indigenous Archaeology, Cross-Cultural Studies. "Syrian and Phoenician Glass and Ivory Productions: a case of Cross-Cultural Interaction in Ancient Mediterranean Early Craftsmanship". Save to Library. If societies are formed through the numerous actions and interactions of individuals, if cultural constructs are constituted in the context of social life, how do society and culture link to individually experienced and conceptualized motivational values? How can we move beyond interpretations that remain too strongly focused on "Ideology" (i.e. elite domination and mystification) and "Identity" and instead examine how new and existing constraints and affordances were negotiated by local agents with diverging interests, outlooks, and levels of empowerment?