

Insularity, Identity and Epigraphy in the Roman World

Edited by

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PREFACE

This book is on the subject of islands, their essence and identity, their isolation and their relationships.

What was an island in the Ancient world? Did the Greeks and Romans have a concept of insularity that had practical consequences for the political, economic and social life of the Empire? Was being related to an island an externally or internally distinctive feature? Can a tension between insularity and globalisation be detected? Is there an insular material culture, an island-based approach to sacredness, or an island-based category of epigraphy?

This work offers multiple, diverse and complementary views on these questions, which, however, do not aim to exhaust the complex reality of the islands of the Mediterranean in the Roman period. Instead, it seeks to cast light on it from different viewpoints and provide a more nuanced analysis based on an interdisciplinary approach. The majority of the chapters in this book arise from the papers delivered at the Colloquium that took place at the University of Barcelona on 5th and 6th November, 2015 and the ensuing discussions¹. Others have been added subsequently, with the aim of completing and enriching the range of perspectives analysed.

To a certain extent, the texts in this collection might be described as 'insular', but, in view of the wide range of topics covered, they reflect that attractive, poetical definition of an archipelago: a group of islands joined by that which separates them.

¹ I would like to express my thanks to Blanca Rodríguez Belló, Silvia Tantimonaco, Dániel Kiss, Víctor Sabaté and Víctor Rodríguez Galera, of the LITTERA group (2014SGR63), who made the colloquium logistically possible, as well as to the MICINN (FFI2011-25113 and FFI2012-36069-C03-01) and the Faculty of Philology of the University of Barcelona, which provided the financial support necessary. Dániel Kiss, Víctor Rodríguez Galera and Víctor Sabaté also extended their generosity to the control of the bibliography.