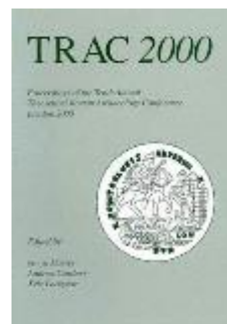
TRAC Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference
www.trac.org.uk



Paper Information:

Title: Representing *Londinium*: The Influence of Colonial and Post-Colonial Discourses
Author: Francis Grew
Pages: 12–24

DOI: http://doi.org/10.16995/TRAC2000_12_24
Publication Date: 29 March 2001

Volume Information:

Davies, G., Gardner, A., and Lockyear, K. (eds) 2001. *TRAC 2000: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, London 2000.* Oxford: Oxbow Books.

Copyright and Hardcopy Editions:

The following paper was originally published in print format by Oxbow Books for TRAC. Hard copy editions of this volume may still be available, and can be purchased direct from Oxbow at http://www.oxbowbooks.com.

TRAC has now made this paper available as Open Access through an agreement with the publisher. Copyright remains with TRAC and the individual author(s), and all use or quotation of this paper and/or its contents must be acknowledged. This paper was released in digital Open Access format in April 2013.

2

Representing *Londinium*: the influence of colonial and post-colonial discourses

Francis Grew

Museum of London

2.1 Introduction

Two soldiers are discussing the campaign (Fig. 2.1). They have recognised the importance of the point just downstream from the tidal head of the Thames where two gravel islands jut into the river from north and south, and have decided to build a bridge and supply base. The base develops into a great port — a jewel in the crown of Roman civilisation, where the products of Mediterranean technology and taste are imported and enjoyed.

This is how Londinium was portrayed in the Tower Hill Pageant — a commercial 'dark ride' and museum that was open between 1991 and 1997 (Grew 1994) — and it reflects what has become, at least since the time of Sir Mortimer Wheeler, the most widely-held interpretation of the Roman city (Wheeler 1930, pp. 21, 32; Perring 1991, pp. 16–9; but *cf.* Marsden 1980, pp. 17–26, who argues for entirely civilian, mercantile, origins). There is, of course, a further element in this interpretation that was barely represented at the Pageant — concentrating as it did on the London Bridge area, and on London's rôle as a port — namely the political. Londinium is often assumed to have been a capital city from an early stage (Wheeler 1930, pp. 29–30; Merrifield 1983, pp. 71–84; for criticism of this view, see Millett 1998).

The popular media often go further. 'The Mayor's ancestor', one newspaper announced, when a stone coffin was found on an archaeological site last year (*London Evening Standard*, 16th March 1999, p. 21). 'Was this Rome's man in London 1,800 years ago?' Just as blatant as the reiteration of the classic triangle of men–wealth–power, is the implication that modern, successful London follows in a direct line from ancient, successful, Roman London. No serious academic or museum curator this century has or would make so crude a connection, but there is a danger that visitors to the Museum of London might be misled into 'reading' the permanent exhibition in this way. The galleries are laid out in roughly chronological order, telling London's story. The Roman gallery is prominent towards the beginning of that sequence. It contains writing, furniture, pictures of historical people — things we feel we can understand. This is in contrast to the preceding Prehistoric gallery, which lays more emphasis on ambiguities in the data and which seeks to humanise the past but perforce has to deal more with generalities (Cotton & Wood 1996). Can we blame the ordinary 'punter' if he or she misses the small print and connects 'them' — the 'Romans' — with 'us' (Fig. 2.2; see further, Beard & Henderson 1999, especially pp. 54–64)? More to the point, can we be sure that such a connection does not lurk, however repressed, in the subconscious of most students of Classical civilisation? As Raphael Samuel put it, with respect to national origin-myths, 'historians, however wedded to empirical

Figure 2.1: Tower Hill Pageant (1991–1997): Roman soldiers planning the foundation of Londinium. Note the cleanliness of the armour and the careful sheathing of the swords — details that affirm the benevolence of Rome and the uncontested nature of the conquest. Unconsciously, perhaps, the model-maker has worked entirely within a Roman discourse, and has perpetuated the image the Romans created of themselves.

enquiry, will take on, without knowing it, the deep structures of mythic thought' (Samuel 1998, p. 14).

So far as representing Londinium goes, an exhibition organised in 1999 by John Clark, the Museum of London's medieval curator, therefore assumes some significance. In *Alfred the Great: London's Forgotten King*, many of the mid-Saxon items found in recent years in the Covent Garden area were displayed. From these it has been argued that 7th and 8th-century London lay principally outside the Roman city walls to the west, and the exhibition concluded with the following epitaph:

> Alfred's legacy also includes ... a vision for the future of London. Alfred's London was not complete when he died in 899 but a new mercantile city grew out of his ideas and plans. The continuous history of the nation's capital city dates from his reign. (Clark 1999, p. 12)

This alternative representation of London — as a city just 1100 years old, with a long 'prehistory' punctuated by a 400-year period during which an earlier city came and went — is one that will require careful consideration when the Museum's permanent galleries are redeveloped.

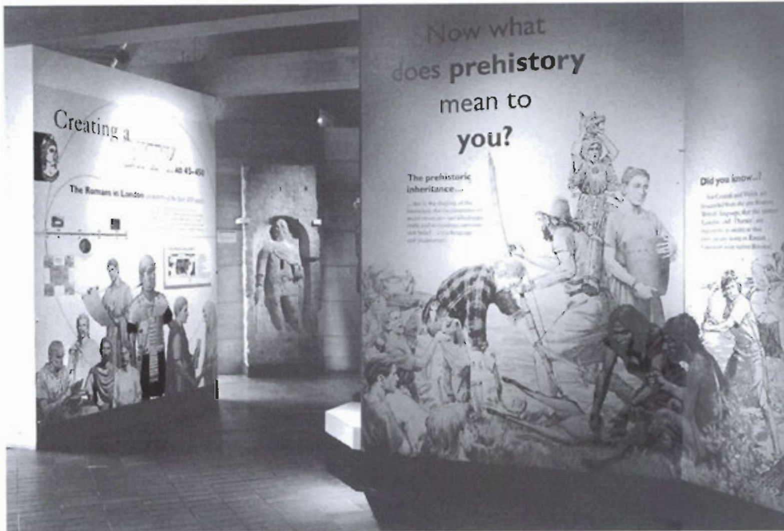


Figure 2.2: Museum of London (1996–2000): entering the Roman gallery from the Prehistoric gallery. The juxtaposition of the word 'Prehistory' with the words 'Creation of a City' not only suggests discontinuity, but could also — in some minds — create a direct link between the Roman period and the present day. Since this paper was given, in April 2000, the Prehistoric display has been dismantled; an entirely new gallery will be opened soon.

2.2 Perceptions of Roman Britain: inductive or historically situated?

Such an interpretation of London is hardly new. It has been current in academic circles as an interpretation of Roman Britain for at least fifteen years. Interestingly, too, it marks something of a reversion to ways of thinking that were common in the first half of the 19th century. In those days the Roman empire was more often a target for criticism than a model for emulation, being regarded as despotic and corrupt (Hingley 2000, pp. 19–22) or simply un-Christian (Samuel 1998, p. 14); it was not until the end of the 19th century that the Romans came to be regarded as fitting 'ancestors' for the English (Hingley 2000, pp. 24–7). With this in mind, it is worth exploring how such interpretations of Londinium come to be framed. Purely inductively, from the evidence to hand? Or, to some extent at least, as part of a more general trend in historical interpretation?

The following might be almost acceptable as a mainstream summary of current views on Roman Britain:

> The provincial conquests of the 1st century ended Britain's isolation, which had been marked in recent centuries. Rapidly, and sometimes brutally, Britain was dragged into the 1st century. Not everything the Romans brought was bad. Medicine and new methods of agriculture were generally good. Political ideas could be used for good or ill. But what is now clear is that in Britain, as in the eastern provinces, this was but one more layer superimposed upon an already vigorous people with a long history.

	Nineteenth century Africa	Roman Britain
Entrepreneurial	Trading posts, chartered companies preceding military and political intervention	Trade or exchange beyond the frontiers, preceding conquest
Macro-economic and political	Capitalist-driven search for new markets; political stalemate in Europe	Expansionist requirements of Roman political élites
Strategic and military	Need to safeguard the route to India; instability of African communities	Need to secure Rome's frontiers; instability of British and Gaulish communities
Personal	Leopold II; Bismarck	Claudius; Caesar

Table 2.1: Summary of the main explanations advanced for the 'Scramble for Africa' in the 1880s and 1890s, and for the conquest of Britain in AD 43.

We might disagree about the importance of Roman agricultural innovation, but otherwise this seems reasonable as an assessment of what happened between AD 43 and 410. In fact, it was written as a summary of current interpretations of Africa during the colonial era; I have substituted '1st century' for '19th century', 'Britain' for 'Africa', 'Romans' for 'Europeans', and so on (Chamberlain 1999, pp. 92–3).[1] Let us consider further, therefore, how Romano-British archaeology may lie within a much broader conceptual framework, or historiographical discourse — which itself lies within a set of yet broader colonial and post-colonial discourses.

For many years now, scholars have consciously pointed to analogies between the Roman empire and modern European empires. Rivet, for instance, argued that 'throughout history contacts between higher and lower civilisations have tended to follow set patterns' so that evidence drawn from modern history 'can point to probabilities, and ... can confirm us in some of the conclusions we may reach by other means' (Rivet 1958, p. 27). In a similar vein, one might mention a conference held in Oxford in 1978, during which a series of papers on British colonial experiences served as a basis for discussion of the invasion of AD 43 and the 'native' response to it (Burnham & Johnson 1979). What has been much less commonly acknowledged, however, is the extent to which scholars have been unconsciously influenced by wider, less explicit, trends in historiography. To stay with Africa, it is remarkable how similar are the reasons — often subtle and highly complex — that have been given by historians for the colonisation of that continent by the European powers in the 1880s and 1890s, to those that have been offered for the annexation of Britain by Rome in the 1st century AD (Table 2.1). Significantly, it seems, these have tended to engage support among practitioners in their respective fields at roughly the same time.

First, there is the view that colonisation is principally the result of entrepreneurs seeking out new territories with resources ripe for exploitation; setting up trading posts there; and getting into difficulties that ultimately require the reluctant inter-

[1] The original text is as follows: 'The colonial conquests of the nineteenth century ended Africa's isolation, which had been marked in recent centuries. Rapidly, and sometimes brutally, Africa was dragged into the twentieth century. Not everything the Europeans brought was bad. Medicine and new methods of agriculture were generally good. Political ideas could be used for good or ill. But what is now clear is that in Africa, as in Asia, this was but one more layer superimposed upon an already vigorous people with a long history' (Chamberlain 1999, pp. 92–3).

vention of their governments. This was indeed the sequence of events in many parts of Africa during the late 19th century, and the majority of those writing at the time — from journalists to academic historians — did not feel it necessary to dig much deeper to find explanations for the transforming acts of colonisation that were in progress around them. Priority was given to the superficial and local over the organic and general, events themselves seeming to be both causes and effects. Partly this was because things were happening at such a break-neck pace that it was difficult to make any sense of them. Returning to office in 1885, when the 'Scramble for Africa' was reaching its most frantic, even the British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, confessed: 'I do not know exactly the cause of this sudden revolution. But there it is.' (quoted in Eldridge 1978, p. 122).

So momentous was the process of European colonisation and so much a part of national consciousnesses, that it is unlikely to be coincidental that many late 19th and early 20th century archaeologists came to understand and explain the Roman Empire — and the invasion of Britain, in particular — in rather similar terms. Wheeler, for example, discussing the possibility of a trading settlement on the site of London before the invasion remarks:

> Latin writers tell us how, in Austria, Gaul and elsewhere, Roman traders preceded the 'flag' and, often at the peril of their lives, opened up commercial relations with the peoples beyond the Roman frontiers.
>
> (Wheeler 1930, p. 17)

Contrasting fundamentally with this form of interpretation, is a second, well-trodden path of thinking that proposes far more structural explanations, stressing macro-economic factors in particular. The publication in 1902 of J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism: a Study* precipitated a radical change in understanding both of late 19th century imperialism generally and of European motives in Africa in particular. Hobson argued that imperialism did not bring any benefits in terms of increased trade but, rather, provided the opportunity for highly profitable investment; it had become far more attractive to invest industrial surpluses overseas in projects such as railways than to reinvest them domestically (Hobson 1902, pp. 56–60, 86). The argument was rapidly adopted and universalised by Marxist thinkers, including Lenin, who came to regard imperialism as the inevitable, final stage of capitalism. Throughout the early and middle years of the 20th century, the theory was continuously refined and reshaped by historians and political philosophers; sometimes receiving a political stress — competition among the Great Powers for possession of Africa being regarded as the resiting of a conflict that in Europe itself had reached stalemate — or, at other times, a socio-economic one, as emphasis was placed on the rôle of financiers and on the hopes of those in the emerging service sector of the economy to buy themselves a status matching that of the landed aristocracy (Cain & Hopkins 1987, pp. 1–6).

Hobson himself saw clear parallels between the British and the Roman empires, arguing that the anticipated returns from taxation and usury was a prime motive for developing new provinces (Hobson 1902, pp. 387–90). During the mid to late 20th century, ancient historians were, on the one hand, circumspect about adopting wholesale modern politico-economic theory of this type — emphasising instead the vastly different nature of ancient and modern economies (*e.g.*, Finley 1973, pp. 21–3) — but, on the other, almost paradoxically enthusiastic about embracing broad socio-economic explanations, both for Roman imperialism generally and for particular manifestations of it. For instance, the predominantly Republican practice of colonisation could be seen as motivated principally by land hunger in the metropolis (Finley 1973, p. 172);

and the mineral wealth and human resources of Britain could be regarded as 'a sort of invisible export balancing the costs of occupation' of that island (Frere 1987, p. 46). In the 1980s and 1990s the argument took a more socio-political twist (somewhat similar to that taken by Cain and Hopkins in the context of Victorian imperialism), when it began to be argued that Roman imperialism was driven primarily by competition among the ruling élites, and that exploitation of new provinces became necessary for guaranteeing political stability at home (*e.g.*, Millett 1990, p. 7).

A third group of explanations for colonisation and imperialism stress military or long-term strategic objectives. This form of analysis — which often sees annexation of new territories as 'inevitable' and poorly thought out, rather than as part of a reasoned foreign policy — has been used at various times as a counter to the 'macro-economic' interpretations. Thus Britain's occupation of Egypt in 1882, or Britain's acquisition of colonies on the east coast of Africa, has sometimes been regarded as part of a grand strategy to safeguard the passage to India (Robinson & Gallagher 1981, pp. 462–8). But while the strategy may have been grand, the tactics were often less so:

> British advances in tropical Africa have all the appearances of *involuntary* responses to emergencies arising from the decline of Turkish authority ... They were largely the work of men striving in more desperate times to keep to the grand conceptions of world policy ... inherited from the mid-Victorian [period]. (Robinson & Gallagher 1981, p. 466, my emphasis)

Roman relations with Gaul and Britain have often been interpreted in a rather similar way. The inexorable, unavoidable nature of Roman expansion generally, and into Gaul in particular, has been stressed by a number of writers (*e.g.*, Drinkwater 1983, pp. 13–14, with regard to 1st century BC Gaul) — perhaps partly because this is how Roman historians often explained it themselves. Polybius saw the acquisition of Spain and north Africa as accidental consequences of the war with Hannibal, and, for rather different reasons, Caesar portrayed not only his expeditions to Britain in 55–54 BC but also the entire conquest of Gaul as essentially defensive measures. They were, he argued, an inevitable consequence of the barbarians' penchant for migration; of their inability to organise themselves peacefully and properly; and of the relentless reinforcement by the Britons of the rebels in Gaul. At the same time, behind explanations of the purely tactical responses, we find that ancient historians occasionally identify and emphasise more wide-ranging, strategic objectives. Some have argued, for instance, that Caesar's prime purpose in Gaul was to secure long-distance trade routes through to Britain, and to safeguard the tin trade in particular (*e.g.*, Hawkes 1977).

In the fourth of these explanation given for colonisation and imperialism, there is the type of analysis that emphasises the rôle of individuals. Sometimes, this can be used to isolate an immediate cause, as opposed to a more fundamental explanation drawn from the list above. For Bismarck or Leopold II of Belgium (whose schemes were to lead to the formation of the Belgian Congo), read Caesar or Claudius. Home politics, not foreign policy, was usually the driving force. Just as it seems that in 1884 Bismarck first came to recognise the significance of colonisation as an election issue (Chamberlain 1999, p. 86) — and in consequence initiated the feverish scramble for colonies that took place in that and the following year — so does it seem that Claudius in AD 43 decided to bolster his weak personal position in domestic politics with military success in a remote land.

By making comparisons of this kind, we can see that Romano-British studies sit within a much broader historiographical framework (Table 2.1). This can enable us

to evaluate alternative interpretations of Roman foreign policy with greater circumspection and, at the same time, to make judicious use of the techniques of source criticism that have been applied by students of more recent history. Nowadays, for example, there is much greater understanding of the distinction between subjective motives and objective causes, as Robinson and Gallagher put it in their suggestively-titled book, *Africa and the Victorians: the Official Mind of Imperialism* (Robinson & Gallagher 1981, pp. xi, 20). Motives are often articulated by particpants at the time something happens (compare the first and fourth groups of causes analysed above), whereas causes may only be detected subsequently by historians (compare the second and third groups). In another respect too, modern analyses of Victorian imperialism hold up a revealing mirror against Romano-British studies. This is in the tendency to emphasise local factors and differing responses, rather than to apply over-arching theories, and it is at least partly a consequence of the contribution made by national historians who, since the Second World War, have written histories of Asia and Africa from a non-western perspective (Eldridge 1978, pp. 138–40). The parallels with the contribution made by archaeology in provinces such as Germany, Gaul or Britain are too obvious to be stated; just as the recognition by modern historians that historical studies are themselves historically and socially situated (*e.g.*, Southgate 1996) has its counterparts in post-modernism, post-structuralism and post-processual archaeology.

How much further has this taken us in understanding Roman Britain? Before proposing an alternative view of Londinium in the 1st and early 2nd centuries, it is worth noting the contribution made by those studies — initially situated within literary criticism and linguistics, rather than 'history' — that have sought to characterise the discourse within which discussion of colonialism has traditionally taken place. These have stressed the extent to which discussion that may appear liberal and spontaneous is in fact tightly constrained by the possibilities of a language that was itself created from the assumptions and stereotypes of a literate, colonising power. Because of their rarity and persuasive force, and because they are perceived as the cornerstones of Western humanist scholarship, Classical authors have been granted a position of almost unchallenged authority. Scholars may have agonised about distortions caused by rhetoric in Tacitus or by self-justification in Caesar, but it is only recently that we have woken up to the fact that when trying to understand the Roman provinces we are generally working within parameters devised by the Romans themselves (Hingley 1994, p. 19; Barrett 1997, p. 1; Webster 1995). Indeed, in one sense, simply to think of 'history' is to position oneself entirely within a Graeco-Roman discourse. The colonised of Roman Britain have left hardly any texts, and certainly none that approximate to 'history'. A particular feature of this discourse is the value placed on urbanism and the rôle of the city. Aristotle had theorised the organisation of the city-state, and both Romans and Greeks had established numerous colonies, so that when Caesar, for instance, came to describe Britain or Gaul it was almost inevitable that he would try to identify *oppida* and to articulate his narrative around them.

In the case of Londinium, our perceptions have been largely conditioned by Tacitus' description of the place at the time of the Boudican revolt:

> ... cognomento quidem coloniae non insigne, sed copia negotiatorum et commeatuum maxime celebre.
>
> ... not indeed distinguished by the name of 'colony' but very famous for (or 'crowded with') numerous merchants and supplies.
>
> (Tacitus, *Annales*, XIV.33)

Haverfield glossed this with the comment:

> We know ... that the Roman provinces contained many such clubs or communities of Roman traders, ruling themselves on a quasi-municipal pattern. We may think that London was, at the outset, one of these communities ...
> (Haverfield 1923, p. 62)

That Londinium was home to thousands of 'Britons' as well as 'Romans' would seem likely simply from the size of the population that was massacred — indeed Tacitus includes an unspecified number of 'our allies' among the victims — but deconstruction should go further. I suggest that the comment concerning the legal status of London should not be read as an objective remark, almost casually made, but as bearing a special significance within the context of Roman imperialist discourse. To Tacitus' readers, a *colonia* would have been synonymous with *Romanitas*, and so the destruction of a chartered town could be easily portrayed in terms of a binary opposition between 'Roman' and 'barbarian'. However, because London was not a *colonia*, the event became less explicable. Attention was drawn, therefore, to the crowds of traders and merchandise, enabling Tacitus to play on the common assumption that 'natives' are always likely to vandalise property and are stereotypically avid for booty (see further, Grew 2000, pp. 161–2). As a consequence, however, there has been more debate among modern scholars about the legal status of Londinium than about almost any other topic. Was the place a *colonia* or a *municipium*? When did it attain a particular status? Does the construction of a forum/basilica denote the grant of a new charter? In the absence of inscriptions, such questions are almost unanswerable — and, in any case, they may miss the point.

2.3 Interpreting early Roman London: models derived from colonial archaeology

This is far from saying that the description of Londinium in *Annales* XIV is entirely fictitious. On the contrary, sufficient amphora, samian and other imported material survives to confirm the presence of abundant *commeatus* and, presumably, some *negotiatores*. But we should, perhaps, question the judgement made in 1985 that these finds are to be explained principally by the presence of

> ... 'colonists' [who] created a demand for goods to be transported long distances from their home towns so that they could continue to live in the manner to which they were accustomed. (Milne 1985, p. 122)

The origins of such explanations in more general historiographical and colonialist discourses have already been discussed, but it is worth considering how recent colonial archaeology might assist us in reassessing them.

Official documentation on the establishment by Dutch and British trading companies of settlements in the New World, shows that they might be provisioned for a time by ship from the home country — often, mainly with seamen's rations. Very soon however, this method of provisioning was supplemented or replaced by local supplies, so that a hybrid form of diet can be recognised in the archaeological record. There are many reasons for this: local availability of comparable foodstuffs, the difficulty of guaranteeing long-distance supplies, or the need to adapt to different environmental conditions (for arrangements at the Dutch colony founded on Saldanha Bay in 1669, see Schrire 1995, pp. 94–6). However, the change entailed a complex series of negotiations between settlers and the indigenous population, and current students of

colonial practice regularly stress the importance of the 'contact zone' where a process of two-way 'transculturation' can take place (*e.g.*, Pratt 1992, p. 6).

Might this model be helpful in interpreting Londinium? While it is true that pre-Boudican fire levels have yielded a higher proportion of imported pottery — Gaulish pottery, in particular — than those of any other period (Davies *et al.* 1994, p. 167, Fig. 143), there is often a degree of circularity in the inferences from such evidence. If we rely heavily on ceramics to identify and characterise the relevant deposits — hypothesising that pre-Boudican London was mostly confined to the hill east of the Walbrook — we are liable to overlook precisely those 'contact zones' where ceramics may have played a different rôle. Significantly, perhaps, on the western outskirts, where round houses were standing in the 50s, imported pottery comprised a much smaller proportion of the assemblage. Crucial to any such investigation is analysis of the animal bone, but this remains almost entirely unpublished. Tantalisingly, at Leadenhall Court — one of the few published groups — the late Neronian levels have revealed evidence of local animal husbandry in the form of neonatal sheep, calves and pig, and shows a statistical profile only moderately comparable with that regarded as characteristic of the most 'Romanised' early sites (West 1993).

So far as both the artefactual and the animal bone assemblages go, some of the most fascinating developments in London seem to have occurred at the very end of the 1st century or early in the 2nd. Pork was consumed in large quantities for the first time, echoing a pattern that has been observed on legionary sites in Britain (King 1984; West 1993). Glassworks were established within the town; fineware pottery kilns were built alongside to produce unusual forms in eggshell, glossy black or mica-dusted fabrics (Marsh 1978, pp. 195–9; J. Drummond-Murray, *pers. comm.*, for more recent discoveries); and it is possible that a range of rare, almost pure tin, plates and canisters was made locally (Jones 1983, p. 52). While it is plausible that these reveal the presence of military craftsmen — based nearby in the newly-constructed twelve acre fort — parallels from colonial archaeology suggest a slight reframing of the hypothesis.

Work on sites both in North America and South Africa has shown the extent to which utilitarian goods might be used by colonists in an effort to affirm their identity in opposition to the colonised. For employees of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape settlement, a close copy of humble Dutch Red Earthenware was manufactured locally, and seems not only to have been used in this way by Company employees themselves but also to have served in attempts to enculturate other sectors of the population with a more 'European' identity (Jordan 2000a,b). So too at the Massachussetts Bay colony in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, imitation British red earthenware served to create or preserve the image of a colonial élite (Turnbaugh 1996). In some situations — at the Cape, for instance — such developments began almost immediately, but in others they took place several generations after the foundation of the colony — at the time when statuses began to be questioned and identities were under threat of merger. Transferring this analogy to Londinium, should we infer a similar maturing of the settlement fifty years after it had been founded and a similar crystallisation of perceived identities? For whatever reason — and indeed as sometimes happened in the colonies — such developments were both sudden and brief.

In this context, it is worth considering how far the establishment of the fort at precisely this time might have both symbolised and engendered a new interest in the distinctions between 'Roman' and 'non-Roman', between ruling and ruled. The conventional view holds that London's garrison had an administrative or ceremonial

function (*e.g.*, Merrifield 1983, p. 77) — a conclusion that undoubtedly derives from study of military sculpture and epigraphy from Londinium, but one which may also draw unconsciously upon perceptions of the present-day rôle of the armed services in London pageantry. In its own time, the Cripplegate fort, encompassing about twelve acres and surrounded by a high stone wall, will have represented a major physical intrusion into the cityscape. In the cemeteries meanwhile, soldiers were setting up life-sized sculptures of their dead comrades (Bishop 1983), to symbolise in perpetuity their rôle as agents of the Roman government.

Potential enough for creating division — but why overlook the obvious potential of the Roman army to act also as a repressive force in civilian areas no less than on the northern frontier? Interestingly, since the early years of this century, when much of the agenda for Romano-British studies was set (Hingley 1996, pp. 38, 42), it has become customary to regard the defence of the frontiers and the civilisation of lowland Britain as two separate, though complementary, aspects of Romanisation. The possibility of intervention by the army in the 'civilian' areas of Britain after the Boudican revolt has rarely been discussed. To turn again to modern parallels, recent studies have emphasised the extent to which colonial control generally depends on the twin, complementary, methods of physical coercion and intellectual acculturation. Significantly, representatives of once-colonised peoples often feel that western post-colonial deconstruction tends to emphasise the rôle of the latter — which might be regarded as 'civilised' if not entirely acceptable — and to downplay the rôle of the former (*e.g.*, Loomba 1998, pp. 31, 69).

2.4 Conclusion

We have moved some way from our initial consideration of Londinium as represented in the media and museums. How then should we be advising those charged with creating new public displays? Here are a few recommendations:

1. Let Londinium be located both within its regional context and within a broad time frame that encompasses both what happened before and what was to happen later.

2. Let us work from the assumption that Londinium contained a hybrid population; but, at the same time, let us note that the true nature of that population may be concealed from us by the fact that the evidence has generally been interpreted within a discourse formulated by just one of the contributors to the mix. To correct this, we might replace the common assumption that Roman-style artefacts must invariably have been used in 'Roman' ways — or that a particular city, building or individual can be ranked by the degree to which it matches up to a supposed Roman ideal — with a determination to investigate how people used the materials and artefacts available to them in a way that would express their identities and would enable them to survive in the world at that time.

3. Let us recall that archaeology itself both draws on and contributes to a much wider set of discourses within the social sciences. Put simply, archaeological interpretation is all part of the fashion business.

Acknowledgements

Especial thanks are due to Clive Bloom, Richard Hingley, Stacey Jordan and the anonymous referee, who made numerous stimulating suggestions and improved this paper in many ways; also to Jon Cotton, a perpetual source of encouragement. Sally Brooks helped with bibliographical references, and James Drummond-Murray (Museum of London Archaeology Service) kindly provided information in advance of publication.

Original sources

TACITUS *Annales (Cornelii Taciti Annalivm Libri)*, edited by C. D. Fisher, 1906. Oxford Classical Texts, Oxford.

References

BARRETT, J. C. 1997. 'Theorising Roman Archaeology.' *In* K. Meadows, C. Lemke & J. Heron (eds.), *TRAC 96. Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference Sheffield 1996*, pp. 1–7. Oxbow, Oxford.

BEARD, M. & J. HENDERSON 1999. 'Rule(d) Britannia: displaying Roman Britain in the museum.' *In* N. Merriman (ed.), *Making Early Histories in Museums*, pp. 44–73. Leicester University Press, London and New York.

BISHOP, M. C. 1983. 'The Camomile Street soldier reconsidered.' *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society* 34: 31–48.

BURNHAM, B. C. & H. B. JOHNSON (eds.) 1979. *Invasion and Response: the case of Roman Britain.* British Archaeological Reports British Series 73, Oxford.

CAIN, P. J. & A. G. HOPKINS 1987. 'Gentlemanly capitalism and British expansion overseas II: new imperialism, 1850–1945.' *The Economic History Review* 40(1): 1–26.

CHAMBERLAIN, M. E. 1999. *The Scramble for Africa.* Longman, London.

CLARK, J. 1999. *Alfred the Great: London's Forgotten King.* Museum of London, London.

COTTON, J. & B. WOOD 1996. 'Retrieving prehistories at the Museum of London: a gallery case-study.' *In* P. M. McManus (ed.), *Archaeological Displays and the Public*, pp. 53–71. Institute of Archaeology, University College London, London.

DAVIES, B., B. RICHARDSON & R. TOMBER 1994. *A Dated Corpus of Early Roman Pottery from the City of London.* The Archaeology of Roman London 5; CBA Research Report 98. Museum of London and the Council for British Archaeology, London and York.

DRINKWATER, J. F. 1983. *Roman Gaul.* Croom Helm, London.

ELDRIDGE, C. C. 1978. *Victorian Imperialism.* Hodder and Stoughton, London.

FINLEY, M. I. 1973. *The Ancient Economy.* Chatto and Windus, London.

FRERE, S. S. 1987. *Britannia: a History of Roman Britain.* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, third edition.

GREW, F. 1994. 'The Tower Hill Pageant: Making the most of archaeology.' *In* G. T. Denford (ed.), *Museum Archaeology — What's New?*, The Museum Archaeologist 21, pp. 43–7. Society of Museum Archaeologists, Winchester.

GREW, F. 2000. 'Whose *Londinium*? theirs or ours?' *London Archaeologist* 9(6): 161–7.

HAVERFIELD, F. 1923. *The Romanization of Roman Britain.* Clarendon Press, Oxford, fourth edition.

HAWKES, C. F. C. 1977. 'Britain and Julius Caesar.' *Proceedings of the British Academy* 63: 125–92.

HINGLEY, R. 1994. 'Britannia, origin myths and the British Empire.' *In* S. Cottam, D. Dunworth, S. Scott & J. Taylor (eds.), *TRAC 94. Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference Durham 1994*, pp. 11–23. Oxbow, Oxford.

HINGLEY, R. 1996. 'The 'legacy' of Rome: The rise, decline, and fall of the theory of Romanization.' *In* J. Webster & N. Cooper (eds.), *Roman Imperialism: Post- Colonial Perspectives,* Leicester Archaeology Monographs No. 3, pp. 35–48. School of Archaeological Studies, Leicester.

HINGLEY, R. 2000. *Roman Officers and English Gentlemen: the Imperial Origins of Roman Archaeology.* Routledge, London.

HOBSON, J. A. 1902. *Imperialism: A Study.* James Nisbet & Co, London.

JONES, C. E. E. 1983. 'A review of Roman lead-alloy material recovered from the Walbrook Valley in the City of London.' *Transactions of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society* 34: 49–59.

JORDAN, S. C. 2000a. 'Coarse Earthenware at the Dutch Colonial Cape of Good Hope, South Africa: a history of local production and typology of products.' *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 4(2): 113–43.

JORDAN, S. C. 2000b. *The 'Utility' of Coarse Earthenware: potters, pottery production and identity at the Dutch Colonial Cape of Good Hope, South Africa (1652–1795).* Ph.D. thesis, Rutgers University.

KING, A. C. 1984. 'Animal bones and the dietary identity of military and civilian groups in Roman Britain, Germany and Gaul.' *In* T. F. C. Blagg & A. C. King (eds.), *Military and Civilian in Roman Britain: cultural relationships in a frontier province*, pp. 187–218. British Archaeological Reports British Series 136, Oxford.

LOOMBA, A. 1998. *Colonialism/Post-Colonialism.* Routledge, London.

MARSDEN, P. 1980. *Roman London.* Thames and Hudson, London.

MARSH, G. 1978. 'Early second century fine wares in the London area.' *In* P. Arthur & G. Marsh (eds.), *Early Fine Wares in Roman Britain*, pp. 119–223. British Archaeological Reports British Series 57, Oxford.

MERRIFIELD, R. 1983. *London: City of the Romans.* Batsford, London.

MILLETT, M. J. 1990. *The Romanization of Britain.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

MILLETT, M. J. 1998. 'Introduction: London as capital?' *In* B. Watson (ed.), *Roman London: Recent Archaeological Work,* Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series 24, pp. 7–12. Journal of Roman Archaeology, Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

MILNE, G. 1985. *The Port of Roman London.* Batsford, London.

PERRING, D. 1991. *Roman London.* Seaby, London.

Pratt, M. L. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.* Routledge, London.

Rivet, A. L. F. 1958. *Town and Country in Roman Britain.* Hutchinson, London.

Robinson, R. & J. Gallagher 1981. *Africa and the Victorians: the Official Mind of Imperialism.* Macmillan, London. (With A. Denny).

Samuel, R. 1998. 'Epical history: the idea of nation.' *In* A. Light (ed.), *Island Stories: Unravelling Britain*, Theatres of Memory, vol. 2, pp. 3–20. Verso, London.

Schrire, C. 1995. *Digging through Darkness: Chronicles of an Archaeologist.* University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville and London.

Southgate, B. 1996. *History: What and Why: Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern Perspectives.* Routledge, London.

Turnbaugh, S. B. 1996. '17th and 18th century lead-glazed redwares in the Massachussetts Bay Colony.' *In* C. E. Orser (ed.), *Images of the Recent Past: Readings in Historical Archaeology*, pp. 215–34. AltaMira, Walnut Creek, CA.

Webster, J. 1995. '*Interpretatio*: Roman word power and the Celtic gods.' *Britannia* 26: 153–61.

West, B. 1993. 'The animal bone.' *In* G. Milne & A. Wardle, *Early Roman development at Leadenhall Court, London and related research*, pp. 67–79. *Transactions of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society*, 44: 23–169.

Wheeler, R. E. M. 1930. *London in Roman Times.* London Museum Catalogues No. 3, London.

Francis Grew
The Museum of London
150 London Wall
London EC2Y 5HN
fgrew@museumoflondon.org.uk