



Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian

By Emma Dench

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Modern treatments of Rome have projected in highly emotive terms the perceived problems, or the aspirations, of the present: "race-mixture" has been blamed for the collapse of the Roman empire; more recently, Rome and Roman society have been depicted as "multicultural." Moving beyond these and beyond more traditional, juridical approaches to Roman identity, Emma Dench focuses on ancient modes of thinking about selves and relationships with other peoples, including descent-myths, history, and ethnographies. She explores the relative importance of sometimes closely interconnected categories of blood descent, language, culture and clothes, and territoriality. Rome's creation of a distinctive imperial shape is understood in the context of the broader ancient Mediterranean world within which the Romans self-consciously situated themselves, and whose modes of thought they appropriated and transformed.

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Romulus' Asylum contains many sharp observations * W. V. Harris, Times Literary Supplement * This is a superb treatment which will be of great value both to those who are interested in self-perception and self-presentation, and to those seeking important new insights on 'mainstream' topics such as the Roman citizenship and the notion of Italy. * Christopher Burnand and Katherine Clarke, *Greece and Rome* * Dench offers one of the most learned, sophisticated, and full discussions of her theme in recent years, and one which succeeds admirably in stimulating debate. * A. J. S. Spawforth * There is no doubt that this project is a success * *Hermathena* *

About the Author

Emma Dench is Senior Lecturer in Ancient History, Birkbeck College, University of London.

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