

**The Citizen in Late Antiquity**Utrecht University, 25 November 2019   
Kanunnikenzaal, Faculty Club (Achter de Dom 7), Utrecht University  
09.30 - 17.30

‘Citizen’ in Late Antiquity was an emotive and complex term. In the classical world, the term not only signified the distribution of rights and duties of members of city and empire, but perhaps much more importantly reflected the intricate processes of inclusion and exclusion that shaped Greco-Roman culture in a myriad of ways. Conventional historiography, which tended to focus on legal citizenship almost exclusively, once characterized citizenship as defunct by the onset of Late Antiquity: it has argued that the mass enfranchisement of the edict of Caracalla and the gradual transformation - or collapse - of the *classical city*, turned the ‘citizen’ into an anachronism, with its social, cultural and political significance returning only at the onset of the Renaissance. Recent scholarship however has started to contest this view by positing that neither the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west nor the transformation of the *classical city* brought an end to the concept of the citizen.

Next to other forms of self-identification, such as gender, class and ethnicity, people in late Roman and post-Roman polities continued to imagine and conduct themselves as citizens and these categories could themselves be understood in terms of legal and social citizenship. The citizen was also omnipresent in religious discourses, most significantly in late antique Christianity where the followers of Christ could either be perceived as citizens par excellence (viz. of the *civitas Dei*) or as intrinsic strangers and outsiders, namely to the *civitas* of the transitory world. Furthermore, citizens, of whatever kind, were also represented in material and visual culture, they took part, as citizens, in economic and artistic life and they appear most frequently in a vast number of textual sources and genres. An understanding of the full spectrum of ‘citizenship’ and ‘the citizen’ in Late Antiquity thus requires the use of a wide range of sources and approaches, and the fresh insights of a new generation of scholars.

This workshop, *The Citizen in Late Antiquity*, aims at providing an informal, constructive environment for post-graduate and early career researchers to present their work, meet others working in the field, and discuss current trends and issues. The *Late Antiquity Network* provides a single platform for those working on a broad range of geographical and disciplinary areas within the period of Late Antiquity, and participants are thus encouraged to interpret ‘citizen’ in a broad sense, thinking about how the theme intersects with their own research. Papers will be of twenty minutes, with ten minutes allocated for discussion. Facilitating this will be an address by our visiting speaker, Professor Engin Isin of Queen Mary University London, an acclaimed and prolific theorist on the subject of citizenship. The workshop is generously supported and hosted by the Dutch NWO VICI research project *Citizenship Discourses in the Early Middle Ages*.

**Programme**

9:30 – **Registration**

10:00 - **Welcome & Opening Remarks**

10:05 - **Keynote**: Professor Engin Isin, Queen Mary University, London - ‘Doing Good Deeds: Graeco-Roman (euergetism) and Ottoman (waqf) Benefaction as Acts of Citizenship’  
  
*Response*: Professor Els Rose, Utrecht University

11:15 – **Tea & Coffee**

11:30 - **Session I -** **Multiple Citizenships and Being a Citizen in the Imperial Period and Late Antiquity**

* Giorgios Mouratidis, (doctoral researcher) University of St Andrews - ‘Athletes and the Phenomenon of Multiple Citizenship during the Imperial Period’
* Kristiaan Venken, (doctoral researcher) KU Leuven - ‘Unity and Division of *Civitas Dei* and *Civitas Terrena*’
* Merel de Bruin, (doctoral researcher) Utrecht University - ‘*Civis* and *Civitas* on Earth and in Heaven: Citizenship Discourses in the Sermons of Augustine, Maximus of Turin and Peter of Ravenna’

*Chair*: Kay Boers, (doctoral researcher) Utrecht University

13:00 – **Lunch**

14:00 - **Session II - Citizen and Non-Citizen: Inclusion and Exclusion**

* Carl Rice, (doctoral researcher) Yale University – ‘*Religio* and the Civic Subject in the Later Roman Empire: Two Manichean Case Studies’
* Dr. Gloria Larini, Independent Scholar - ‘Prudentius’s *Psychomachia* as Political Allegory: the Christian-Roman Man and the Heritage of *Mos Maiorum*’
* Dr. Nikolas Haechler, University of Vienna - ‘Jewish Citizens under the Reign of the Emperor Heraclius (610-641). Forceful Inclusion of Marginalised Groups as a Strategy of Resilience in the Face of Political Crisis’

*Chair*: Thomas Langley, (doctoral researcher) University of Cambridge

14:30 – **Tea and Coffee**

14:50 - **Session III - Citizens and Civic Government: Cities and their Rulers in the Long Late Antiquity**

* Cosimo Paravano, (doctoral researcher) University of Vienna – ‘Libanios on the City Councils: From Source to Agent’
* Álex Corona Encinas, (doctoral researcher) Universidad de Vallodalid – ‘Political Transformations and Citizenship in the Early Byzantine City’
* Lenneke Van Raaij, (doctoral researcher) University of Exeter - ‘The Return of the *Civitas*: The Episcopal City in the High Middle Ages’

*Chair*: Dr Megan Welton, Utrecht University  
  
16:20 – **Open Discussion** - Chaired by Dr Rebecca Usherwood, Trinity College Dublin  
  
17:20 – **Closing Remarks**

**Abstracts and Readings**

**Professor Engin Isin, Queen Mary University, London**

*Doing Good Deeds: Graeco-Roman (*euergetism*) and Ottoman (*waqf*) Benefaction as Acts of Citizenship*

Euergetism (benefaction or doing good deeds) is well known to historians of ancient Greece and Rome especially during the late antiquity. Following its early usage by André Boulanger (1923) euergetism was proposed as a historical-sociological construct by Paul Veyne (1984, 1992) as civic gift-giving that organised public life in cities. Although its origins are now traced back to the ancient Greek poleis (Gygax 2016), euergetism in late antiquity became a performative act by which public services such as festivals, temples, baths, walls, forums, marketplaces, theatres, and aqueducts were provided. Ottoman benefaction known by its Islamic name *waqf* (*awqaf*, pl.) in the 16th to 18th centuries is well known to historians of Ottoman and Islamic institutions. Like euergetism, Ottoman awqaf became a performative act by which Ottoman cities were endowed with mosques, marketplaces, inns, baths, libraries, almshouses, and hospitals (Singer 2008; van Leeuwen 1999). It is quite unlikely that Ottoman historians know about euergetism or that ancient historian about waqf (Isin and Lefebvre 2005). Yet, the similarities are uncanny and this lecture will illustrate (1) the force performativity to stage these acts of benefaction as acts of citizenship and (2) the political importance of understanding citizenship as performative acts.

Isin, Engin F. and Lefebvre, Alexandre (2005), ‘The Gift of Law: Greek Euergetism and Ottoman Waqf’, *European Journal of Social Theory,* 8 (1), 5-23.

**Giorgios Mouratidis, University of St Andrews**

*Athletes and the Phenomenon of Multiple Citizenship during the Imperial Period*

Distinguished athletes are known to have been awarded citizenships, as prizes, since the Archaic age. Literary evidence shows how Olympic victors changed their citizenship and participated in festivals as citizens of a different *polis*. Astylos of Croton, for example, and Dicon from Caulonia, are known to have competed not as citizens of their homelands but as citizens of Syracuse. However, in most of these known cases, the grant of a second citizenship was a source of friction between the athlete and their *patris*. Astylos, for example, after being proclaimed Syracusan, had his statue in his fatherland Croton demolished and his house turned into a prison.

The phenomenon of granting citizenships continued during Hellenistic period and reached its peak during the Imperial. However, in the first centuries of our common era, athletes and other performers (artists, musicians, etc.), seem to have stopped being identified by their city’s ethnic name and started accumulating a number of citizenships. A characteristic example, although not the average multi-citizen athlete, is Demetrios of Salamis who boasted that he was citizen in no less than 47 cities. Furthermore, it has been argued convincingly that contrary to earlier periods, multiple citizenships for athletes were no longer sources of friction between athletes and their cities nor among the cities themselves (van Nijf 2012).

The aim of this paper is to offer a study of the phenomenon of multiple citizenships and examine its historical significance. I will demonstrate that the accumulation of citizenships during the Imperial Period did not mean that citizenship lost its importance, nor it should be considered as an indication of the alienation between athletes and cities. Instead, by demonstrating their citizenships in as great numbers as possible, athletes tried to blur their association with a certain geographic space and highlight a new association with the wider Panhellenic community.

In this pursuit, their monuments were carriers of their identity. The ‘celebratory autonomy’ that these monuments, I will argue, enjoyed, along with the de-emphasising of the traditionally strong athlete-city bond and the projection of their citizenships, became the vehicles for the projection of their Panhellenic identity; thus, allowing athletes to function both in a city and within a wider network of cities. The study of multiple citizenships, in other words, shows how these multi-citizen performers aimed to transcend the geographical boundaries of their *poleis* and pursued a Pan-Hellenic identity, becoming true *cosmopolites*.

Van Nijf, O. 2012: 'Athletes, artists and citizens in the imperial Greek city', in A. Heller and A.-V. Pont (eds.), *Patrie d'origine et Patries Électives: Les Citoyennetés Multiples Dans Le Monde Grec d'époque Romaine*; Bordeaux, 175–194.

Frija, G. 2012: 'Les citoyennetés multiples chez les notables locaux : l'exemple des prêtres du culte impérial civique', in A.-V. Heller, Anna; Pont (eds.), *Patrie d'origine et Patries Électives: Les Citoyennetés Multiples Dans Le Monde Grec d'époque Romaine: Actes Du Colloque International de Tours, 6-7 Novembre 2009*, Bordeaux; Pessac; Paris, 113–126.

Ștefan, A. 2017: 'The Case of Multiple Citizenship Holders in the Graeco-Roman East', in A. Cecchet, Lucia; Busetto (eds.), *Citizens in the Graeco-Roman World*, Leiden; Boston, 110–131.

**Kristiaan Venken, KU Leuven**

*Unity and Division of* Civitas Dei *and* Civitas Terrena

In the beginning of the fifth century, in his De ciuitate Dei, Augustine presented a vision on society. Initially this work was written in response to the pagan allegations that the Christians were to blame for the fall of Rome in 410. According to Augustine, the society is a ‘mixed body’ (corpus permixtum) where citizens of two cities, the city of God (civitas Dei) and the earthly city (terrena civitas), live together. Both groups of citizens are distinguished by a different orientation: citizens of the civitas Dei put the love of God above self-love; citizen of the terrena civitas prefer earthly and temporal things above eternal values. A strict separation between both groups only occurs at the end of times; in the earthly order, here and now, there is no clear dividing line. The citizens of the civitas Dei share the earthly institutions with the citizens of the civitas terrena, living as foreigners in the countries here on earth, pilgrims on their way to their homeland in heaven. There have been many studies already on the significance of civitas Dei and terrena civitas and related concepts or images used by Augustine or other authors of his time. The use of Augustine's ideas for a political purpose and the effect of these ideas on later times has been extensively studied as well. Beyond the usual distinction between both groups based on their final loves, my study concentrates on concrete characteristics of both cities, with focus on unity or dividedness. The analysis is performed by investigating the finding places in De ciuitate Dei where terms related to unity or division occur in the context of both cities. As a result, unity will be shown to be a fundamental feature of the civitas Dei and dividedness or lack of unity of the terrena civitas. Moreover, presence of such a dividedness in the terrena civitas is the cause of problems in society and of the difficult coexistence between the civitas Dei and the terrena civitas.

The introduction (pgs. x-xxix) of R.W. Dyson, Augustine: The City of God against the Pagans, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, and in particular pgs. xv-xix on “Augustine’s Political Thought”.

Furthermore, in some lemma’s in the Augustinus-Lexikon – such as those on the topics ‘ciuis, ciuitas’, ‘civitas Dei’ and ‘concordia discordia’ – you may find interesting background: Cl. LEPELLEY, *Ciuis, civitas*, in C. MAYER (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Vol. 1, Basel, Schwabe, 1986-1994, 942-957; Em. LAMIRANDE, *Ciuitas Dei*, in C. MAYER (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Vol. 1, Basel, Schwabe, 1986-1994, 958-969; M.-F. BERROUARD, *Concordia - discordia*, in C. MAYER (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Vol. 1, Basel, Schwabe, 1986-1994, 1107-1111.

**Merel de Bruin, Utrecht University**

Civis *and* civitas *on earth and in heaven: citizenship discourses in the sermons of Augustine, Maximus of Turin and Peter of Ravenna*

During the first centuries of Christianity, Greek and Roman citizenship vocabulary was adopted by Christian authors to express their ideas on Christian identity. Combined with biblical and philosophical notions of belonging and one’s true home, citizenship vocabulary - in Latin for example: *civitas*, *civis*, *patria*, but also antonyms of *civis*, such as *peregrinus* - provided these authors with various means to articulate the Christian individual’s and his or her community’s place on earth through the perspective of the heavenly life to come. Examples of the inventiveness with which the earliest Christians applied this kind of terminology are discussed by Dunning (Dunning, 2009).

In my paper I will examine the functions of Latin citizenship vocabulary – with a specific focus on the terms *civis* and *civitas* - in the sermons of three late antique bishops: Augustine, Maximus of Turin and Peter of Ravenna. I will explore how these bishops employed *civis* and *civitas* in their sermons and examine to what extent these terms played a role in defining and constructing communal identity. Late antique sermons are an especially relevant source for this purpose. As the primary tool of the bishop to convey God’s will to the community, the sermon functioned to instruct the heterogeneous urban audiences (Rebillard, 2018; Clark, 2001) to live their earthly life according to the Christian ideals and values. It guided and exhorted the congregation to handle day-to-day issues in view of God’s promise of heaven, and it distinguished between the good Christian and the bad. The sermon’s context of use - being preached in a communal setting - made the bishop’s message not only meaningful for each individual, but also facilitated the construction of a shared group identity.

In this paper I intend to discuss three key issues: first, to what extent do these late antique bishops employ *civis* and *civitas* in their sermons? Second, do these terms have a function in the definition and construction of a communal identity? And third, in what ways do the bishops under study differ in how they employed these terms? By exploring these issues I aim to show the various ways in which the bishops fitted citizenship vocabulary in their teachings of the Christian way of life, and to picture the extent to which the vocabulary played a role in their efforts of defining the ideal community, in its spiritual as well as its earthly sense.

Rapp, Claudia, 'City and citizenship as Christian concepts of community in Late Antiquity', in: Rapp, C. and Drake, H. A. (eds.) *The City in the Classical and Post-Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 153-166.

Allen, Pauline, 'Impact, Influence, and Identity in Latin Preaching. The Cases of Maximus of Turin and Peter Chrysologus of Ravenna', in: Dupont, A., Boodts, S., Partoens, G., & Leemans, J. (eds.) *Preaching in the Patristic Era*. (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 135-156.

Rebillard, Éric, *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), chapter 3, 'Being Christian in the Age of Augustine', from this chapter, the pages 61-79.

**Carl Rice, Yale University**

Religio *and the Civic Subject in the Later Roman Empire: Two Manichean Case Studies*

From the days of Rome’s earliest expansion, access to the rights of the Roman citizen had ordered the Empire’s subjects along a spectrum of citizen-subjectivities. One’s place as subject intersected with one’s citizen-status (or lack thereof) to situate them somewhere along the hierarchical social order of empire. Scholars have traditionally argued that citizenship became obsolete in the aftermath of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, when nearly all free inhabitants of the Empire acquired citizenship. Historians have recently challenged this view, however, suggesting instead that discourses around citizenship proliferated in late antiquity. Indeed, it appears that, following the *Constitutio*, Roman society turned to a number of strategies beyond and in addition to the citizenship to interpellate its subjects and to determine their access to civic rights and privileges. One of these strategies was *religio*, a category which assumed a more profound significance and normative function in the mid-third century. Subsequently, adherence to normative *religio* became a key determinant for one’s status as a civic subject.

In this paper, I explore these phenomena by juxtaposing two sets of legal documents which concern the Manichaeans, a well-known deviant religious community in the later Roman empire. First, I present a rescript from 302 in which Diocletian and his Tetrarchic colleagues targeted their Manichaean subjects because of their *religio*. Then, I turn to a series of laws from the Theodosian Code which likewise espouse a normative *religio* and punish deviation from it. When read together, these documents suggest that Manichaeans persistently deviated from conceptions of normative *religio* under both the pagan and Christian imperial orders. Moreover, the Roman government employed a series of repressive strategies in their attempts to encourage their subjects to conform to its normative ideals: financial punishments, deprivation of civic rights with a mark of *infamia*, and violence. Each of these strategies linked religious identity with the multitudinous discourses of citizenship in late antiquity as it shaped the subjects of empire to adhere to a particular religious identity.

Through these case studies, I explore the ramifications of these observations for understanding of the relationship between *religio* and civic subject in the Roman empire and the strategies the government employed to enforce normative religious engagement. Ultimately, I contend that these two dossiers are representative of larger-scale connections between *religio* and the civic subject in the third, fourth and fifth centuries. I conclude by offering an analytical model through which to further explore this relationship.

Bond, Sarah. 2014. "Altering Infamy: Status, Violence, and Civic Exclusion in Late Antiquity." *Classical Antiquity* 33(1): 1-30.

Lo Nero, Carolina. 2001. "*Christiana Dignitas*: New Christian Criteria for Citizenship in the Late Roman Empire." *Medieval Encounters* 7(2): 146-164.

**Dr. Gloria Larini, Independent Scholar, formerly Scuola Normale, Pisa**

*Prudentius’s* Psychomachia *as Political Allegory: the Christian-Roman Man and the Heritage of* Mos Maiorum

In 1970 Franco Cardini wondered whether allegories could represent « una moralità più concreta e immediata, più “cittadina”: in una parola “politica” ». My research’s purpose aims at showing, through a literary, historical and comparative analysis, that the concepts of city and citizen, Barbarian and foreigner, protagonists of the allegorical battle of Psychomachia, describe an historical reality in fieri. In this work in fact the poet doesn’t represent only the desire for supremacy of two opposing groups, Romans and Barbarians, or between two religions, Christianity and the so called Paganism, but also the contrast between Christian Romans, for him the heirs of mos maiorum, and the “non-Christian Romans” and also “Barbarians” who had citizenship, symbol of the lost Roman identity of the past: he finds in the Christological figure the only factor of aggregation, a testimony of the values of ancient Rome. In his images Prudentius uses a double cognitive association: he mixes the reality of his time, the symbols of Roman power during Roman Republic and the empire of Augustus, and the culture and the habits of the Barbarians, filtered through the chthonic personifications of the classical greek and Roman literary tradition. The battle is not only fratricidal in a religious sense, but it’s a fight between social and political groups, brothers in their origin: the History has transformed them into different "peoples" with different points of view about culture, religion and political attitudes and inwardness. Prudentius’ dynamic allegories manifest the persistence of a 'surface' of Romanity also in change of status civitatis, plain for a Roman man through signs and symbols linked to different historical period and cultures. The Spenglerian idea of pseudomorphosis to connote Late Antiquity as original and autonomous cannot reflect these complex phenomena. Andrea Giardina defines it «metafora fuorviante», and his argumentation is confirmed, even in the light of these poetic Prudentius’ images free from the interference of the cognitive and historical modern categories: the allegoric personifications represent the transformation of Roman culture and society during Late Antiquity, which happened externally and internally, but without acquiring the characteristics of a different “element”. The poet, Roman citizen and aristocrat converted to Christianity, believes that mos maiorum can remain intact only under the aegis of Christ, the new imperator: only the Christian Romans can be true citizens able to passing the ideal of Rome aeterna and invicta, within Roman institutions, against Roman-barbarian hybridization.

Gloria Larini, “La trasformazione dei topoi del duello. I Sette contro Tebe di Eschilo e la Psychomachia di Prudenzio”, in *Controversie. Dispute letterarie, storiche, religiose dall’Antichità al Rinascimento*, ed. Gloria Larini, preface Franco Cardini, Libreriauniversitaria.it, Padova 2013, pp. 111-146.

Andrea Giardina, “Esplosione di Tardoantico”, in *Studi* *Storici* XL,1, 1999, pp. 157-189.

Franco Cardini, *Cristiani perseguitati e persecutori*, Roma, Salerno Editrice, 2011.

**Dr. Nikolas Haechler, University of Vienna**

*Jewish Citizens under the Reign of the Emperor Heraclius (610-641). Forceful Inclusion of Marginalised Groups as a Strategy of Resilience in the Face of Political Crisis*

The reign of the emperor Heraclius is widely regarded as a period of crisis and change for the Later Roman Empire. Devastating wars with the Persian Sassanids, the Avars and Slavs as well as with the Arabs – to name but the most prominent – repeatedly threatened to destabilize the state. It does, therefore, not come as a surprise that many citizens during the first half of the 7th century interpreted catastrophic events, such as the capture of Jerusalem in 614 or the siege of Constantinople in 626, as signs of the approaching apocalypse, announcing the end of this world’s time, seemingly caused by the sins and deviant beliefs of Byzantium’s inhabitants.

In order to overcome these challenges, Heraclius attempted to deploy a wide range of strategies, ranging from a blatant increase in military power, customizations of the state’s administrative (financial) structures to alleviating eschatological fears of his subjects. Thus, he likewise tried to unite the divided Christian Church over the questions about the nature of Christ by issuing the so-called "Ecthesis-Letter" together with patriarch Sergios in 638. Efforts to forcefully harmonize the religious affinities of the Empire’s citizens, thereby overcoming apocalyptic fears and steadying his own political power, are, however, well testified by compelled baptisms of Jews already around 630 after Heraclius’ victories over the Persians. Note that such anti-Jewish measures were a common phenomenon all over the Mediterranean World, extending from the Visigoths under king Sisebut to the Merovingians under king Dagobert I and to Italy under the influence of pope Honorius I.

This paper will focus on the treatment of Jewish citizens in Byzantium during the first half of the 7th century. It will argue that in light of dramatic historical developments, orders to forcefully baptize Jewish communities were deliberately deployed by the emperor as a strategy of resilience to surmount fears of the impending apocalypse among his Christian subjects. The presentation will thereby primarily focus on a critical examination of passages from the Chronicle of the so-called Fredegar, letters from Maximus the Confessor, the Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati and the Armenian history by Ps.-Sebeos. Although Heraclius’ measures aimed to unify Byzantium’s population, it will be shown that they did in fact not reduce the gap between Christians and Jews. Instead, they were based upon and subsequently even consolidated the status of Jewish citizens among the Empire’s marginalised groups.

Dagron, Gilbert & Déroche, Vincent, *Juifs et chrétiens en Orient byzantin*, Paris 2010 (Bilans de Recherche 5), 17-46".

Magdalino, Paul, “The End of Time in Byzantinium”, in: Wolfram Brandes & Felicitas Schmieder (eds.): *Endzeiten. Eschatologie in den monotheistischen Weltreligionen*, Berlin et al. 2008 (Millenium-Studien 16), 119-134, [119-128 in particular]).

**Cosimo Paravano, University of Vienna**

*Libanios on the City Councils: From Source to Agent*

Libanios has often been seen as a somewhat romantic defender of such allegedly lost causes as civic life, paganism and a rhetorical education whose commitment to ancient values, though commanding respect, was ultimately out of touch with the evolving world of his time. In particular, his passionate defenses of the city council of Antioch (e.g. Orations 48 and 49) have been considered part of this rearguard battle and very good witnesses to the dwindling vitality of Late Antique civic life. However, recent research has shown how the cities of the Greek East continued to enjoy prosperity well into at least the 6th century, thus calling for a methodological reversal: we should not take Libanios as an unbiased witness and posit a decline in the late 4th century, but rather consider him an agent and ask what his political and ideological agenda was in giving such a depiction of Antioch.

My paper will try to do this by analyzing two speeches dating to 385 CE: Oration 48 shows how for Libanios the very concept of Greek citizenship relied on a functioning city council. The other is Oration 28, a speech which has received virtually no scholarly attention (no translation is available). In it, Libanios harshly criticizes Icarios, then comes Orientis, for mistreating city councilors and encourages emperor Theodosius (actually, his praetorian prefect Cynegius) to pass and enforce legislation protecting them. Other sources, such as the Theodosian Code, show that such legislation must have been in the air at court and Libanios’ text can be interpreted as a lobbying means to persuade the praetorian prefect to take action.

Such an analysis will lead to two conclusions. The first is that Libanios was not fighting for a hopeless cause and that his claims find parallels in contemporary legislation. The second is that we should not, as Libanios would have us do, equate an undeniably diminished influence of the city councilors with a decline of city life. If he defends this equation, it is because of his support for a conception of Hellenism with strong civic overtones, one which was starting to be challenged by other intellectuals like Themistios. Properly assessing the literary evidence in its political and intellectual context can help unravel conflicting narratives bearing on the transformations of civic life in Late Antiquity and to better understand the perception contemporaries had of them.

G. Dagron, ʽL'empire romain d'Orient au IVe siècle et les traditions politiques de l'hellénisme. La témoignage de Thémistiosʼ, *T&MByz* 3 (1968), 1-242, esp. pp. 60-82 (“Les oppositions politiques”).

J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch. City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1972, pp. 101-105 (“The Council: Theory and Practice”), 167-192 (“The Changing Character of the Council”, “The Flight of the Councillors”, “The New Aristocracy”)

**Álex Corona Encinas, Universidad de Vallodalid**

*Political Transformations and Citizenship in the Early Byzantine City*

During the times of the Early Byzantine empire, Justinian’s public administration was not just a local phenomenon, but one of great importance to the political organization of a multi-ethnic and multinational community, to such an extent that some authors argue that Rome’s global power could not be understood without the history of its cities. In this context, the municipal administration was reformed during the Prefecture of John the Cappadocian (532-541), leading to an increased role of components like the provincial governors or the bishops and, at the same time, to processes of centralization and bureaucratization. Some of these reforms altered the political and administrative schemes of the cities deeply, resulting in political, social and economic phenomena, like an increase in the tax burden and an empowerment of the “regime of the notables”, who will play a major role in the local councils (previously formed by the curiales or βουλευταί).

As a result, the review of the legal sources behind the reforms of Justinian and the literary works of the period reveal that certain administrative amendments were motivated by changes in the political mentality of the citizenship of that time and also responded to a complex ideological programme articulated by the emperor Justinian, designed to appeal to people through the recovery of traditional values and institutions of the Roman past.

Therefore, I will examine some of the purposes of the reforms, its causes and its effects for the citizens of the Byzantine municipia through some of the concrete legislative initiatives and comments by the non-legal authors of the period, while reflecting on issues like the early Byzantine concept of the municipium, the transformation of the local political institutions and the actual scope of the legal provisions regarding the administration of the cities.

Curchin, L. “The end of local magistrates in the Roman Empire”, in *Gerion*, 32, 2014, pp. 271-286.

Maas, M. “The Ideological Transformation of Tradition”, in Maas, M. *John Lydus and the Roman Past: Antiquarianism and Politics in the Age of Justinian.* London: Routledge, 1992, pp. 38-52.

**Lenneke Van Raaij, University of Exeter**

*The return of the* Civitas*: The episcopal city in the High Middle Ages*

Some Roman concepts outlive the Romans: *civitas* is one of them. Instead of being forgotten, the word *civitas* transformed to fit the growing Christian framework in the late-antique and early-medieval periods. The diocesan structure moved along similar lines as the late-antique Roman provinces, and the cities from which the (arch)bishops ruled, were often cities with Roman origin, such as Paris, Reims, Cologne and Trier. These cities were often related to as *civitates*.

This concept of a diocesan form of *civitas* became especially relevant in the tenth century. With centralised Carolingian power gone, regional leaders came to the fore and bishops now considered themselves the centre of power within their own diocese. Indeed, with minting rights, rights to collect taxes and juridical power at hand, they were often in charge of worldly as well as spiritual power within the diocese. The centre from which they could exercise their power was the *civitas;* the episcopal, political and often economical centre of the diocese. The *civitas* was important to the religious rulers for cultural and religious reasons too, as it had the potential to serve as a post card for their authority as (arch)bishop.

In this paper, I will take you on a journey to such a tenth-century episcopal *civitas* and explore to what extent the inhabitants were confronted with this concept and in what ways the bishop actively propagated a narrative of an episcopal *civitas.*

S. Rossignol, ‘*Civitas* in Early Medieval Central Europe – Stronghold or District?’ *The Medieval History Journal* 14.1 (2011) 71-99.

J. Ott, ‘Urban Space, Memory, and Episcopal Authority: The Bishops of Amiens in Peace and Conflict, 1073-1164’ *Viator* 31 (2000) 43-78.