"I have seen a face with a thousand countenances"[1]: interpreting Ptolemies' *mixed* statuary
"Eu vi um rosto com mil semblantes"[2]: interpretar a estatuária ptolemaica *mista*

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Abstract: Around the time the postcolonial paradigm was being established in the Humanities, the Ptolemaic period was also receiving growing attention. Scholars in the second half of the 20th century, however, understood Egypt's society and culture as a set of impermeable communities/traditions, merely coexisting with one another.[3] This interpretation caused a radical turn in historiography. More significantly, though, it left material culture that did not belong exclusively to either of the cultural sets (Greek or Egyptian) largely overlooked, and, later on, underestimated in the debates on who influenced who. The author's master's thesis took as a case study the Greco-Egyptian stone sculptures in the round of male Ptolemaic rulers, looking to further understand these previously underestimated objects. They were not underestimated, however, in the sense that their existence was not acknowledged or analysed, but in the sense that the explanation put forward was not complex enough. These 20th century authors formulated their interpretation mainly from the point of view of state and elites, disregarding thus other possible realms of agency. This article presents a part of the investigation, namely the theoretical framework adopted to suggest another interpretation for the existence of the "mixed" statuary of Ptolemaic rulers. Although today Ptolemaic Egypt is not understood as a colonial case, postcolonial studies will contribute to this alternative line of interpretation by decentralizing analysis, from the state to other groups. Nevertheless, the major contribution will come from a theory of consumption, which in turn aims to decentralize studies, from issues of power to other realms.

Keywords: Ptolemaic Egypt; Royal Ptolemaic stone sculpture in the round; Greco-Egyptian statues; Culture contact; Consumption studies.

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1   From the poem *Faces*, by Kahlil Gibran.
2   Do poema *Faces*, de Kahlil Gibran.
3   One of the main features of a postcolonial interpretation is that the group subordinated by the colonial context has an active role in the process of interaction, more than it was assumed before. It does notdeny, however, interaction.

Introduction

❝*The Greek 'colonies' have become a byword for migration and colonialism in the ancient Mediterranean.*", states Peter van Dommelen (2012: 394) at the opening of his article on migration and colonization in the ancient sea.

Studying ancient Greek migratory flows and settlements have been, since the 19th century, a topic of choice for most Classicists, even to the extent of constituting a "subdiscipline" within Classical studies. The timeline under focus, however, has been mainly the end of the Late Bronze Age up until Classical times – *circa* the 10th to the 4th centuries B.C.E. – , while the period after the conquests of Alexander III of Macedon, especially the reigns of the *diadochoi*,[4] has been little investigated from this perspective, namely in a diachronic and a synchronic view of the issue. (van Dommelen 2012: 394-395)

From the 4th century B.C.E., however, people from the Balkans and other Greek-speaking regions spread as far as India, were they soldiers, merchants, philosophers or kings-to-be; such process led to the formation of one of the most relevant flows of migration in Antiquity in the Mediterranean region.[5]

The usual questions asked by social scientists when examining movement of people are those related to the moment, duration and geography of the occurrence. Indeed, migration as a conceptual tool for social and human studies conveys in its most basic definition the necessary correlations between the temporal and the spatial aspects.

The phenomenon, however, goes far beyond such dimensions. It bears in particular one element that is frequently

overlooked but still impactful nonetheless: that is the human aspect of migration. While elaborating on this matter, Katja Mueller (2005: 73) wrote: "Migrants form part of a network of human relationships, of families and cultures which eject them or from which they depart voluntarily". They also come to integrate (alter, disrupt, challenge) the networks of the place of arrival, thus constituting, as a phenomenon, a relational experience at the two moments (departure and arrival), between those who migrate and those who respond to the migration (Mueller 2005: 74; Archibald 2011: 51).

It was on this topic that my investigation aimed on. I set out to assess the encounters between the two main communities of Egypt during the Ptolemaic period (Egyptian and Greek), most specifically on the matter of artistic production. It also seems relevant to understand exactly what is meant when speaking of a wave of migration into Egypt during the dynasty founded by one of the *diadochoi*, Ptolemy I Soter.

Migration to Ptolemaic Egypt

From papyri and inscriptions, there is some level of confidence on the quantity and diversity of foreign ethnic designations occurring in Ptolemaic Egypt (La'da 2003: 159). Even considering the problematic and biased nature of this data,[6] according to Katja Mueller (2005) the most diverse and frequent number of labels from cities and regions outside Egypt occurred in the middle of the 3rd century B.C.E., with over 170 different labels registered. This papyrologist created the following table to gather the array of ethnic labels and their frequency on Csaba La'da's (2002) major study on the subject, *Prosopographia Ptolemaica X. Foreign Ethnics in Hellenistic Egypt*:

4   That is, the generals, companions and relatives that fought each other in order to succeeded Alexander in the many parts of his empire.

5   The Hellenistic capitals of the *diadochoi* are understood, in the terminology of social network analysis, as "super hubs", outgrowing all other known, contemporary, cities (Archibald 2011: 59). The population density in Alexandria, Antiocheia, Seleukeia-on-the-Orontes and Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris seem to increase from around the end of the fourth century B.C.E., and Sitta von Reden suggests that it is due to the increase in standards of living, although migration is not ignored as one of the contributors to such an increase in density in these cities (Archibald 2011: 424). Zosia H. Archibald (2011: 60), focusing specifically on the issue of migration, argues too (and more strongly) that a great part of the number of people living in these large cities in the fourth century B.C.E. onwards is due to migratory flows. In fact, "The size of the largest urban centres [of the period] implies a scale of inward migration that is much larger than the social units documented in narrative sources".

6   For instance, the fact that there are no similar sources written in Egyptian-Demotic, or the fact that some of the labels of origins were formalized with time, inherited or even fabricated (Mueller 2005: 76).

Ethnics (by region)	Number of cases
Cyrenaica	201
Thrace	199
Ioudaia	102
Crete	80
Attika	63
Thessaly	58
Caria	53
Arabia	49
Pamphylia	40
Ionia	37
...	...
Total	**1632**

Table 1. Frequency of ethnics (by region) in Ptolemaic Egypt.

Source: Mueller (2005: 77).[7]

From the number of cases registered, the three most common foreign ethnic designations (by region) are Cyrenaica, Thrace and Ioudaia. Taking into account, however, all of the ethnics mentioned in the table, the conclusion is rather different, since it is clear a Greek preponderance on the data: Ionia, Caria, Thessaly, Attika and Crete were Greek regions, and even Cyrenaica, Thrace and Pamphylia were too part of the Greek world.

This is well-demonstrated by the map below (also by K. Mueller 2005). The circles, either because of their size or because of clustering, evidence the predominance of Greek migration into Ptolemaic Egypt (Thompson 2006).

Even though only half of the data presented in the table can be precisely dated, we can estimate that the number of foreign immigrants increases with a stable pace from 300 B.C.E. to 215 B.C.E., then it decreases severely, and continues in that way into the mid-first century B.C.E. (Mueller 2005).[8]

The waves of migration by the end of the 3rd century B.C.E. then composed around 10% of the population of Egypt, and by the first century B.C.E., namely as a consequence of marriages, it probably resulted in around 15% of people being designated as Greek[9] (Rathbone 1990). Given this outlook, it is understandable that one considers the impact of such a migratory flow, especially since immigration to Egypt during the Ptolemaic Period had no parallel in the history of the country (La'da 2003; Mueller 2005).

To be clear, foreign migrations into Egypt were not unusual, "either as successful or unsuccessful invaders or as peaceful immigrants" (La'da 2003: 157). But the Hellenistic period (especially the Ptolemaic chronology), besides the unprecedented numbers, represented a move away from the traditional sources of immigration in Egypt, that had been until then Syria-Palestine, Libya and Nubia (La'da 2003). More significantly, it comprehended the encounter of two cultural entities who had a very particular approach toward foreigners. On the one hand, there were the ancient Egyptians, that from the earliest times "divided the world into kmt and dSrt, that is, the nurturing and familiar black earth of Egypt and the hostile red earth of the desert, symbolizing all foreign people" (La'da 2003: 157). On the other hand, there were the ancient Greeks, who exalted the civilizational aspects of their culture against the barbarism of others (Bagnall 1997).
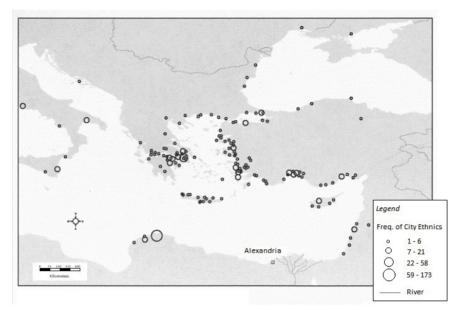
Relations between Egypt and Greek regions are documented for over two millennia, that is, approximately, since the Aegean Bronze Age. It is believed that despite the previous mentions to their pre-conceptions of the world, this was an extensive and fruitful relationship from commerce, military to the intellectual field (La'da 2003).

Once the political element was added, however, a serious challenge appeared: how could one interpret the Ptolemaic period, especially its cultural aspects, when there was (in principle) an obvious power imbalance between the communities involved?

7   Only a part of this table – the part that interests this article – is shown here.

8   There is little evidence thereafter, as well for before 320 B.C.E. (Mueller 2005).

9   As long as we consider a total of population in Egypt in the third to the first centuries BCE not exceeding the four million.

Fig. 1. Distribution and frequency of city ethnics in Ptolemaic Egypt.
Source: Mueller 2005: 80

Culture contact on studies of the Hellenistic period

Historiography regarding Egypt on the Hellenistic period clearly exposes the struggle of interpretation. The interest in this chronology emerged in the middle of the 19th century through the works of Johann Droysen. The German scholar brought, to some degree, the Hellenistic period out of the neglect where it had been both for Classicists and Egyptologists, who, at that time, understood this period as a degeneration of both ancient Greek and Egyptian cultures (Samuel 1989). In fact, a quick look at books on both communities reveals this perception, on headlines such as "the golden/classical age", or on the naming of the "final" chronologies of their histories with this teleological connotation – which are still very present ideas.

The emergence of an academic interest on this period in the 19th century formed specifically entangled with the topic of cultures in contact, when J. Droysen famously proposed that this period saw a blend of Western and Eastern cultures. The next generations "fleshed out Droysen's view"

(Burstein 1997:38), developing it further and in complete accordance with ideologies of colonialism and imperialism of the time, which boasted advanced civilizations for their progress towards rationalism, assuming their mission to be the extension of their model to primitive communities, through the spread of more progressive governmental forms, innovative technology, or stimulating economic activity (Samuel 1989).

"The historical imagination inspired by World War I" (Samuel 1989: 6) did not contribute much (nor differently) to the case of cultural encounters and their study from a not colonialist or imperialistic point of view. What the 1920s and 1930s did produce was an astounding amount of work concerning economy, politics, administration, military history, religion, agriculture, to name a few (Samuel 1989).

The first major contribution came after World War II. The postcolonial world forced western scholars into reflecting upon the (un)conscious projection of colonialism on their works, preventing some of continuing to understand apparent colonial situations in antiquity (of European people coming

into contact and conquering non-European peoples) "with the same "good conscience" they once had, confident that European domination was good for the ruled as well as for the rulers" (Bagnall 1997: 226). Studies about the interaction between the different communities,[10] rather than analysis of states, became common, but in what concerns Ptolemaic Egypt at least, these studies on interaction produced an overall understanding, a bit counter-intuitive perhaps, that no mixing, mingling or blending had occurred. The cultural sets, namely the Greco-Egyptian ones, were understood as co-existing units, with little influence on one another (Burstein 1997; Burstein 2002).

Despite having been an important step for comprehending the Hellenistic period, and Ptolemaic Egypt in particular, since it ceased unified approaches to the time line and conceded individual attention to the various kingdoms and peoples (Samuel 1989), this perspective tended to "exaggerate barriers to contact between Greeks and non-Greeks". It tended even to "exaggerate the extent of ethnic solidarity within the Egyptian population" (Burstein 1997: 51), when speaking of Ptolemaic Egypt. But ultimately, it largely overlooked and underestimated objects that clearly contradicted that idea.

Royal Ptolemaic statuary: a case study for culture contact studies

The statues

As stated at the beginning, I sought to explore in my Master's thesis the matter of migration from the moment of arrival of the foreign groups at the new/local community – not necessarily from the viewpoint of the Greeks, the ones who "came", but in the ways that such a movement of people interfered or not with the existing networks, especially in what concerned the artistic environments.

I took as a case study the stone sculpture in the round of the male Ptolemaic rulers,[11] using the *corpus* available (to my knowledge) of the entire dynasty, as long as their place of discovery was attributed to Egyptian territory.[12] My attention was particularly directed to the heads of statues regarded as "mixed" in style, which posed from my perspective a difficulty to the researcher who sought to classify, analyse and explain this group that did not belong exclusively to one artistic tradition.

From a total of 137 statues collected and analysed until the writing of this article, 34 presented features from both cultural/artistic sets (see Table 2). This means that around 25% of the objects gathered fell under the category of "mixed" statues.

Features	Number of objects	%
Egyptian	61	*ca.* 44,5 %
Greek	40	*ca.* 29,2 %
Both	34	*ca.* 24,8 %
Face too damaged to analyse	2	*ca.* 1,5 %
Total of statues	137	100 %

Table 2. Grouping of the features found in the collected statues of the Ptolemies.

The "mixed" group of Ptolemaic royal statuary refers to heads with features and/or renderings of the face from both artistic sets, that is, for instance, a face with an Egyptian rendering, wavy hair and a diadem with an *uraeus* (see Figure 2), or a face with a probable Greek rendering, wavy forehead hair and a double crown (see Figure 3). Between Hellenistic and pharaonic regalia, face renderings and other facial features, the combinations were numerous and that makes it difficult to create a consistent

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10   Different from the previous view of a blend between West and East from the point of view of the *conqueror*.

11   Excluding sphynxes and sculptor's models or votives.

12   The statues that did not have a provenance indicated were, however, considered for this study if the analysis of the object suggested Egypt as the probable place of discovery.

category of objects– that is, that does not seem to be the deposit of all of the objects we could not integrate in the straightforward categories of Egyptian or Greek production or representation. But categorization – etic conceptual tools and groupings to study these objects - was not an end in itself, at least not in the study I carried out; I also aimed at understanding the mechanisms that allowed for such a reality to come into existence, while looking for emic designations and motivations for the existence of these objects.

In this article I will explore only part of my Master's investigation, specifically the theoretical frameworks I found most useful for understanding the creation of this kind of objects. For this reason, it is a more interpretative article rather than a thoroughly documented or descriptive one. Its purpose is to reflect on the possibilities of an approach informed by theories from other disciplines discussing, nevertheless, a common source (material culture) and a similar question to that source (how can change in material culture be interpreted).

Fig. 2. Limestone statue of a Ptolemy, 37.1489E.
Source: Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 2014.

Fig. 3. Granite statue of a Ptolemy.
Source: National Archaeological Museum.

Reinterpreting Ptolemaic royal statuary

Ptolemaic royal statues have received some attention: from the study of Kyrieleis in 1975, Smith's (1988) study on Hellenistic royal portraiture, Josephson's 1997 study of Egyptian royal sculpture of Late Period, Ashton (1999) and Stanwick's (2002) studies at the turn of the century, culminating in Brophy's (2014) recent doctoral thesis on the subject.[13] Much has been achieved, in dating and/or attribution of the statues to a ruler; studies by both Classicists and Egyptologists have been carried out, from different viewpoints; stylistic analysis too have had many scholars devoted to in the last couple of decades; historical and comprehensive analysis, with a contextualization provided to these statues and a correlation with other kinds of sources, have too been pursued; and throughout these many kinds of studies some proposals were advanced in order to explain the aforementioned "mixed" statues.

13   I considered for this article mainly the English-speaking world.

Three are the touchstones of works on the topic: the question of interaction (whether "mixed" statues reflect an interaction between Egyptian and Greek ideas); the ideological argument; and the role of ethnicity in these artistic options.

The question about interaction is often polarized between the interaction and the no-interaction stances. The first one, perhaps the oldest proposal (as Maspero was writing about it in 1887), is the proposition that argues for an interaction between ancient Egyptian and ancient Greek artistic traditions, a stance more recently re-emerged in Stanwick's study (2002).

The second school of thought, formulated in the second half of the 20th century, was the idea that no interaction, blending, mixing, influence, or something of the sort, had occurred between Egyptian and Greek artistic forms. This was an idea famously advanced by Robert Bianchi, but also followed by Ashton (2004). Advocates of the no-interaction school argued for openness in ancient Egyptian artistical practices to change *in itself*, and thus needing no external driver, nor *influencer*. Change occurred thus from within and so, one could conclude from this line of thought, ancient Egyptian culture kept its course as a cohesive, separate tradition.

I will address some problems in these approaches, regarding this group of statues, next.

Regarding interaction, my problem is twofold. Not only did I not see how the two positions could not be conciliated (since the argument that ancient Egyptian practices enabled the kind of change that happened in "mixed" statues is not necessarily contrary to saying that that change was incited by an interaction with different traditions, such as the Greek one), but I also hesitated about this binary treatment of the question. The problem with binary oppositions – between interaction/ no interaction, influence/no influence, or acceptance/rejection of the foreigner – is that they tend to confine the treatment of the issue into controlled artificial "spaces". And that is often problematic because it tends to "frame reaction to foreign domination in the outsider's terms", thus diminishing the range of possible

responses. It is also problematic because the locals' real choices were most probably not that clear and straightforward, and, more than that, "even some types of rejection may be types of acceptance" (Bagnall 1997: 228). Given that, I looked into theories that dealt with the matter of culture contact, namely material culture "in between" cultures, to see if I could approach the issue outside that frame. I would find that possibility in Michael Dietler's (2010) theory of consumption, with which I came into contact through the work of Kathryn Howley (2018).

Consumption is most commonly understood in its contemporary, capitalistic, stricter sense as the utilization of mass-produced, end-of-the-chain commodities. When understood in a broader sense, it can be defined both as embedded in and as a constitutive process of "symbolic construction of identity" (Dietler 2010: 214-215). Taken to the scale of a group of people, this process creates an important ground for "agentive social action, symbolic discourse, and cultural [conceptualization and] transformation" with a specific material significance (Dietler 2010: 208). It is in this broader sense that the concept gives body to the theory of consumption and becomes relevant to the study at hands.

Dietler's (2010) theory of consumption, although not first formulated by him,[14] will be used according to his interpretation.

My interest in this approach to interaction was twofold. I was interested in the fact that this theory had a material focus – that is, objects were at the centre of the enquiry –, and secondly, I was interested in its use of the concept "culture". Studying Ptolemaic "mixed" statuary recurrently came to the question of interaction, as seen before, which rapidly led to a bipolarized issue. The reason for that, I believe, derived from a particular understanding of culture. Beyond the issues posed by the use of the word "influence" (which I will not address here), the two schools of thought seemed reliant on a notion of culture as a homogeneous, single-cell organism. Interaction

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14   The economist and sociologist Thorsten Veblen and the sociologist Georg Simmel were responsible for that (Dietler 2010).

in this context was interpreted as a loss of identity (a cultural one, in this case). It was put in those terms perhaps because it was perceived as an experience devoid of agency, or at least disregarding different types of agency, with overtly simplistic operating mechanisms.

The theory of consumption, however, considers culture as porous, a project in the making[15] – never one and only, a cohesive or coherent unit. Consumption plays an important role in this context, since it consists in a mechanism that actively participates in culture, by being structured by it, and simultaneously constructing it in this relational, constant, process (Dietler 2010: 215).

This process may seem structured, but it is rather (more often) an improvisation – diffuse in nature and decentralized in character –, continuously changing "by also dealing with alien objects and practices through either transformative appropriation and assimilation or rejection" (Dietler 2010: 216).

The mention of "alien objects and practices" and their consumption further underlines interaction as an essential part or mode in identity, both in theory and in the culture's constitutive process. Therefore, interaction does not equal "deculturation". To quote Marshall Sahlins, M. Dietler (2010: 217) underlined even further the centrality of interaction, writing that that author had even noted that "cultures are generally foreign in origin and local in pattern", which should serve to deconstruct culture as an internal inherent trait of a community. Cultural continuity, in this respect, would be nothing more than the collection of moments and manners through which cultures have changed. Consumption across cultures would be one of those manners – a process in which "selective appropriation and creative assimilation [occurs] according to local logic".

Defining culture in this manner helps rethink and review the deeply rooted *"Western dichotomy between tradition and change"* (Dietler, 2010: 216-217), which is something that has been

quite problematic within Egyptology, as noted by Dimitri Laboury in his seminal article (2017).

This author introduced the conceptual framework "intericonicity" (akin to intertextuality)[16] in Egyptology in order to contest the tendency to think in terms of tradition as opposed to change in the discipline. Through his study of the mechanisms of production behind New Kingdom private tomb images and Middle Kingdom statues, he proposed the use of the concept since it denominated and explained more efficiently the variability found in ancient Egyptian art. This variability, that is, creative borrowing, re-interpretation and reuse of an icon, instantiations of a type, combination of different traditions or sources, re-categorization, or variations in the transmission of an image (Laboury 2017), was, in his words, the ancient Egyptian mode of artistic creation and innovation.

By opting to focus on the immigrant that became pharaoh, and on his lineage, I was not only studying these individuals' representations (or choices for representation) but also the institutions that commissioned those statues, the audiences to whom the statues were made for, as well as those in the "middle", who produced them. A certain balance, thus, between these very different realms of agency was needed and, most of all, encouraged, since no object can be regarded as ideological in purpose without considering the many instances through which it went through. This leads to the second characteristic of approaches to the "mixed" group of Ptolemaic statues: the ideological readings of these objects.

The vantagepoint of studying objects such as these through consumption theory lies precisely on the fact that when they are discovered they are, in principle, in their last place of consumption, which gathers in itself all of the previous "stages" (that is, spaces of agency), with the inherent choices and motivations associated to them. Consumption

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15   "Rather than viewing culture as simply an inheritance from the past, a processual approach recognizes that it is, more accurately, a kind of eternal project" (Dietler 2010: 216).

16   That is, the theory that states that every text exists interconnected with others, and it is in consideration to them that it constructs and establishes its form, meaning and reception (Laboury 2017).

theory is conscious of that in the analysis. The many stages, and the groups acting within each one of them, do not always form a cohesive or coherent "chain". They are, in fact, "often contradictory", for the groups at stake are "located differentially within complex relational fields" (Dietler 2010: 216). Therefore, it was required to study these statues as finished products, representing someone and with a certain audience in view, but also as works of artisans and artists.

For the ideological, top-down argument to be used as an explanation of "mixed" royal statues, we must have evidence of the kind of control by the royal house over the modes of production. By reading Ptolemaic documentation (Austin 2006; Bagnall & Derow 2004; Burstein 1985), one can conclude two things. The first one is that at least officially there was no suggestion on how the male royal statues should look like, except for the statue mentioned in the decree present in the Rosetta stone, which asks for a statue in the Egyptian "work"/"fashion".[17] Aside from that, the concern is essentially devoted to the material in which the statues should be made, and the height of it (see Stanwick 2002).

Even if ordered directly by the royal house (which we know not all of them to have been) (Ashton 1999), the accomplishment of that order fell on a diverse group, ranging from priests, officials and laborers, as the Famine stele indicates (Stanwick 2002). And if no guideline is directly given (to our knowledge), then we may assume that the choices were done along this chain of people, across different types of agency and ideas of royal portraiture.

Given this outlook (obviously in view of its availabity and my knowledge on the subject)[18], there is no reason to directly interpret these statues within an ideological framework, at least not exclusively. The creation of "mixed" statues can be reasonably attributed to an emic (Egyptian) mechanism of artistic creativity. That is what the studies of Dimitri Laboury on ancient Egyptian mechanisms of production, the documents consulted, and the theory of consumption have led me into proposing.

The many elements added to the statues could, then, represent a range of people (including the royal house) consuming ideas and icons from the available circumstances (that is, the Greco-Egyptian artistic milieu) – very similar to an iconographical thesaurus (Laboury 2017) -, rather than (just) a formal top-down will of appeasing Egyptian and Greek cultural tastes/expectations. This is to what interpretations about the "mixed" statuary of the many Ptolemies usually come down to: the statues are understood as tools of an ethnically constructed political programme.

Csaba La'da (2003) has affirmed that there is no evidence supporting an idea of a systematic and institutionalized ethnic discrimination on the part of the central government (which is not the same as equality). As such, there would be no reason for the Ptolemies to be using their representations in statuary in that manner, for ethnically-driven ideological purposes. Not even for cases such as the appeasement of "native rebellions", mistakenly defined on ethnicity grounds, since those were in fact economic and not ethnic grievances (Ashton 1999: 29), with Greeks often taking part as well.[19]

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17   "A statue of King Ptolemy the ever-living, God Manifest and Beneficent, shall be set up in each temple in the [most] distinguished [place], to be called (statue) of Ptolemy the avenger of Egypt, and beside it shall stand the chief god of each temple presenting to him the weapon of victory, which shall be constructed [in the Egyptian]/ fashion" (Austin 2006: 494).

The Rosetta Project Online has the Demotic text also available (the Hieroglyphic text is incomplete on this part). In Demotic, the expression used is "r-X wp(.t) rmT-(n-) Km(j)", "done according to Egyptian work" (Werning & Lincke, 2019).

Stanwick (2002) argues that the translation to "statue" might be a mistake, since the text seems to be pointing instead to a relief.

18   There is still much to be translated and published.

19   Ethnic friction is in fact extremely rare until the late Ptolemaic and early Roman period, when the direct involvement of Rome in Egyptian matters and the introduction of a differential legal and tax system on the basis of ethno-cultural criteria polarized the ethnic groups inhabiting Egypt (La'da 2003).

Final remarks

"Studies of consumption by archaeologists and socio-cultural anthropologists have a special place in this domain of research [consumption studies] because they bring to it a global perspective that ranges widely in time and space" (Dietler 2010: 226).

To consider the contribution that other spaces and chronologies can bring to the discussion of certain themes or the construction of some theories is a recent perspective. There are two often-cited advantages of such a move. The first one is the relativization of such knowledges, also referred to as the provincialization of North Western knowledge when the move is not only to other chronologies but to spaces outside this territory – a topic thoroughly developed by Sanjay Seth (2014) in his recent studies. The second one is the possibilities for improvement of these knowledges, by bringing them more case studies from where to draw critics and contributions to the theory.

My move outside Egyptology was not necessarily concerned with these issues – and it may not contribute to the critic or enhancement of consumption theory. But I believe Ptolemaic studies can gain much with its application, or in fact with virtually any invitation of other discipline's view on a same topic or object. Todd Gillen (2017: 17), in the introduction to the proceedings of the conference held at the University of Liège, *(Re)productive Traditions in Ancient Egypt*, pointed out precisely that: "Egyptologists are not availing themselves of the conceptual richness of a broad academic landscape [...] We have to read more widely and discover what we can add to the discussion". However, I would underline the contributions that that broad academic landscape could make in our discipline: it can test some of our disciplinary theories and views, it can bring new light (ideas, perspectives, questions) into topics much exploited under the same "grid", and it can ultimately provincialize Egyptological knowledge – which, in essence, has been a North Western one, with its own merits and vices.

MIRANDA, C. "Eu vi um rosto com mil semblantes"[20]: interpretar a estatuária ptolemaica mista. *R. Museu Arq. Etn.*, 33: 3-14, 2019.

Resumo: Na época em que o paradigma pós-colonial se estabelecia nas humanidades, o período ptolemaico também recebia crescente atenção por parte dos investigadores. Os estudos sobre essa cronologia, durante a segunda metade do século XX, contudo, entendiam a sociedade e a cultura ptolemaicas como um agregado de comunidades/tradições em grande medida impermeáveis, coexistindo apenas entre si.[21] Essa interpretação causou uma alteração radical na historiografia sobre o período. Mais significativamente, porém, deixou a cultura material que não pertencia exclusivamente a nenhum dos conjuntos culturais (grego ou egípcio) largamente ignorada e, mais tarde, subestimada nos debates sobre quem influenciou quem. A dissertação de mestrado da autora tomou como estudo de caso a escultura em pedra greco-egípcia dos governantes ptolemaicos masculinos, procurando entender melhor esses objetos. Contudo, eles não foram subestimados no sentido de que a sua existência não foi reconhecida ou analisada, mas sim no sentido de que a explicação apresentada não se revelava suficientemente complexa. Os estudos apresentavam uma

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20   Do poema *Faces*, de Kahlil Gibran.

21   Uma das principais características de uma interpretação pós-colonial é a de que o grupo subordinado pelo contexto colonial tem um papel activo no processo de interacção, mais do que antes lhe seria atribuído. Não nega, contudo, a interacção.

interpretação elaborada principalmente do ponto de vista do Estado ptolemaico e das elites, desconsiderando assim outros possíveis domínios de agência. Este artigo apresenta uma parte da investigação, nomeadamente o quadro teórico adotado para sugerir uma outra interpretação para a existência da estatuária "mista" de governantes ptolemaicos. Ainda que hoje o Egito ptolemaico não seja entendido como um caso colonial, os estudos pós-coloniais contribuirão para esta linha de interpretação alternativa por meio do descentramento da análise, do Estado para outros grupos. A contribuição maior virá, não obstante, de uma teoria do consumo, que visa por seu turno descentrar os estudos, de questões de poder para outras esferas.

Palavras-chave: Egito ptolemaico; Escultura real ptolemaica em pedra; Estátuas greco-egípcias; Contato cultural; Estudo sobre consumo.

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