

“ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” UNIVERSITY OF IAȘI  
FACULTY OF HISTORY  
INTERDISCIPLINARY CENTRE FOR ARCHAEOHISTORICAL STUDIES

**STUDIA ANTIQUA  
ET  
ARCHAEOLOGICA  
26/1, 2020**

# EDITURA UNIVERSITĂȚII „ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA”

IAȘI — 2020

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Lucrețiu Mihailescu-Bîrliba (**editor in chief**) (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Robin Brigand (French National Centre for Scientific Research, Besançon), Ashley Dumas (University of West Alabama), Alexander Falileyev (Institute for Linguistic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Sankt Petersburg), Svend Hansen (German Archaeological Institute, Berlin), Martin Hose (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich), Gheorghe Iacob (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Ion Niculiță (Moldova State University Chișinău), Attila László (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Ioan Carol Opreș (University of Bucharest), Daniele Vittorio Piacente (University of Bari), Alexandru-Florin Platon (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Adrian Poruciu (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Alexander Rubel (Iași Institute of Archaeology), Ion Sandu (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Eugen Sava (National Museum of History of Moldova, Chișinău), Christoph Schäfer (University of Trier), Wolfgang Schuller (University of Konstanz), Claire Smith (Flinders University, Adelaide), Acad. Victor Spinei (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Dan Gh. Teodor (Iași Institute of Archaeology), Nicolae Ursulescu (“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași), Mihail Vasilescu (“Al. I. Cuza” Univ. of Iași), Olivier Weller (Pantheon-Sorbonne University, Paris).

## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Roxana-Gabriela Curcă (**chief secretary**), Marius Alexianu, Neculai Bolohan, Vasile Cotiugă, Iulian Moga, Iulia Dumitrache, Andrei Asăndulesei, Felix-Adrian Tencariu (**members**), Ștefan Caliniuc (**web editor**).

Postal address (materials sent for reviewing purposes and other correspondence):

*Universitatea “Al. I. Cuza”, Facultatea de Istorie, Bulevardul Carol I, nr. 11, 700506 - Iași, Romania.*

Tel.: (+04) 0232 201 615; Fax.: (+4) 0232 201 201, (+4) 0232 201 156;

Website: saa.uaic.ro; Email: saa.uaic.ro@gmail.com, blucretiu@yahoo.com.

The responsibility for the content of the materials published falls entirely on the authors.

This volume uses the free open-source typeface *Gentium* by SIL International.



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

ISSN 1224-2284

ISSN-L 1224-2284

## Table of Contents

### ARTICLES

Ana DROB, Petre COLȚEANU, Viorica VASILACHE, <i>Interdisciplinary Study of a Bronze Hoard from Gorj County, Romania</i> .....	1
Sergey M. ZHESTOKANOV, <i>The Corinth-Corcyra Conflict of the Seventh Century BC</i> .....	15
Larisa PECHATNOVA, <i>Spartan Elite and Corruption Scandals</i> .....	25
Peter FRAŇO, <i>Cicero and Clodius in the Work Stoic Paradoxes (Cic. Parad. 27-32)</i> .....	35
María Pilar MOLINA-TORRES, <i>Historiography and Lines of Research in the History of Women in Antiquity</i> .....	45
Ivo TOPALILOV, <i>On the Perinthos-Heraklea 37</i> .....	59
Nelu ZUGRAVU, <i>Ancora sulla Dacia restituta</i> .....	69
Milan KOSTREŠEVIĆ, <i>Die Antike Biographie als Hintergrund des Evangeliums</i> .....	95
Marian MOCANU, <i>Late Roman Tableware from Argamum – ‘Faleză Est’.</i> <i>African, Cypriot, Egeean and Pontic wares</i> .....	119

### REVIEWS

M. <sup>a</sup> Pilar González-Conde Puente, <i>Las provincias de Hispania en los años de Adriano</i> (Nelu Zugravu) .....	131
Bruno Luiselli, <i>Romanobarbarica. Scritti scelti</i> (Nelu Zugravu) .....	132
Paul N. Pearson, <i>Maximinus Thrax: From Common Soldier to Emperor of Rome</i> (Pavel-Flavian Chilcoș) .....	133



## ARTICLES



## Interdisciplinary Study of a Bronze Hoard from Gorj County, Romania

Ana DROB<sup>1</sup>, Petre COLȚEANU<sup>2</sup>, Viorica VASILACHE<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract.** *This paper presents the study of bronze artefacts resulting from an accidental discovery in the Preajba neighbourhood of Târgu Jiu municipality, Gorj County, Romania. In addition to the presentation of the field assessment and artefact analogies, the objects were analysed using optical microscopy (OM) and scanning electron microscopy (SEM) coupled with Energy-Dispersive X-Ray (EDX), in order to highlight the morphology of the corrosion crust and to determine the elemental composition of corrosion and soil contamination products. Thus, it was possible to establish the nature of the materials used and the manufacturing technology.*

**Rezumat.** *În lucrare se prezintă studiul artefactelor de bronz rezultate în urma unei descoperiri întâmplătoare în cartierul Preajba, municipiul Târgu Jiu, jud. Gorj, România. Pe lângă prezentarea evaluării de teren și a analogiilor artefactelor, acestea au fost analizate prin microscopie optică (OM) și microscopie electronică de scanare (SEM) cuplată cu energia dispersivă de raze X (EDX) pentru evidențierea morfologiei crustei de coroziune și stabilirea compoziției elementale a produșilor de coroziune și a celor din contaminare din sol. Astfel s-a putut identifica natura materialelor folosite și tehnologia de manufacturare.*

**Keywords:** Bronze, corrosion, OM, SEM-EDX.

### Introduction

Systematic research, as well as accidental discoveries, reveals a rich archaeological material that leads to a better understanding of the prehistoric communities. Study of whole or fragmentary artefacts, from different historical periods, by involving non-destructive (preserving the integrity of the artefact) or micro-invasive (the need for sampling or cleaning a very small surface due to the formation of corrosion layer on the artefact) analyses methods, aims to determine the composition of alloys, the mechanism of chemical,

---

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of History, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași; anadrob1@gmail.com.

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of History, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași; petrecolteanu@gmail.com.

<sup>3</sup> "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Institute of Interdisciplinary Research-Interdisciplinary Sciences Department, Arheoinvest Center; viorica\_18v@yahoo.com.

electrochemical, microbiological corrosion, as well as the compounds formed by the alteration processes<sup>4</sup>.

On the territory of Preajba locality, Gorj County, was discovered a bronze hoard and two atypical ceramic fragments, which are the object of another investigation<sup>5</sup>. In this study were analysed only the metal fragments consisting of: three fragmentary bracelets, three fragments of a sword blade, a pendant and a celt fragment. The artefacts were analysed using OM and SEM-EDX methods in order to establish the raw materials and the production technology.

## 1. Archaeological context

After the accidental discovery of a bronze hoard made with a metal detector, in Preajba locality, Gorj County, a request was made by the Gorj County Department for Culture to conduct a field assessment to determine the archaeological potential of the region<sup>6</sup>. The area under investigation is located in the Getic Subcarpathians, in the Târgu Jiu Depression. From an administrative point of view, the area is located in the north of Gorj County and belongs to the city of Târgu Jiu. The site where the hoard was discovered is approximately 2 km west of DC2 Preajba, in the forest, between two streams, the Holdun River to the east and the Gornac creek to the west (45° 04'55.00643 " ; 23° 22'36.96681") (Figure 1).

Initially, the research focused on the perimeter where the bronze hoard was discovered. To determine the archaeological context of the discovery, was drawn an archaeological trench (T1), oriented NW-SE, with dimensions of 5.30×1 m and with the depth of -0.60 m (Figure 2). In the trench profile were identified the remains of a pit, noted Context no. 1 (Cx. 1), with a depth of -0.30 m and an oval shape (0.60×0.40 m). This complex represents the hoard pit, largely destroyed in the moment of the discovery.

Following the field evaluation, it we decided to expand the research area because there were some clues that nearby were located a previously unidentified archaeological site, as well as a tumular necropolis<sup>7</sup>. Both hypotheses have been confirmed. In the point called "La Fântâni" was discovered a settlement whose level of habitation begins during the

---

<sup>4</sup> ROBBIOLA, BLENGINO, FIAUD 1998, 2083–2111; ROBBIOLA & PORTIER 2006, 1–12; SANDU *et al.*, 2008, 256–266; 2010, 1054–1058; 2012, 1646–1652.

<sup>5</sup> From this deposit, two other celts were handed over by the management of the County Museum "Alexandru Ștefulescu" Gorj for analysis to another institution. The information according to which all the objects were in the same deposit is based only on the statements of the discoverer and on the report signed between him and the Gorj County Department of Culture.

<sup>6</sup> The research team included Gheorghe Calotoiu ("Alexandru Ștefulescu" Gorj County Museum), Petre Colțeanu, Ana Drob and Sebastian Drob. We would like to thank Mr. Gh. Calotoiu for the kindness in giving us the materials for publication.

<sup>7</sup> The field evaluation report was submitted to the Gorj County Department of Culture.



transition period to the Bronze Age (Coțofeni Culture)<sup>8</sup>, continues in the Bronze Age, and the latest archaeological materials identified belong to Hallstatt A (Vârtop Group)<sup>9</sup>. Site number 2, "In Pădure" is a tumular necropolis from which 16 mounds have been identified, without the possibility of cultural classification, these probably belonged to the first period of the Iron Age and the beginning of the second.

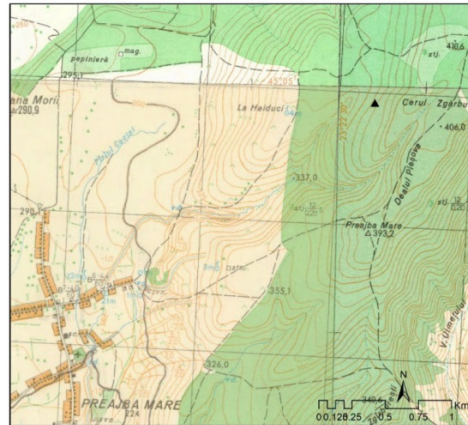


Figure 1. The discovery place of the bronze hoard

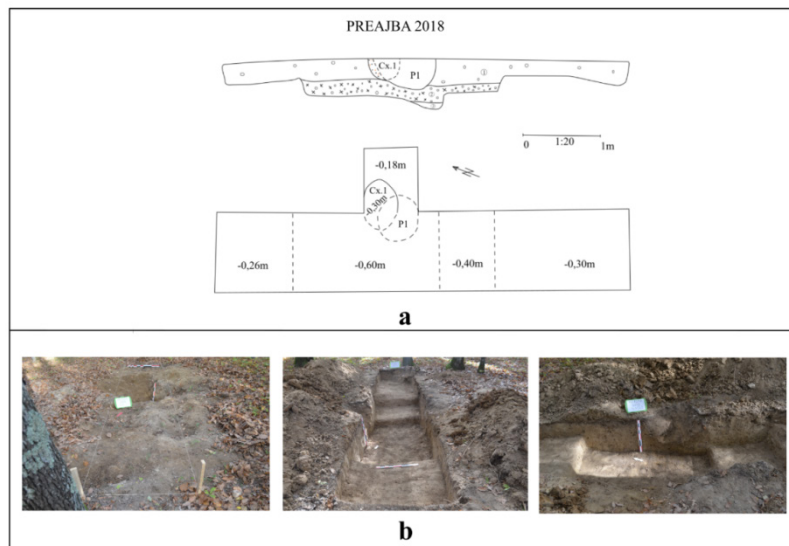


Figure 2. Archaeological context of the discovery: a-Archaeological drawing of trench 1 (Cx. 1 Pit containing bronze hoard, P1 Pit dug by the metal detectorist); b-photos during the survey

<sup>8</sup> TUȚULESCU 2016.

<sup>9</sup> LAZĂR 2011; CALOTOIU 2012.

## 2. Materials and methods

### 2.1. Archaeological description of artefacts

*Bracelet fragment (Armringe) - B1* — The fragment (Figure 3) comes from a round bracelet with analogies in Transylvania at Moigrad I<sup>10</sup>, belonging to the Moigrad-Tăuteu series (Ha B1- B2). The bracelet is broken from antiquity, the diameter of the section is 0.7 cm and the weight is 13.414 g, being decorated with rows of incised lines twisted around the bracelet.

*Bracelet fragment (Armschutzspiralen) - B2* — The second bracelet fragment (Figure 4) comes from an arm bracelet found in Transylvania, in Stâna<sup>11</sup>, being included in the Uriu-Domănești series (Bz D-Ha A1), as well as in Tăut<sup>12</sup> and Aiud<sup>13</sup>, Cincu-Suseni series (Ha A1). The piece is torn from antiquity, but was also affected by the discoverer. It is round, the diameter of the section is 0.5 cm and has a total weight of 18.160 g, being decorated with a series of short incised lines twisted around the bracelet. The piece consists of three fragments, marked B2a, B2b, B2c that also correspond to the sampling areas.

*Bracelet fragment (Armschutzspiralen) - B3* — The third item is also an arm bracelet (Figure 5), having the same analogies as B2. This piece was also broken from antiquity and damaged at the time of discovery. The bracelet is circular with 0.4 cm diameter of the section and a total weight of 21.137 g, being decorated with a series of short incised lines on either side of the bar.

*Sword blade fragments (Schwerter) - S* — (Figure 6) have the best parallels in Caransebeș<sup>14</sup>, being part of the Cincu-Suseni series (Ha A1). The blade is broken from antiquity and, only three pieces were discovered (Sa, Sb, Sc). They have a width of about 3 cm, and a total length of 12.8 cm, with three nervures on each side. The total weight is 95.172 g.

*Pendant fragment (Anhänger) - P* — (Figure 7) it belongs to a pendant<sup>15</sup>, that has similarities in Transylvania, at Caransebeș<sup>16</sup> (Bz D-Ha A1), Pecica II<sup>17</sup> and Răbăgani<sup>18</sup>, Cincu-Suseni series (Ha A1). The pendant has five arms, four of which are broken from antiquity. The piece is not decorated and weighs 2.84 g.

---

<sup>10</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 329, pl. 311/8-9; 1978, tafel 235/21-22; 1998, tafel 78/577-579.

<sup>11</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 203, pl. 64/15; 1978, tafel 47/5.

<sup>12</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 279, pl. 213/16; 1978, tafel 159/6; 1998, Tafel 20/156.

<sup>13</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 225-226, pl. 109-110; 1998, tafel/18-20/157-160.

<sup>14</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 233, pl. 125/15; 1978, tafel 87/17.

<sup>15</sup> The terminology that defines this piece includes the variants: pendant, *lunula*, needle guard „Nadelhalter/Nadelshützer” — CHIDIOȘAN & EMÖDI 1981, 165.

<sup>16</sup> GUMĂ 1992, 53-58/56.

<sup>17</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 260, pl. 176/20.

<sup>18</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 262, pl. 180/27-30; 1978, tafel 131/2, 5, 7.

*Socketed axe fragment (Tüllenbeil) - C* – (Figure 8) this piece weighs 22.535 g and the lack of specific elements makes it impossible to identify chronological and cultural similarities.

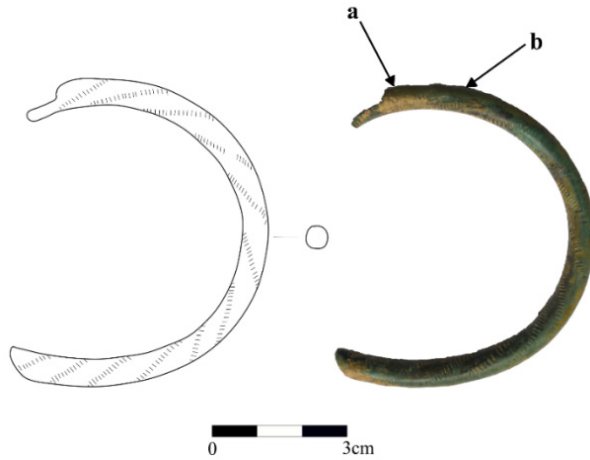


Figure 3. Images of B1: left - drawing; right - photo; a, b - sampling area

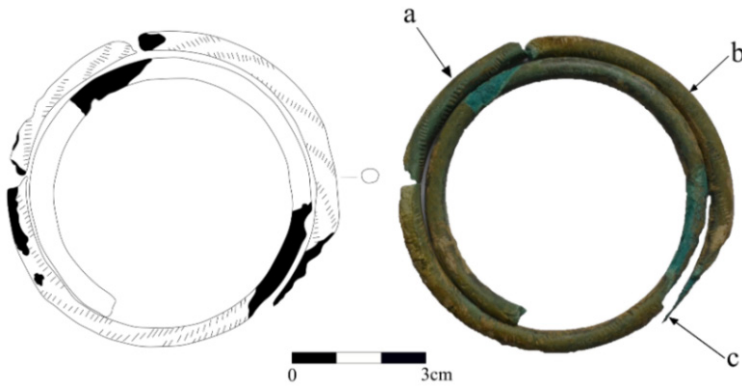


Figure 4. Images of B2: left - drawing; right - photo; a, b, c - sampling area

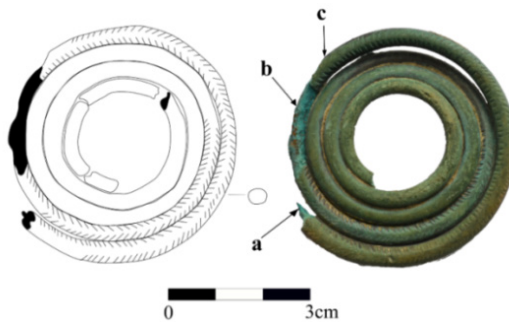


Figure 5. Images of B3: left - drawing; right - photo; a, b, c - sampling area

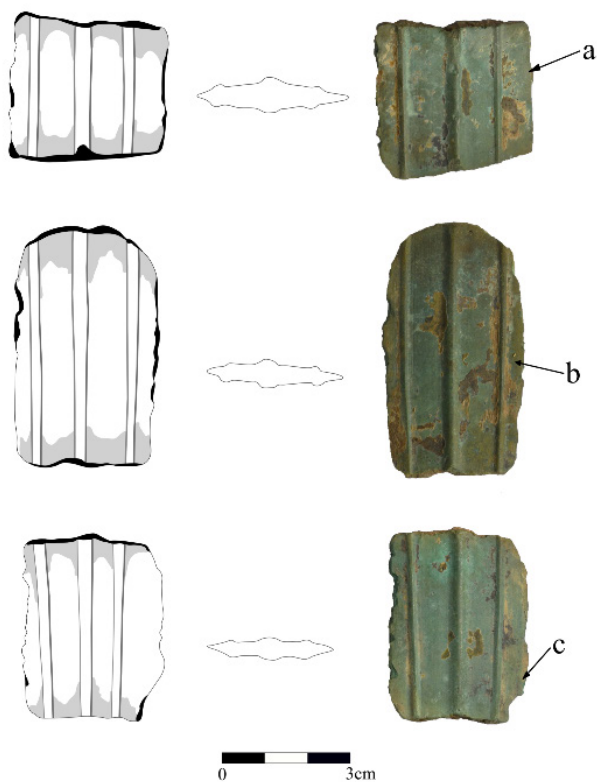


Figure 6. Images of S: left – drawing; right – photo; a, b, c – sampling area

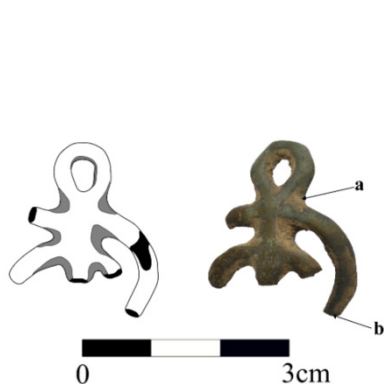


Figure 7. Images of P: left – drawing; right – photo; a, b – sampling area

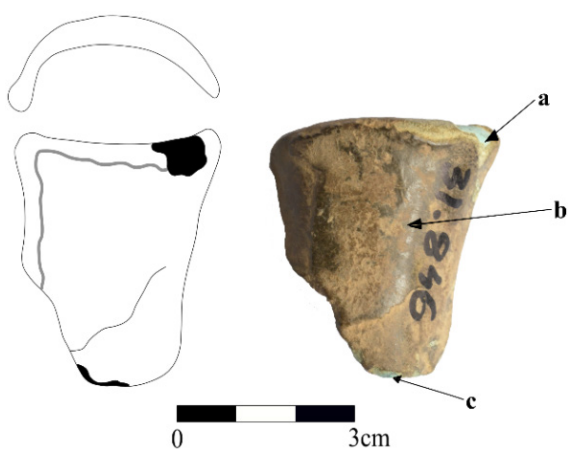


Figure 8. Images of C: left – drawing; right – photo; a, b, c – sampling area

## *2.2. Sampling areas*

Samples for analysis were taken from areas with cracks or detachments, thus not affecting the integrity of the artefacts. These were noted with the letter P, followed by numbers from 1 to 6 in the order of the description of the pieces and the letters corresponding to the sampling areas illustrated in the figures of the objects (Figures 3–8).

## *2.3. Analysis methods*

Microscopic analysis — The microscopic analysis was performed, at 50× magnification, with a Zeiss Stemi-2000C stereomicroscope that has a Canon G9 camera attached, from the Bioarchaeology Laboratory of the Arheoinvest Center from the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași.

SEM-EDX analysis — The analysis used a scanning electron microscope, SEM, model VEGA II LSH by TESCAN coupled with a third generation, X-flash type EDX detector, type QUANTAX QX2 made by Bruker/Roentec. The microscope, fully controlled by computer, has an electron gun with tungsten filament, which can achieve a resolution of 3nm at 30kV, with magnification power between 30× and 1,000,000× in "resolution" operating mode, acceleration voltage between 200 V at 30 kV, scan speed between 200 ns and 10 ms per pixel. The working pressure is less than  $1 \times 10^{-2}$  Pa. The images obtained for the analysed samples consisted of secondary electrons (SE) or backscattered electrons (BSE) at magnifications between 200× and 1000×. Quantax QX2 is an EDX detector used for qualitative and quantitative micro-analyses.

## **3. Results and discussions**

The bracelet fragment – B1 was analysed OM on two areas (Figure 9/a). On the first one, the uniform patina without corrosion products is highlighted, and on the other, we can see traces of soil from the burial environment.

The SEM-EDX analysis was performed on a micro-sample of corrosion crust both at the interface with the metal (P1a) and on the external face (P1b), corresponding to the SEM images in Figure 9. The elements of the basic alloy were identified - Cu and Sn, the impurities in the ore (As and Fe), those in the corrosion products (C and O) and Si, Al and S that come from the soil contamination (Table 1). The higher concentration of Sn from the outside is due to the process of segregation to the surface, where it forms corrosion products. Due to its

amphoteric character and the tendency to agglomeration in the form of micro-lenticels, it controls both segregation and corrosion processes<sup>19</sup>.

The bracelet fragment - B2, presents areas with detachments of the corrosion crust, and by the OM and SEM analysis (Figure 10/a, b) corrosion products of the basic copper carbonates type are highlighted.

Elemental analysis (EDX) was performed on two areas with corrosion products (P2a and P2b) and on one with the core (P2c). Thus, the elements of the basic alloy were highlighted: Cu and Sn, along with those of the ore Ni, Fe and As. The elements of corrosion and contamination products are the same as in B1, with the exception of S, which comes from the period of installation and use, having as source cysteine and cystine present on the human skin with which it has been in contact. The presence of Ag in high concentration (18.85%, 11.35% and 6.04%) only in corrosion products means that the artefact was coated with Ag, a process known since the late Bronze Age and illustrated by modern methods of analysis<sup>20</sup>. The mapping performed on the analysed micro-samples highlights the arrangement of Ag (Figure 11 / a-b), which confirms its presence in the silvering process.

The OM analysis (Figure 12 /a) highlights the uneven arrangement of corrosion products, as well as areas of soil contamination. The EDX analysis was performed on the SEM images (Figure 12/b) corresponding to the core (P3a), the corrosion zone (P3b) and patina (P3c). Thus, the basic alloy consists of Cu and Sn, along with the ore microelements (Ni, Fe and As). In addition to corrosion products, higher concentrations of soil contaminants have been identified in the P3c area, in addition to Mg and K (Table 1). In addition, as in the case of fragment B2, Ag was identified in high concentrations (7.01%) arranged in the form of fine wires that indicate the use of the silvering process (Figure 12 /a-b).

The sword blade (S) presents a uniform corrosion layer with detachments (Figure 14/b), and by the OM analysis (Figure 14/a), were identified deposits of basic carbonates and copper oxides randomly arranged. EDX analysis was performed on a surface area of each fragment (P4a, P4b and P4c) corresponding to the SEM images in Figure 14/b. Thus, the composition of the alloy was identified as Cu, Sn and Pb, along with the ore microelements - Fe and As (Table 1). The high concentration of lead indicates that it is part of the alloying elements, because bronzes with an appreciable Pb content are used to make objects that must withstand the action of prolonged slip<sup>21</sup>. There are also elements from corrosion products (C and O) and those from soil contamination (Si and P).

OM and SEM analyses of the pendant fragment (P) highlight the uneven distribution of corrosion products (Figure 15/a, b).

---

<sup>19</sup> SANDU *et al.*, 2014, 918–927; VASILACHE, APARASCHIVEI, SANDU 2011, 117–126; VASILACHE *et al.*, 2015, 633–642.

<sup>20</sup> FIGUEIREDO *et al.*, 2010, 287–289.

<sup>21</sup> CURA D'ARS DE FIGUEIREDO JUNIOR, FREITAS CUNHA LINS, BELLIS, 2007, 7104.

The elemental analysis was performed on two areas (P5a and P5b), identifying the elements of the alloy (Cu, Sn and Pb), the elements in the ore (Fe, Ni and As), as well as the elements of the corrosion products and soil contaminations. The presence of lead in appreciable concentrations (7-8%), in the case of small objects, can be explained by its properties of increasing the fluidity and allowing the precise casting of parts that require details<sup>22</sup>.

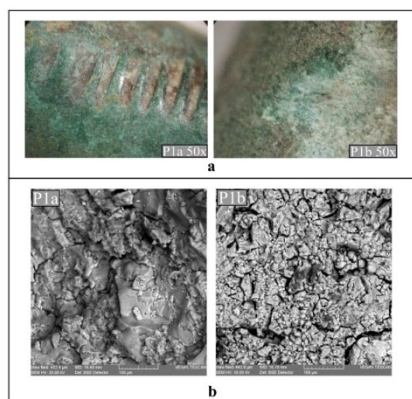


Figure 9. Images of the analysed area on the bracelet fragment - B1; a - OM and b - SEM

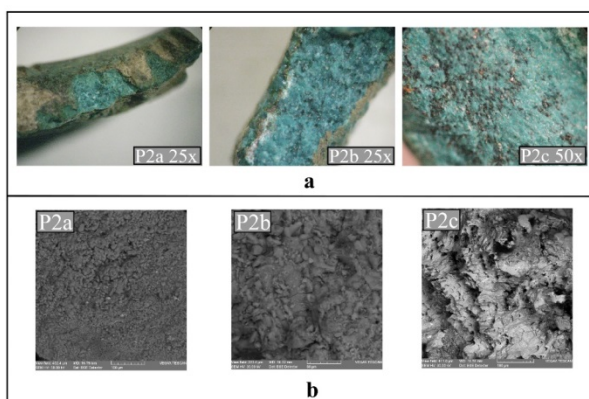


Figure 10. Images of the analysed area on the bracelet fragment - B2; a - OM and b - SEM

Table 1. Chemical composition of the analysed samples

Sample	Elemental composition – weight percent (%)														
	Cu	Sn	Pb	Ni	Ag	As	Fe	S	Si	Al	Mg	K	P	C	O
P1a	16.698	42.830	-	-	-	3.147	1.013	0.218	1.735	1.682	-	-	-	0.064	32.612
P1b	35.609	24.128	-	-	-	5.011	0.435	0.861	3.272	0.555	-	-	0.255	0.209	29.665
P2a	26.003	12.391	-	-	11.358	1.088	0.554	15.138	0.388	0.588	-	-	-	1.244	31.247
P2b	49.222	15.996	-	0.578	18.852	3.316	0.905	8.346	2.013	0.454	-	-	0.317	-	-
P2c	93.850	3.265	-	1.044	-	-	-	1.840	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P3a	80.313	5.552	-	0.750	-	1.289	-	0.687	-	-	-	-	-	1.398	10.009
P3b	38.913	27.230	-	0.644	7.101	3.562	0.805	7.380	2.635	0.977	-	-	0.745	-	10.006
P3c	12.669	1.319	-	-	-	-	1.279	-	12.500	5.134	1.095	0.487	-	3.765	61.743
P4a	23.596	39.931	19.154	-	-	0.847	2.087	-	2.351	-	-	-	0.462	0.031	11.537
P4b	41.417	27.486	18.089	-	-	0.662	1.619	-	2.951	-	-	-	0.262	0.051	7.458
P4c	41.021	30.935	21.693	-	-	1.077	2.250	-	2.551	-	-	-	0.231	0.003	0.236
P5a	18.778	64.942	8.764	0.568	-	0.391	0.640	-	4.006	1.163	-	-	0.742	-	-
P5b	26.838	57.380	7.279	1.786	-	-	0.577	-	2.519	0.831	2.006	-	0.682	-	0.098
P6a	68.577	11.717	-	0.517	-	1.128	0.361	-	0.510	-	-	-	-	-	17.188
P6b	21.618	72.591	-	-	-	2.153	-	-	2.169	0.399	-	-	0.251	-	0.815
P6c	17.879	49.904	-	-	-	1.978	-	0.986	2.006	-	-	-	0.291	0.012	26.947

<sup>22</sup> GOFFER 1980, 170.

The OM and SEM-EDX analyses (Figure 16/a, b) on the socketed axe (C) were performed on a small sample taken from the area with active corrosion products, as follows: on the outside (P6a), the metal interface (P6c) and an area with a metal core (P6b). The elements of the basic alloy were identified: Cu and Sn and the ore microelements (Fe, Ni and As). Corrosion elements (C and O) and those of soil contamination (Si and Al) were also identified as can be seen from Table 1.

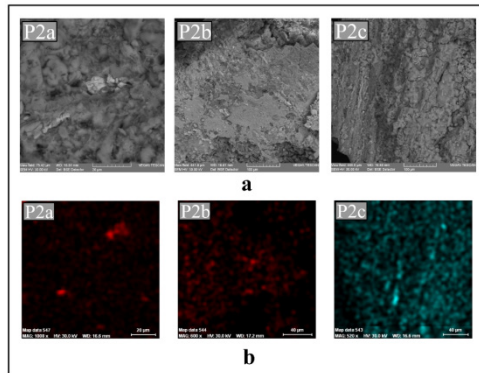


Figure 11. Images with Ag arrangement on the sample on the bracelet fragment - B2; a - SEM and b - Mapping of SEM surfaces

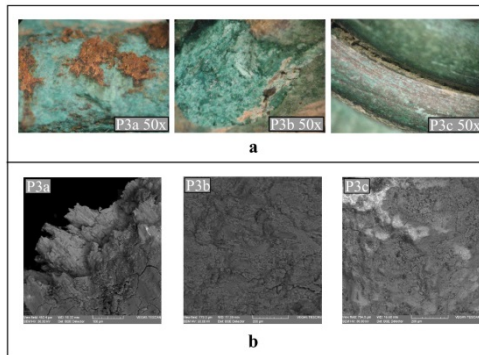


Figure 12. Images of the analysed area on the bracelet fragment - B3; a - OM and b - SEM

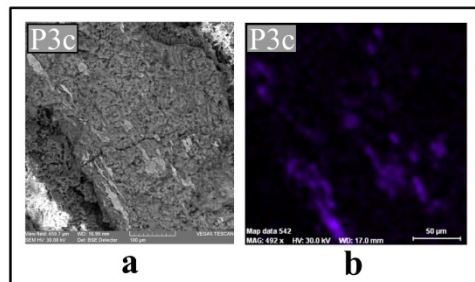


Figure 13. Images with Ag arrangement on the P3c sample; a - SEM and b - Mapping of the SEM surface



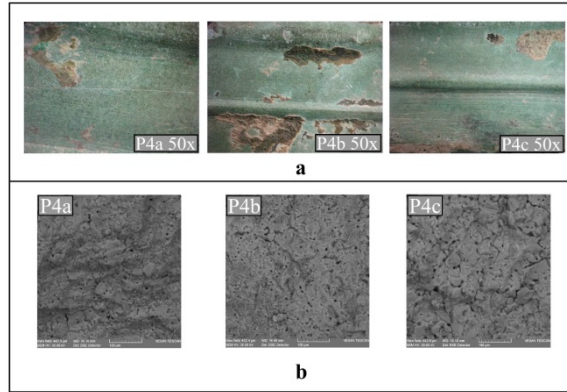


Figure 14. Images of the analysed area on the sword blade – S; a - OM and b - SEM

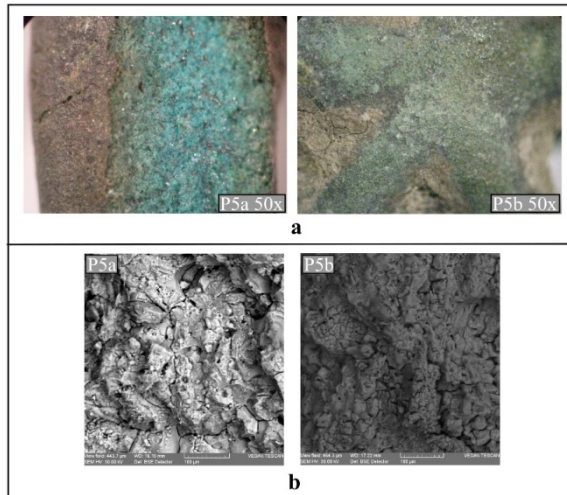


Figure 15. Images of the analysed area on pendant fragment – P; a - OM and b - SEM

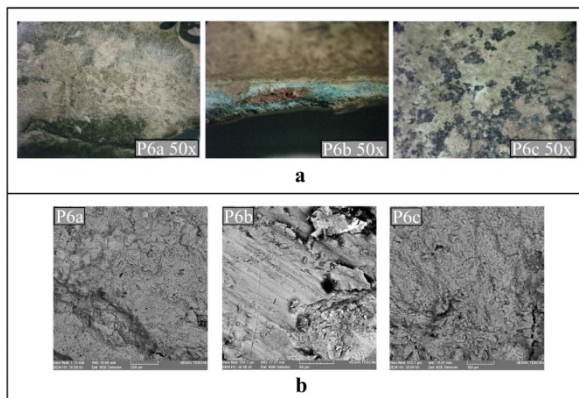


Figure 16. Images of the analysed area on socketed axe fragment – C; a - OM and b - SEM

## Conclusions

From a typological point of view, the hoard pieces have analogies in central and southwestern Transylvania and they can be assigned to Early Hallstatt, Cincu-Suseni (Ha A1) and Moigrad-Tăuteu (Ha B1- B2) series.

Based on the results obtained by combining the OM and SEM-EDX analyses, it can be said that the analysed fragments are made of Cu and Sn based alloys. Samples S and P also contains a high concentration of lead, which helps to increase the malleability for casting and the resistance to use of objects. Thus, we can assume that there is an important link between technological processes and the content of the alloy needed to make certain pieces, which indicates a good knowledge of the properties of these metals. Fragments B2 and B3 were silvered, a process known in the late Bronze Age in south-western Europe.

The presence of As even in very small quantities indicates that the objects were not obtained by melting metal scrap<sup>23</sup>. Traces of arsenic below 1% are the result of the use of polymetallic ores and not the result of an intentional production of arsenical bronze<sup>24</sup>.

During the burial period, the pieces underwent strong processes of segregation of active metals towards the surface and a series of degradations and damages, developed from the surface to the interior due to redox, acid-base and complexation processes, assisted by monoliths by including contamination elements from the ground. Thus, some chemical compounds such as oxides (CuO, Cu<sub>2</sub>O, Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>, SiO<sub>2</sub>, etc.) and basic carbonates (CuCO<sub>3</sub>·Cu(OH)<sub>2</sub>, CuSO<sub>4</sub>·3Cu(OH)<sub>6</sub> etc.) have been identified in the corrosion of bronze.

Typologically, the pieces from the analysed hoard seem to come, most likely, from the Transylvanian metallurgical centre. Besides the analogies of the bronze objects, the place of their discovery represents another argument, the river Jiu's valley being probably a way of transporting the goods inside the Carpathian arch to the south, towards the Getic Plateau. A future objective is represented by performing other types of analyses in order to identify the source of raw material, which will lead to the identification of local productions or imports.

**Acknowledgement.** This work was co-funded by the European Social Fund, through Operational Programme Human Capital 2014-2020, project number POCU/380/6/13/123623, project title "PhD Students and Postdoctoral Researchers Prepared for the Labour Market!"

---

<sup>23</sup> BUGOI *et al.*, 2013, 1242.

<sup>24</sup> ZORI, TROPPER, SCOTT 2013, 1173.

## References

- BUGOI, R., B. CONSTANTINESCU, A.D. POPESCU, F. MUNNK 2013. Archaeometallurgical studies of Bronze Age objects from the Romanian cultural Heritage. *Romanian Reports in Physics* 65(4), 1234–1245.
- CALOTOIU Gh. 2012. *Civilizații milenare în județul Gorj, Epocile bronzului și fierului*. Târgu Jiu.
- CHIDIOȘAN, N., I. EMÖDI 1981, O descoperire de la sfârșitul epocii bronzului și începutul Hallstattului în peștera Mișidului, com. Șuncuiuș, jud. Bihor. *Thraco-Dacica* 2, 161–167.
- FIGUEIREDO, E., R.J.C. SILVA, M. FÁTIMA ARAÚJO, J.C. SENNS-MARTINEZ 2010. Identification of ancient gilding technology and Late Bronze Age metallurgy by EDXRF, Micro-EDXRF, SEM-EDS and metallographic techniques. *Microchimica Acta* 168, 283–291.
- CURA D'ARS DE FIGUEIREDO JUNIOR, J., V. FREITAS CUNHA LINS, V.M. BELLIS 2007. Surface characterization of corroded bronze-leaded alloy in salt spray cabinet. *Applied Surface Science* 253, 7104–7107.
- GOFFER, Z. 1980. *Archaeological Chemistry*. New York.
- GUMĂ, M. 1992. Un nou depozit de bronzuri descoperit în zona Caransebeșului. *Thraco-Dacica* 13(1-2), 53–58.
- LAZĂR S. 2011. *Sfârșitul epocii bronzului și începutul epocii fierului în Sud-Vestul României*. Craiova.
- PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA, M. 1977, *Depozitele de bronzuri de României*. Bibliotheca Archaeologica Iassiensis XXX. București.
- PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA, M. 1978, *Die sicheln in Rumänien mit Corpus der jung-und spätbronzezeitlichen Horte Rumäniens*. Prähistorische Bronzefunde XVIII/1. München.
- PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA, M. 1998, *Der Arm-und Beinschmuck in Rumänien*. Prähistorische Bronzefunde X/4, Stuttgart.
- ROBBIOLA, L, J.M. BLENGINO, C. FIAUD 1998. Morphology and mechanisms formation of natural patinas on archaeological Cu-Sn alloys. *Corrosion Science* 40, 2083–2111.
- ROBBIOLA, L., PORTIER, R. 2006, A global approach to the authentication of ancient bronzes based on the characterization of the alloy—patina— environment system. *Journal of Cultural Heritage* 7, 1–12.
- SANDU, I., N. URSULESCU, I.G. SANDU, O. BOUNEGRU, I.C.A. SANDU, A. ALEXIANU 2008. The pedological stratification effect of corrosion and contamination products on byzantine bronze artefacts. *Corrosion Engineering Science and Technology* 43, 256–266.
- SANDU, I., O. MIRCEA, A.V. SANDU, I. SARGHIE, I.G. SANDU, V. VASILACHE 2010. Non-invasive Techniques in the Analysis of Corrosion Crusts formed on Archaeological Metal Objects. *Revista de Chimie* 61(11), 1054–1058.
- SANDU, I.G., O. MIRCEA, V. VASILACHE, I. SANDU 2012. Influence of the Archaeological Environment on Ancient Copper Alloy Artifacts. *Microscopy Research and Technique* 75(12), 1646–1652.
- SANDU, I.G., F.A. TENCARIU, D.M. VORNICU, A.V. SANDU, A. VORNICU, V. VASILACHE, I. SANDU 2014. Establishing the archaeo-metallurgic ornamentation process of an axe from the bronze age by OM, SEM-EDX and micro-FTIR. *Microscopy Research and Technique* 77(11), 918–927.
- TUȚULESCU I. 2016. *Perioada de tranziție spre epoca bronzului în zona deluroasă și montană a Olteniei*. Târgu Jiu.

- VASILACHE, V., D. APARASCHIVEI, I. SANDU 2011. A Scientific Investigation of the Ancient Jewels Found in the Ibida Site, Romania. *International Journal of Conservation Science* 2, 117–126.
- VASILACHE, V., I. SANDU, C.C. LAZANU, I.G. SANDU 2015. Archaeometalurgical evaluation of two spearheads from the bronze age. *International Journal of Conservation Science* 6, 633–642.
- ZORI, C., P. TROPPER, D. SCOTT 2013. Copper production in late prehispanic northern Chile. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 4, 1165–1175.



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## The Corinth-Corcyra Conflict of the Seventh Century BC

Sergey M. ZHESTOKANOV<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** *In the introduction to his historical treatise the Athenian historian Thucydides mentions the most ancient naval battle in Greek history that took place between the Corinthians and their colonists Corcyraeans around 664 BC, of which battle there is no account in other sources. Having analysed the information on the relationships between Corinth and Corcyra in the Archaic and early Classical periods provided by the written tradition of antiquity, the author of the article arrives at the conclusion that it was but one of many conflicts between the metropolis and its colony, which started as early as the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC and by the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC became one of the reasons for the Peloponnesian War that split the ancient Greek world into two camps.*

**Rezumat.** *În introducerea tratatului său istoric, istoricul atenian Thucydides menționează cea mai veche bătălie navală din istoria greacă care a avut loc între Corint și Corcyra în jurul anului 664 î.Hr., despre care există nicio relatare în alte surse. După ce a analizat informațiile despre relațiile dintre Corint și Corcyra în perioadele arhaică și clasică timpurie, furnizate de tradiția scrisă a antichității, autorul articolului ajunge la concluzia că a fost doar unul dintre numeroasele conflicte dintre metropolă și colonie, care a început încă de la sfârșitul secolului al VIII-lea î.Hr.*

**Keywords:** Ancient Greece, archaic age, Corinth, Corcyra, Thucydides.

In his *History's* introductory part, commonly known as the “*Archaeology*”, Thucydides, while highlighting the major events taking place prior to the Peloponnesian War, mentions a conflict between the Corinthians and Corcyraeans which is not recorded in other sources: “*Again, the earliest seafight in history was between the Corinthians and Corcyraeans; this was about two hundred and sixty years ago, dating from the same time (i.e., from the end of the Peloponnesian War — S.Zh)*” (I, 13, 4). The reason for the naval battle that happened ca 664 BC between the metropolis' and the colony's fleets, and whether it was an isolated incident or an episode in a prolonged armed struggle, cannot be inferred from Thucydides' words alone. To clarify those matters, one would have to resort to analysing the data provided by the written tradition of antiquity on the specific nature of relations between Corinth and Corcyra before the above-mentioned naval battle as well as after it.

---

<sup>1</sup> St. Petersburg State University, Institute of History; email: sergey-zhestokanov@yandex.ru.

The extant sources inform us that the Corinthian colony on the island of Corcyra was established in the course of migration of a number of Corinthian settlers led by Archias to Sicily, where in 733 BC they founded Syracuse — the largest Greek settlement in the Western Mediterranean region. On their way to Italic waters they left a detachment under the command of Chersicrates who, similarly to Archias, was descended from the Bacchiads — the ruling clan of Corinth. After landing on Corcyra, Chersicrates expelled the Eretrians who had previously settled there (Plut. *Amat. Narr.*, II, 293b), as well as the local tribe of Liburnians (Str., VI, 2, 4), and founded a settlement sharing the name with the island. According to a later chronology compiled by Eusebius of Caesarea, the colony on Corcyra was founded not in 733 BC, as the earlier sources imply, but actually a quarter of a century later, in 708 BC (*Hier.*, II, p. 91 Helm). A. Graham and C. Roebuck are inclined to believe this later date, being of the opinion that the Corinthians should have become interested in the island after colonizing Sicily and recognizing the advantages for trading with Magna Graecia that Corcyra conferred.<sup>2</sup> However, the date provided by Eusebius is not in agreement with either the accounts by earlier authors or with the archaeological evidence.<sup>3</sup>

The colony on Corcyra that controlled the narrow strait between the mainland and the island was designed as an intermediary port where seafarers could take shelter from storms and replenish their stocks before continuing their voyage.<sup>4</sup> Besides, the colony provided an excellent opportunity to control the trade routes connecting mainland Greece with the Western Mediterranean region.

Soon after gaining a foothold on Corcyra, the Corinthian settlers seem to have participated in the first known conflict between the metropolis and the colony. This can be inferred from the message from Scholiast to Apollonius of Rhodes about the decision of the Corinthians to deprive the Corcyraean oikistes Chersicrates of his civil rights (IV, 1216). Naturally, at the time when Corinth was under the complete domination of the Bacchiads, such a decision could not have been made by ordinary citizens of the metropolis and is likely to have been originated by the members of the ruling clan. The author of the *scholia* does not clarify what Chersicrates' offence against Corinth was. It is possible that the Corcyraean leader attempted to use the island's favourable location to seize control over the sea communications going along Corcyra coastline and connecting mainland Greece with its western colonies and Italic areas rich in natural resources. One cannot rule out the possibility that the Corcyraeans attacked Corinthian ships sailing past the island and transporting grain and ores from Italy and Sicily to the metropolis.

---

<sup>2</sup> GRAHAM 1971, 219; ROEBUCK 1972, 113.

<sup>3</sup> BOARDMAN 1964, 232; HAMMOND 1967, 414.

<sup>4</sup> DUNBABIN 1948, 16; HAMMOND 1967, 414; BOARDMAN 1964, 232f.; ROEBUCK 1972, 113; MURRAY 1980, 104; GRAHAM 1982, 105.

Perhaps, Thucydides' account of the Corinthians attempting to put down piracy early on (I, 13, 5) reflects the information which was already obscure at the time of his writing the treatise, *i.e.*, about the Corinthian authorities trying first and foremost to eliminate the threat posed by their former compatriots. Yet, even if the Corcyraeans practiced maritime banditry, it is unlikely to have been a regular occurrence and in any case, it did not completely prevent the Corinthians' access to Magna Graecia. That is clearly demonstrated by the growing volume of Corinthian imports in the Western Mediterranean region starting from the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. The number of findings of Corinthian-produced merchandise dating back to the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC or the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC in this region exceeds the imports from all the other Greek poleis combined.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, it should be noted that a certain conflict between the metropolis and the colony, although still latent, started to take shape.

The last third of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC was the time when Corinth's political and economic power was at its zenith. However, by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century the standing of the isthmic polis was starting to noticeably worsen. A heavy blow to Corinth's prestige was dealt when the city lost control over a substantial part of Megarian territory in the course of a revolt led by the Olympian Orsippus (Paus., I, 44, 1; IG., VII, 52).<sup>6</sup> But an even more significant factor contributing to the decline of Corinth was the rise of its long-time adversary, the neighbouring city of Argos, during the reign of Pheidon<sup>7</sup>. Apparently, the Argive kings preceding Pheidon were merely title holders inheriting the traditional rank passed down in the Temenid family, while decision-making authority rested with the local aristocracy. After inheriting the title of the king, Pheidon changed the state of affairs and became an unrestricted ruler, thus giving later authors grounds for reckoning him among tyrants (Arist. *Pol.*, V, 8, 4, 1310b).<sup>8</sup>

After strengthening his position in Argos, Pheidon launched an all-out attack on the neighbouring territories. The invasion mounted by the king of Argos was under the banner of recovering 'Temenus' inheritance' (Str., VIII, 3, 33), *i.e.*, the lands once allocated to this Heraclid according to the well-known myth about the division of Peloponnesus among the descendants of Heracles (Apollod., II, 8, 4–5; Paus., III, I, 5; IV, 3, 3–8).

According to Strabo, Pheidon's attacks were successful; as a result, a number of Peloponnesian cities came under his sway (Str., VIII, 3, 33), as well as the islands located along

---

<sup>5</sup> BLAKEWAY 1932/33, 202 ff.; 1935, 144 f.; DUNBABIN 1948, 17 f.; HEICHELHEIM 1958, 503 n. 40; STARR 1961, 376; COLDSTREAM 1977, 242; BOARDMAN 1964, 29, 178 ff.

<sup>6</sup> HIGHBERGER 1927, 101 ff.; HAMMOND 1955, 97 f.; BURN 1960, 88; STARR 1961, 347; JEFFERY 1976, 155; MURRAY 1980, 142.

<sup>7</sup> WILL 1955, 352 ff.; FORREST 1966, 109; MOSSÉ 1969, 27 f.; JEFFERY 1976, 136; FINE 1983, 109; SALMON 1984, 71 f., 221; YAILENKO 1990, 96.

<sup>8</sup> WILL 1955, 355; ANDREWES 1956, 41 f.; BURN 1960, 177; FORREST 1966, 104; MOSSÉ 1969, 30; FINLEY 1970, 106; ARNHEIM 1977, 66; SALMON 1984, 98 f.; ZHESTOKANOV 2005, 68.

South Greece coastline, Aegina being the largest of them (VIII, 6, 16). In Elis, the power was consolidated in the hands of the pro-Argive tyrants of Pisatis who were able to cement their position definitely not without the assistance of Argos (Paus., VI, 21, 1; 22, 2–4).<sup>9</sup> In 669 BC Argive troops heavily defeated the Spartans in the battle of Hysiae, whereafter Pheidon invaded Elis and celebrated the Olympic Games there (Str., VIII, 3, 33).

Whether Corinth was part of “Temenus’ inheritance” which Pheidon laid claim to is not clear. However, it becomes obvious from the writings of Plutarch (*Amat. Narr.*, 2, 772c) and Nicolaus of Damascus (*FgrHist.*, 90 F 35) that the Argive ruler’s aggressive schemes included its territory as well.<sup>10</sup>

In the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC the position of Corinth in the international arena was weakened, thus providing Corcyra with an opportunity to undermine the total control exercised by the metropolis over the colony.<sup>11</sup> An attempt made by the Corinthian authorities to forcefully exert their influence in the north-western part of Greece might have triggered direct confrontation between the metropolis and its colony. As was mentioned at the beginning of the article, according to Thucydides, a naval battle between the Corinthians and Corcyraeans happened ca 664 BC (I, 13, 4). It is possible that the epitaph for Arniades perishing in the battle of the Ambracian Gulf, which was found in Corcyra and dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC (IG, IX, I, 868), also refers to the above-mentioned sea fight.

The loss of Corcyra must have dealt a major blow to the economic state of Corinth.<sup>12</sup> The city’s commercial interests were predominantly connected with the western colonies. Hence, the animosity on the part of the rebellious island greatly hindered, even if not fully stopped, Corinthian traders’ journey to the west. This circumstance must have played an important role in fuelling rising discontent with the rule of the Bacchiads. Several years later they were overthrown.<sup>13</sup>

Some members of the ruling clan took refuge in Corcyra after falling from power in Corinth. Among them was the famous Demaratus who later settled in Etruria and became the father of Tarquin the Elder, a future king of Rome (Cic. *De re pub.*, II, 34; Dion. Hal., III, 46; Str., VIII, 6, 20; Liv., I, 34, 1–2). The matter of the émigrés opposing the new regime in Corinth and settling on the island must have resulted in further deterioration in relations between

---

<sup>9</sup> BRADEEN 1947, 240; JEFFERY 1976, 136, 168; SEALEY 1976, 44.

<sup>10</sup> A. Burn equals the famous Argive king with a Corinthian legislator of the same name believing that Corinth was part of Pheidon’s state. See: BURN 1960, 179; cf. DOVATUR 1965, 375, n. 25; LENSCHAU 1938, 1940. A. Burn’s hypothesis is based on a report of the Scholiast on Pindar that Corinthian coins were first struck by Pheidon of Argos (*OL*, XIII, 27d). We think that there may be a mistake in this report since in other cases the Scholiast calls this Pheidon a “Corinthian” (*OL*, XIII, 17e; 21d). Aristotle who mentions both Pheidons never equals them anywhere (*Pol.*, II, 3, 7, 1265b; V, 8, 4, 1310b).

<sup>11</sup> BRADEEN 1947, 233, 238, 240; BURN 1960, 186; OOST 1972, 15; FINE 1983, 109.

<sup>12</sup> HAMMOND 1959, 136; HAMMOND 1967, 442 f.; MURRAY 1980, 141; FINE 1983, 109.

<sup>13</sup> ZHESTOKANOV 2005, 72.



the metropolis and the colony; that spurred the new rulers of Corinth on to find a way of getting out of the present situation.

A solution to the existing problem was found in the course of the new phase of colonization initiated by Cypselus after strengthening his authority in Corinth. At least three settlements—Ambracia, Anactorium and Leukas—were established on the north-west coast of Greece during the reign of the first tyrant of Corinth (Str., VII, 7, 6; Nic. Dam. *FgrHist.*, 90 F 57, 7; Ant. Lib., 4).

The status of Corinthian colonies was rather unusual in regards to the colonization practice of the Hellenes of the Archaic period. While settlements founded by other poleis, as well as earlier Corinthian colonies, were autonomous communities, the colonies established by the Cypselids were fully dependent on the metropolis from the very start.<sup>14</sup> As a rule, the leaders of colonists were relatives of Corinthian tyrants (most often their sons) who remained in the newly-established settlements as governors appointed by the Cypselids (Str., VII, 7, 6; Nic. Dam. *FgrHist.*, 90 F 57, 7; 59, 1; Ant. Lib., 4).

According to Strabo, the three colonies established during the reign of Cypselus were founded as part of a unified plan (X, 2, 8), the implementation of which was probably entrusted to Gorgos, the Corinthian tyrant's son. The ancient geographer argues that Gorgos along with his father was in charge of sending colonists off. It is known from other sources that Gorgos was also one of the oikistes (Ps.-Scymn., 453–463; Ant. Lib., 4).<sup>15</sup>

Initially the colonists settled on the coast of Leukas, which at that time was part of the mainland (Str., I, 3, 18). From *Periplus* ascribed to Scylax of Caryanda it is known that the Corinthians were invited to Leukas by the local residents who were suffering from internal strife. According to the author's report, the number of people of Corinthia participating in the colonization effort reached one thousand (Ps.-Scylax, 34). The fact that this number was definitely too large for the purpose of founding a single colony supports Strabo's hypothesis that Cypselus had plans of a massive expansion into the territories along the coast of Epirus.

The settlement in Leukas received Pylades, son of Cypselus, as the oikistes (Nic. Dam. *FgrHist.*, 90 P 57, 7); he soon exterminated the Acarnanians who had dwelled there and annexed their lands (Ps.-Scylax, 34). The rest of the colonists, probably using Leukas as their base, reached the Ambracian Gulf and settled on both its shores (Str., X, 2, 8). Echiades, Cypselus' third son, established Anactorium on the southern shore of the Gulf (Nic. Dam. *FgrHist.*, 90 F 57, 7); while on the opposite shore Gorgos, who probably led the largest number of the colonists, founded Ambracia — the largest colony in the area

---

<sup>14</sup> NILSSON 1936, 21; WILL 1955, 521 ff.; 526 f.; GRAHAM 1971, 30 ff., 250; MURRAY 1980, 144; FINE 1983, 112; SALMON 1984, 215; ZHESTOKANOV 1996, 93.

<sup>15</sup> ZHESTOKANOV 1996, 91.

(Ps.-Scymn., 453–463; Str., VII, 7, 6; Ant. Lib., 4). A vast stretch of fertile land in the vicinity of Ambracia<sup>16</sup> attracted significant numbers of colonists to the northern shore of the gulf.

The expansion of Corinth into the north-west coastal regions of Greece was often attended by confrontation with local residents. We have already mentioned the conflict between Pylades and the Acarnanians in Leukas. The Corinthian settlers probably encountered resistance from the local populace on the shores of the Ambracian Gulf. A golden bowl discovered in Olympia has the following inscription: “*The sons of Kypselos dedicated (this bowl) from Herakleia*”.<sup>17</sup> Pliny the Elder locates this city in Acarnania to the east of Anactorium. (Plin. *N.H.*, IV, 5; Steph. Byz., s.v. *Apollōnia*).

Cypselus’ successor Periander continued his father’s policy extending the influence of Corinth further to the north. During his reign two more Corinthian colonies were established on the coast of Illyria — Epidamnus (Thuc., I, 24, 2) and Apollonia (Thuc., I, 26, 2; Ps.-Scymn., 439; Str., VII, 5, 8; Plin. *N.H.*, III, 145; Steph. Byz., s.v. *Apollōnia*).

The Cypselids’ colonization policy was probably meant to resolve several issues. One of them may have been alleviating the agrarian problem, which was ever relevant for mainland Greece, through moving impoverished peasants to the newly-acquired lands. The massive number of the first-wave colonists, as well as vast stretches of arable land in the vicinity of the Ambracian Gulf and near Epidamnus and Apollonia, seem to support this hypothesis.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps, another important problem that Corinthian colonization was meant to solve was the necessity of re-establishing western communications that were impeded by the hostile actions of Corcyra.<sup>19</sup> The construction of the canal that separated Leukas from the mainland may have indicated the inclusion of trade interests in the new phase of Corinthian colonization (Str., I, 3, 18; X, 2, 8). The canal was probably designed to shorten the distance on the route to the Ambracian Gulf and to make communication with colonies in Magna Graecia more convenient. The very location of the colony in mountainous Leukas which, unlike the other Corinthian colonies, did not have enough arable lands suggests the commercial nature of this settlement. It seems, Leukas was meant to play the role of an intermediary port on the way to the western colonies, thus replacing Corcyra that Corinth had lost control over at the end of the Bacchiads’ rule (Thuc., I, 13, 4). It is entirely possible that the settlement in Leukas was a starting point for the subsequent conquest of the adversary island.<sup>20</sup>

The colonies of the Cypselids established along the western trade routes and united under control of the metropolis shaped Corinth as a sea power. For a period of time Corcyra remained independent. However, its fate was sealed. After conquering the island, Corinth

---

<sup>16</sup> SALMON 1984, 210.

<sup>17</sup> MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BULLETIN 1922, 65 ff. Cf.: WILL 1955, 517 n. 1; HAMMOND 1967, 426 f.

<sup>18</sup> ZHESTOKANOV 1996, 91.

<sup>19</sup> O’NEILL 1930, 156; MOSSÉ 1969, 32; SALMON 1984, 216 f.; ZHESTOKANOV 1996, 91.

<sup>20</sup> SALMON 1984, 216; ZHESTOKANOV 1996, 92.

established almost complete maritime domination over the routes between Italy and Greece which is confirmed by the prevalence of Corinthian imports in the Western Mediterranean region.<sup>21</sup> Corinthian leadership in the trade with the West declined under pressure from the expanding economic might of Athens.<sup>22</sup> But that happened in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC after the tyranny of the Cypselids was overthrown — their fall probably marked the start of the collapse of the “sea empire” they had created.

A number of researchers hold the opinion that it was in the era of the Cypselids that the coastal cities of Aetolia and Acarnania—Chalcis, Molycreium and Sollium<sup>23</sup>—came under the sway of Corinth. Thucydides writes of these cities’ dependence on Corinth terming Chalcis a Corinthian polis (I, 108, 5), Sollium a Corinthian polisma (II, 30, 1), and Molycreium a Corinthian apoikia (III, 102, 2).

After gaining independence from Corinth during the rule of the Bacciads (Thuc., I, 13, 4) Corcyra was brought back to the fold by the metropolis, at least during Periander’s reign.<sup>24</sup> The island, similarly to the other colonies of the Cypselids, was ruled by the governors appointed by the tyrants of Corinth. During the reign of Periander the ruler of the island was one Lycophron, the second son of the tyrant of Corinth (Hdt., III, 53; Diog. L., I, 94–95; cf. Nic. Dam. *FgrHist.*, 90 F 59, 1–2). The island’s joining the “sea empire” of the Cypselids probably happened before 627 BC. This is the date Eusebius of Caesarea provides for the founding of Epidamnus (*Hier.*, II, p. 97 Helm). It is known from other sources that the colony was populated through the joint effort of the Corinthians and Corcyraeans (Thuc., I, 24, 2). However, there is evidence that Corcyra had already been subjugated in the time of Cypselus.<sup>25</sup> According to Thucydides, the establishment of Anactorium—another Corinthian colony—was carried out by the Corinthians in concert with the Corcyraeans (I, 55, 1). Nicolaus of Damascus writes that the settlement was founded during the rule of Cypselus (*FgrHist.*, 90 F 57, 7).

At the end of Periander’s rule Corcyra once again seceded from Corinth, with the island’s inhabitants assassinating the governor Lycophron in the process. According to ancient writers’ reports, the popular uprising was triggered by elderly Periander’s intention to transfer power over Corinth to his son Lycophrone while he took his son’s place in Corcyra (Hdt., III, 52; Nic. Dam. *FgrHist.*, 90 F 59, 2; Diog. L., I, 95). The explanation offered by the written tradition of antiquity does not seem plausible, however, to discover the genuine reasons behind the Corcyraeans’ revolt appears impossible for the lack of other data.

---

<sup>21</sup> URE 1922, 186 f.; BLAKESWAY 1932/33, 204 ff.; NILSSON 1936, 15; 23; COOK 1946, 81 ff.; HEICHELHEIM 1958, 503 n. 40; COLDSTREAM 1968, 374 ff.

<sup>22</sup> NILSSON 1936, 23; ROEBUCK 1972, 125.

<sup>23</sup> GEYER 1927, 932 f.; O’NEILL 1930, 153 f.; OLIVA 1954, 216; WILL 1955, 520; JEFFERY 1976, 147; HAMMOND 1982, 335. Cf.: SALMON 1984, 213.

<sup>24</sup> BURN 1929, 24; BERVE 1967, 21; GRAHAM 1971, 31; JEFFERY 1976, 148; MURRAY 1980, 147; SALMON 1984, 218.

<sup>25</sup> NILSSON 1936, 82; SALMON 1984, 219.

The uprising was crushed by Periander who had fifty prominent citizens of Corcyra executed and three hundred young men from noble families captured and sent to Lydia to be castrated (Hdt., III, 48; Plut. *De mal.*, Herod., 22, 859f). They were probably supposed to serve at the court of the Lydian king Alyattes as eunuch slaves that had always been valued in the East.

Periander's nephew Psammetichus was appointed the governor of the retaken Corcyra. Later he would succeed Periander in Corinth (Nic. Dam. *FgrHist.*, 90 F 59, 4). The last Corinthian tyrant retained the power for three years only; after he was overthrown, Corcyra once again regained its independence. However, despite the fall of the tyranny in Corinth and the collapse of the "sea empire" of the Cypselids, the relations between the metropolis and its former colony were still strained. That can be inferred from a report of Plutarch about Themistocles' participating in settling a dispute between the Corinthians and Corcyraeans as an arbitrator (Them., 24).

Eventually, the long-standing conflict between the kindred poleis resulted in an armed confrontation, when at the end of the thirties of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC they became embroiled in the strife that broke out between different social strata in Epidamnus. Later, Athens' interference in the conflict provided one of the reasons for the Peloponnesian war (Thuc., I, 24–55).

## References

- ANDREWES, A. 1956. *The Greek Tyrants*. London.
- ARNHEIM, M.T. 1977. *Aristocracy in Greek Society*. London.
- BERVE, H. 1967. *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen*. I. München.
- BLAKEWAY, A. 1932/33. Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Commerce with Italy, Sicily and France in the VIII<sup>th</sup> and VII<sup>th</sup> Centuries BC. *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 33, 170–208.
- BLAKEWAY, A. 1935. «Demaratus». A Study in Some Aspects of the Earliest Hellenisation of Latium and Etruria. *Journal of Roman Studies* 25, 129–149.
- BOARDMAN, J. 1964. *The Greek Overseas*. Harmondsworth.
- BRADEEN, D.W. 1947. The Lelantine War and Pheidon of Argos. *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 78, 223–241.
- BURN, A.R. 1929. The So-called «Trade-leagues» in Early Greek History and Lelantine War. *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 49, 165–178.
- BURN, A.R. 1960. *The Lyric Age of Greece*. London.
- COLDSTREAM, J.N. 1968. *Greek Geometric Pottery. A Survey of Ten Local Styles and Their Chronology*. London.
- COLDSTREAM, J.N. 1977. *Geometric Greece*. London.
- COOK, R.M. 1946. Ionia and Greece in VIII<sup>th</sup> and VII<sup>th</sup> Centuries BC. *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 66, 67–98.
- DOVATUR, A.I. 1965. *Aristotle's Politics and Politeia*, Moscow–Leningrad.
- DUNBABIN, T.J. 1948. *The Western Greeks. The History of Sicily and South Italy from the Foundation of the Greek Colonies to 480 BC*. Oxford.

- FINE, J. 1983. *The Ancient Greeks. A Critical History*. Cambridge–London.
- FINLEY, M.I. 1970. *Early Greece. The Bronze and Archaic Ages*. London.
- FORREST, V.G. 1966. *The Emergence of Greek Democracy*. London.
- GEYER, F. 1927. Sollion. *Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* III A, 5, 932–933.
- GRAHAM, A.J. 1971. *Colony and Mother City in Ancient Greece*. Manchester.
- GRAHAM, A.J. 1982. The Colonial Expansion of Greece. *The Cambridge Ancient History* III, 3.
- HAMMOND, N.G.L. 1955. The Heraeum at Perachora and Corinthian Encroachment. *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 49, 93–102.
- HAMMOND, N. G. L. 1959. *A History of Greece to 322 BC*. Oxford.
- HAMMOND, N.G.L. 1967. *Epirus: The Geography, the Ancient Remains, the History and the Topography of Epirus and Adjacent Areas*. Oxford.
- HAMMOND, N.G.L. 1982. The Peloponnese. *The Cambridge Ancient History* III, 3.
- HEICHELHEIM, F.M. 1958. *An Ancient Economic History from the Palaeolithic Age to the Migrations of the Germanic, Slavic and Arabic Nations*, I. Leiden.
- HIGHBERGER, E.L. 1927. *The History and Civilization of Ancient Megara*. Baltimore.
- JEFFERY, L.H. 1976. *Archaic Greece. The City-States 700–500 BC*. London.
- LENSCHAU, T. 1938. Pheidon. *Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* XIX, 38, 1939–1945.
- MOSSÉ, C. 1969. *La Tyrannie dans la Grèce Antique*. Paris.
- MURRAY, O. 1980. *Early Greece*. Brighton.
- Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 1922. 20, 122. Boston.
- NILSSON, M.P. 1936. *The Age of the Early Tyrants*. Belfast.
- OLIVA, P. 1954. *Rana Řecka tyrannis. Studie k otázce vzniku sátu*. Praha.
- O'NEILL, J.G. 1930. *Ancient Corinth, with a Topographical Sketch of the Corinthia*, 1. Baltimore.
- OOST, S.I. 1972. Cypselus the Bacchiad. *Classical Philology* 67, 10–30.
- ROEBUCK, C. 1972. Some Aspects of Urbanization in Corinth. *Hesperia* 41, 96–127.
- SALMON, J.B. 1984. *Wealthy Corinth. A History of the City to 338 BC*. Oxford.
- SEALEY, R. 1976. *A History of the Greek City-States c. 700–338 BC*. Berkeley.
- STARR, Ch. 1961. *The Origins of Greek Civilization 1100–650 BC*. New York.
- URE, P.N. 1922. *The Origin of Tyranny*. Cambridge.
- WILL, E. 1955. *Korinthiaka. Recherches sur l'Histoire et la civilisation de Corinthe des origines aux Guerres Médiqes*. Paris.
- YAILENKO, V.P. 1990. *Archaic Greece and the Middle East*. Moscow.
- ZHESTOKANOV, S.M. 1996. Colonization Policy of the Tyrants of Corinth. *SPbU Vestnik* 2, 90–94.
- ZHESTOKANOV, S.M. 2005. Pheidon of Argos and Corinth. *Mnemon. Research and Publications on the History of the World of Antiquity* 4, 63–72. Saint Petersburg.





## Spartan Elite and Corruption Scandals

Larisa PECHATNOVA<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** *The article deals with cases of corruption in Sparta. The author shows that in the 5th century BC right up until the last decade of the Peloponnesian War it was mainly the Spartan kings and their closest relatives who were accused of corruption. But already at the turn of 5th–4th centuries BC almost all civil and military leaders of the country were involved in corruption scandals. At the end of the Peloponnesian War, the number of wealthy citizens who made their fortunes during military campaigns abroad sharply increased. The traditional moral values of equality and fraternity which the Spartans used to be brought up to believe quickly gave way to an unbridled thirst for profit. The author cites examples of corruption scandals in which both individual admirals and the entire Spartan government were embroiled. According to the author, moral corruption of the upper class led to the degradation of the whole society, dramatically increasing the social gap between the rich and the poor.*

**Rezumat.** *Articolul tratează cazurile de corupție din Sparta. Autorul arată că în secolul al V-lea î.Hr., până în ultimul deceniu al războiului peloponezic, regii spartani și apropiații lor au fost acuzați de corupție. La sfârșitul războiului peloponezic, numărul cetățenilor bogați care și-au făcut averi în timpul campaniilor militare din afara Spartei a crescut brusc. Valorile morale tradiționale de egalitate și fraternitate în care spartanii obișnuiau să creadă au făcut loc unei sete neînfrânate de profit. Autorul citează exemple de scandaluri de corupție în care au fost implicați atât amirali, cât și întregul guvern spartan.*

**Keywords:** Sparta, Spartan kings, ephors, Xenophon, Lysander, corruption.

As a rule, ancient writers, describing significant social changes that occurred in the late classical Sparta, associated them with moral decline and growing disbelief in traditional values. Even Xenophon, generally pro-Spartan, the friend and admirer of Spartan king Agesilaus, recognized that Sparta contemporary with him was significantly different from the ideal model that he himself portrayed in *Lacedaemonian Politeia*. Xenophon did not dare to completely ignore the fact that in his time the Spartan elite was thirsty for money and was involved in numerous corruption scandals. In the penultimate, 14th chapter of his tractate, where Xenophon criticizes contemporary Sparta,<sup>2</sup> he blames ‘the Spartans for their blatant

---

<sup>1</sup> St. Petersburg State University, Institute of History, Russia; email: l.pechatnova@spbu.ru.

<sup>2</sup> It is a common belief that Xenophon felt compelled to make such a realistic remark as a concession to his readers, well aware of the real state of Spartan society which was very far from the idyll depicted by him.

disobedience towards the god and the Lycurgan laws' in their desire to serve abroad and openly demonstrate the wealth acquired there' (*Lac. Pol.* 14, 7, hereinafter translated by M. Lipka). In this case, Xenophon had in mind those officers who, during the Peloponnesian War and Spartan hegemony, held the highest command posts in the army and were appointed *harmosts*<sup>3</sup> in the allied cities. Their military and financial independence often led to all sorts of excesses. So, the *harmosts*, being *de facto* unlimited rulers in the cities under their jurisdiction, tended to become real tyrants, robbing the allies and enriching themselves at their expense (*Xen. Hell.* VI, 3, 8). An example of such a classic tyrant from among the military commanders is Clearchus, *harmost* of Byzantium. In 403 BC he unleashed real terror on the city with massacres, expulsions and confiscation of property (*Diod.* XIV, 12, 2-9). In his '*Hellenica*', Xenophon keeps silent about this side of the activities of Clearchus, who was well known to him, but in the *Lacedaemonian Politeia*, although without naming specific names, he complains that the Spartans now prefer 'to suffer corruption by flattery as *harmosts* in the cities' (14, 2). Xenophon is diligently looking for the cause of corruption of the military elite, not inside, but outside of Sparta. In his opinion, residing abroad had led the *Spartiates* to moral decay, because it was there that they had been infected by foreigners with audacity and levity (14, 4: ... ῥαιδιουργίας οἱ πολῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ξένων ἐμπίμπλαιντο). Xenophon bluntly says that first and foremost the Spartan elites sought to enrich themselves at the expense of the allies. According to him, 'those who are reputed to be the leading men are doing their best to continue to serve as *harmosts* abroad for the rest of their lives' (14, 4). So even from the brief and not detailed remarks of Xenophon about the state of society in Sparta he was contemporary with, there is a very clear conclusion: the Spartan elite *in corpore* had changed its former values. Now the upper stratum of society sought not so much to complete their careers as *gerontes*, but to serve abroad, spending time in looting and embezzlement. The cautious Xenophon, as it seems, told us more than he himself intended.

A few decades later, Aristotle speaks absolutely directly about the same phenomenon – the corruption of the Spartan elite. For him, corruption was a long-established practice in Sparta that had spread across all social strata, especially the upper echelon. Aristotle, for example, mentions that in one scandalous story, unknown to us, but apparently, well-known to his readers, almost all the *ephors* were involved. According to him, in the affair at Andros 'certain *ephors* were corrupted with money and so far as lay in their power ruined the whole state' (*Pol.* II, 6, 14, 1270b, hereinafter translated by H. Rackham). Aristotle also recalls the *gerousia*, whose members, unlike the board of five *ephors*, were representatives solely of the Spartan elite. *Inter alia*, the *gerontes* were in charge of the state treasury.

---

<sup>3</sup> Military governors who appeared during the Peloponnesian war and were sent together with the garrisons to the most important allied cities for the military support of the pro-Spartan governments. The office of *harmost* existed for about 30 years until the battle of Leuctra (*Xen. Hell.* VI. 3. 18; Paus. IX. 6. 4).



This, as Aristotle testifies, gave them an opportunity to dip their hands into the till: 'And it is known that those who have been admitted to this office take bribes and betray many of the public interests by favoritism' (*Pol. II, 6, 18, 1271a*). Since the *gerontes* were not controlled by society, then, according to Aristotle, their access to the treasury was contrary to the interests of the state and could even become a threat to the security of the country (*ibid.*).

According to Xenophon (*Lac. Pol. 14, 3*) and Aristotle (*Pol. II, 6, 5-7, 1269b*), if asceticism and poverty could still be found in classical Sparta, they existed only as slogans. Apparently, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC the unbridled passion of the Spartans for money and enrichment was already well known and was perceived in Greece as their national trait (*φιλαργυρία* and *φιλοχρηματία*) (*Isocr. VIII, 96; XI, 20; Arist. Pol. II, 6, 23, 1271b*). Of course, previously a number of the Spartans were involved in corruption scandals, but these *phenomena* had never been so widespread.

Until the last decade of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC only the Spartan kings were accused of such frauds. Since the kings were not fully integrated into the structures required for all Spartans, such as the public education system (*agōgē*) or public dinners (*syssitia*), for example, they had a greater degree of freedom than their 'subjects'. Although it sounds paradoxical, the kings can be regarded as the only people in Sparta who actually did not belong to the number of equals (*homoioi*). Dissimilar standards of upbringing and education also formed a mentality different from that of their fellow citizens, and, consequently, a different behavioral pattern. At least some of the Spartan kings skillfully used all sorts of corrupt schemes in the fight against their political opponents, even resorting to bribing oracles. The kings used their position as commanders in chief of the Spartan army, receiving bribes from the enemy, mostly for abandoning military campaigns that had already begun. In this manner, they in certain respects were becoming the war criminals.

Not surprisingly, the very first king, about whom the rich written tradition<sup>4</sup> has been preserved, turned out to be a corrupt man. Thanks to Herodotus, we are quite well aware of the activities of Cleomenes I (520–487). According to the tradition, he was suspected of corruption at least twice during his reign. So, in 494 BC he was accused of receiving a bribe from the Argeians for abandoning the assault on their city (*VI, 82, 1*), and in 491 BC of accepting a bribe from the Athenians for organizing a military campaign against Aegina (*VI, 50*). But in the latter case, Herodotus does not rule out the possibility that Cleomenes was deliberately slandered by his co-ruler Demaratus (*VI, 64*). Whether Cleomenes was a

---

<sup>4</sup> Although according to the calculations of the ancient chronographs, in particular Eusebius, the first kings in Sparta had already ruled at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC, we know almost nothing about them, apart from their names and sometimes the duration of their rule. We know very little even about the kings who were the immediate predecessors of Cleomenes I and his co-ruler Demaratus.

bribe-taker or not is still the subject of scientific disputes.<sup>5</sup> However, it is important for us that in Sparta at the beginning of the 5th century BC similar charges, apparently, were not perceived as something out of the ordinary. After the trials of Cleomenes, charges of accepting a bribe by officials of even the highest rank will become commonplace in Sparta.

The next king, already convicted of bribery without any doubt, is Leotychides II (491–469). Herodotus reports that during the campaign in Thessaly (476 BC), the king received a bribe from the Thessalian Aevadae for the cessation of hostilities against them (VI, 72). In Sparta, Leotychides was sentenced to death, but he was given an opportunity to flee to Tegea (Paus. III, 7, 9).

Thucydides supplements the list of Herodotus with several more names of high-born bribe-takers. The first on his list is the regent Pausanias. But in the case of this man, Thucydides is not entirely objective: he strives to blackwash the hero of Plataea. In the depiction by Thucydides, Pausanias appears as a corrupt tyrant and traitor, who for his own ends was ready to subjugate all Hellas to Persia (I, 128–134). Of course, a lot of colorful details in Thucydides' story about the regent seem to be greatly exaggerated<sup>6</sup>, but one thing is indisputable: Pausanias compromised himself abroad so much that the Spartan authorities voluntarily renounced their hegemony and handed over the leadership of the allied fleet to Athens around 477 BC. Thucydides explains this act of the forced peacefulness of the ruling elite as follows: '... Lacedaemonians sent out no other commanders thereafter, fearing that any who went out might be corrupted, as they saw had happened in the case of Pausanias' (I, 95, 7, hereinafter translated by Ch.F. Smith; see also: Plut. *Arist.* 23). The Spartan authorities were indeed alarmed and frightened by the too active and unpredictable practices of their royal commanders both abroad and at home. For them it was worse than routine embezzlement. Pausanias was not permitted to flee abroad, as the bribe-taker king Leotychides was allowed to do at about the same time. Pausanias was not even tried. The authorities were so afraid of him that they committed terrible blasphemy: he was walled up in the temple, where he died of hunger and thirst (Thuc. I, 134; Nep. Paus. 4–5; Paus. III, 17, 7–9)<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>5</sup> Some historians, e.g. R. Parker, are convinced that in the case of Argos at least, bribery did occur (PARKER 1989, 142–173, esp. 156).

<sup>6</sup> Since the 70s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when a whole series of articles about Pausanias appeared, and until now there has been a clear tendency towards a more critical attitude towards Thucydides' story about Pausanias. I will refer in particular to the opinions of G. Cawkwell, P. Powell, M. Nafissi, M. Lupi (CAWKWELL 1997, 11, 124 f., n. 35; POWELL 2001, 223; NAFISSI 2004, 147–180, esp. 160; LUPI 2018, 271–290, esp. 283).

<sup>7</sup> As far as we know, the Spartan authorities turned a blind eye to the escape abroad of high-ranking *Spartiates* who had already been sentenced to death or were still awaiting a trial. As a rule, they were not prosecuted and the authorities did not demand their extradition. But this rule concerned only corrupt officials or unlucky commanders. For example, in 395 BC the king Pausanias was allowed to flee to Tegea, although he had been previously sentenced to death for the failure of a military expedition and the death of Lysander (Xen. *Hell.* III, 5, 6–7; 17–25; Paus. III, 5, 6–7; Plut. *Lys.* 28–29; Diod. XIV, 89). But the same practice did not apply to dissidents whose activities seriously affected

King Pleistoanax, the son of the regent Pausanius, did not escape accusations either; although he only faced corruption charges. According to Thucydides, he was accused of the fact that in 446 BC he, along with the *ephor* Cleandridas, his companion, had received the bribe of 10 talents from Pericles for withdrawing his troops from Attica. In Sparta, the king was tried and sentenced to a large fine of 15 talents (Schol. ad Ar. Nub. 858f). Pleistoanax, without having paid the fine, decided to leave the country, and no one prevented him from doing so (Thuc. II, 21, 1; V, 16, 3).

The next episode, reported by Thucydides, occurred already during the Peloponnesian War. In 419 BC the Spartan king Agis II led the campaign against Argos. However, for some unknown reason, perhaps having received a large bribe, the king withdrew from the decisive battle and returned home. For this offense, Agis was convicted and sentenced to a fine of 17 talents. However, the king later secured an acquittal. Apparently, the court did not have reliable evidence of his guilt, or his supporters were able to somehow hush up the case (Thuc. V, 63; see also: Diod. XII, 78).

But not only kings in this early period (from the beginning of the 5th century to 419 BC) were accused of corruption. Among the bribe-takers there were also people of non-royal origin. However, they were usually connected with kings and participated in the same corruption schemes as royalty. So, for example, two kings, namely Pleistoanax and Agis II, who were convicted of receiving money from the enemy, had not acted on their own, but in collusion with their advisers, the *ephors*.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, for the same crimes the *ephors* were sentenced to severer punishments than their accomplices — kings. For example, the *ephor* Cleandridas, the companion of Pleistoanax, was sentenced to death, and he only managed to escape his fate by fleeing prudently (Diod. XIII, 106, 10; Plut. *Per.* 22; Nic. 28, 5).



The number and status of Spartan citizens accused of corruption changes from the second half of the Peloponnesian War, when Sparta begins to receive financial assistance from the Persians<sup>9</sup> and conduct active military operations against Athens abroad, especially

the state interests. The authorities dealt with them mercilessly. So, in 487 BC the king Cleomenes seems to have been forced to commit suicide, although the sources do not confirm this version (Hdt. VI, 75; Plut. *Mor.* 224a) (For political suicides in Sparta, see: DAVID 2004, 25–47). In 241 BC the *ephors* themselves executed in prison the king Agis IV, his mother and grandmother (Plut. *Agis* 19; 21).

<sup>8</sup> *Ephors*, as a rule, remained anonymous to the ancient historians. However, there were exceptions. For example, the *ephor* Cleandridas, the father of Gylippus. He was tried for the same crime as Pleistoanax and sentenced *in absentia* to death (Diod. XIII, 106, 10; Plut. *Per.* 22; Nic. 28, 5). Apparently, in this case, the name of *ephor* was preserved only because Cleandridas was not an ordinary *Spartiate*, but belonged to a noble family.

<sup>9</sup> In 412–411 BC Sparta signed three treaties with Persia, the texts of which are quoted in the eighth book of Thucydides (VIII, 18; 37; 58). Under the terms of these treaties, Persia promised to support the Spartan fleet with money. Subsidies from the Persians, especially from Cyrus the Younger, were the first big money the Spartans had ever seen.

in Asia Minor. Money began to come both from the Persians and from the Allies; a significant part of it ended up lining the pockets of the ruling elite (Xen. *Lac. pol.* 14, 3; Plut. *Lys.* 17; 18). A careful study of the sources shows that in the last decade of the Peloponnesian War almost all high-ranking officers who served abroad and had at least some access to state money were embroiled in corruption. After 413 BC, when the fleet was created with the Persian money, almost all the Spartan admirals, with rare exceptions, were convicted of corruption. The list opens with the naval officer Therimenes, who probably in 412 BC received from Tissaphernes, the Persian satrap, a bribe for agreeing to maintain the fleet at a lower cost than was required by the contract (Thuc. VIII, 29, 2; 45, 3). Astyochus, the *nauarch* (navy commander) in 412/411 BC, followed the same pattern. Thucydides bluntly states that Astyochus was bribed by Tissaphernes and ‘for his own private gain’ (ἐπὶ ἰδίοις κέρδεσι) was ready to put his entire fleet on short rations (VIII. 50, 3).

Perhaps Pasippidas, the *nauarch* in 410/409 BC, also received a bribe from the same satrap Tissaphernes. In any case, he was suddenly removed from command, recalled to Sparta and subjected to trial (Xen. *Hell.* I, 1, 32). But, apparently, Pasippidas was soon acquitted, because later in 409/408 BC we see him already serving as an ambassador (I, 3, 13). The successor to Pasippidas, the *nauarch* in 409/408 BC Cratesippidas also turned out to be a corrupt official. Being bribed, he allowed the oligarchs previously expelled from Chios return to their homeland (Diod. XIII, 65, 3–4). The sources, naturally, retained information only about senior naval officers—*nauarches*—, but their subordinates acted in the same way. Many of the fortunes in Sparta seem to have originated from the bribes received by Spartan officers in the last decade of the Peloponnesian War.

The most famous *peculator*, whose ‘feat’ apparently made a strong impression on the whole Greek world, was Gylippus, the hero of the Sicilian campaign and friend of Lysander. In 404 BC he tried to steal a huge amount — 300 talents from the 1500 talents that Lysander had ordered him to deliver to Sparta (Diod. XIII, 106, 8–10; Plut. *Lys.* 16). When the case was solved, Gylippus fled and was sentenced to death *in absentia* (Diod. XIII, 106, 8–10; Posidon. *ap. Athen.* VI, 234a; Plut. *Lys.* 16–17).

At the very end of the Peloponnesian War, when the cash flow to Sparta increased significantly, embezzlement and bribery became even more widespread. At this time, Sparta was shocked not so much by the numerous facts of corruption, but by its scale, which had never been seen before. No wonder Plutarch claimed ‘that the Lacedaemonian state began to suffer distemper and corruption soon after its subversion of the Athenian...’ (*Agis* 5, 1, translated by B. Perrin). The sudden emergence of huge fortunes apparently made a shocking impression on the part of society that had not received any substantial advantages from the Spartan victories. Most likely, the highest Spartan magistrates who were not directly connected with the war (some of the *ephors* and *gerontes*) stood up to protect their interests. They rightly feared that the quick growth of economic inequality would counter all state

propaganda based on the idea of economic, political and legal equality of all citizens. The conservative opposition resisted any innovations that undermined the state's monopoly in the field of finance and expanded the economic freedoms of private citizens. The noble conservatives, who wanted to enlist the support of poorly educated Spartan *plebes*, traditionally used the most convincing arguments for the crowd – divine sayings. At that time, they either unearthed an ancient dictum, or invented a suitable one for this occasion, proclaiming that Sparta would be destroyed by nothing more than greed (ἄ φιλοχρηματία Σπάρταν ὀλεῖ ἄλλο δὲ οὐδέν) (Zenob. *Prov.* II, 24 = Schol. ad Eurip. *Androm.* 446 = Arist. fr. 544 Rose<sup>3</sup>)<sup>10</sup>. Such oracles reinforced official propaganda and contributed to the manipulation of the public's mind.

The sharp economic and social polarization of society at the turn of the 5th–4th centuries BC led to attempts by the ruling elite to rectify the situation through the adoption of a number of new laws. However, these were only palliative measures, since the ruling elite wanted to achieve impossible things: on the one hand, they wanted to maintain the former unity and consent of the civic community; on the other hand, they intended to continue amassing wealth buying up the lands from impoverished fellow citizens. Therefore, the fight against corruption waged by the civil authorities was more of a decorative nature and was associated, as a rule, with political clashes within the elites. So, at the turn of the 5th–4th centuries BC either a new law was adopted, or some ancient rule was enacted, according to which citizens were forbidden, under pain of death, to keep gold and silver coins at home<sup>11</sup> (Plut. *Lys.* 17). St. Hodgkinson rightly suspected that this law was initiated by the enemies of Lysander and was a response to the corruption scandals that were directly related to the immediate circle of the disgraced *nauarch*. According to the British scientist, such a law was applied exclusively *ad hoc* and was never widely used in Spartan practice<sup>12</sup>. Indeed, as far as we know, the only person who in 403 BC was not only sentenced to death in accordance with the law, but actually executed, was Thorax, the *harmost* of Samos (Diod. XIV, 3, 5; Plut. *Lys.* 19). Perhaps if Thorax had not been a close friend of Lysander, who was then in disgrace, the Spartan authorities would have turned a blind eye to the violation of financial discipline by Thorax.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ephorus, and Plutarch after him, considered this text as an ancient Delphic oracle (Ephor. ap. Diod. VII, 14, 5; Plut. *Mor.* 239f.; *Agis* 9). But according to Ed. Meyer, this dictum emerged not earlier than the end of the 5th century BC and was but one element of the ideological struggle that the king Pausanias and his supporters waged against dangerous innovations. To give this political slogan special weight, the oracle was deliberately made archaic and given out as a product of a very early time (MEYER 1892, 211–286, esp. 226–227). Following Ed. Meyer, most scholars agree that this hexameter is a proverb of the Classical period, and in no way refers to Archaic Sparta. See a review of opinions: VAN WEES 1999, 1–41, esp. 3, n. 2.

<sup>11</sup> According to A. Powell, private housing in Sparta was considered the most suitable place to store illegal cash and treasures (POWELL 2001, 247).

<sup>12</sup> HODKINSON 1996, 85–101, esp. 88.

Justice in Sparta was always selective and based on case-law. And a lot of decisions depended not so much on principles but on personal relationships of all interested parties. It is enough to recall the collision associated with the paradoxical justification of Sphodrias. This Spartiate, being the *harmost* of the Boeotian Thespieae, apparently received a bribe from the Thebans for organizing a provocation against Athens, with which Sparta was then at peace (Xen. *Hell.* V, 4, 20; Plut. *Ages.* 24, 4; *Pelop.* 14, 2). In 378 BC he undertook to attack the Athenian harbor Piraeus with his detachment. The attack on Piraeus failed, and Sphodrias was tried *in absentia* in Sparta as a bribe-taker and war criminal. But the king Agesilaus, solely thanks to his authority, secured an acquittal of Sphodrias, cynically stating ‘that it is impossible that Sphodrias is not guilty of wrong-doing; but that when, as child, boy, and young man, one has continually performed all the duties of a Spartan, it is a hard thing to put such a man to death; for Sparta has need of such soldiers’ (Xen. *Hell.* V, 4, 32, translated by C.L. Brownson; see also Plut. *Ages.* 25, 5). The fate of Sphodrias was essentially decided by one person<sup>13</sup>.

According to the Greeks themselves, Sparta at the end of the 5th century BC turned into the richest state after Persia (Plat. *Alc.* I, 122c–123a). The funds collected from the allies, the robbery and confiscation of property in the conquered territories, on the one hand, replenished the treasury, and on the other hand, provided the Spartan military officers with an opportunity to accumulate huge fortunes.

Significant funds, apparently, lined the pockets of the elite, so that it became even more alienated from the bulk of the citizens than before. At the turn of the 5th–4th centuries BC the new nobility arose from the top military leadership and allied with the old aristocratic families. It is very likely that hidden buying and selling of posts began during this period. The will of the majority could be easily ‘corrected’ thanks to the intentional preservation of the very ancient and primitive election method, which Aristotle defined as “childish” (*Pol.* II, 6, 18, 1271a10). Thus, without any particular hassle, it became possible to recruit those candidates to *Gerousia* and *Ephorate* who were ready to secure their elections with contributions and valuable gifts.

The huge income gap between the wealthy Spartan elite and ordinary citizens led to their actual alienation from each other and to a serious deformation of the moral principles of the whole society. The rich did not hesitate to demonstrate their wealth, and their fellow citizens—impoverished *Spartiates*—gradually fell and turned into outcasts (Plut. *Agis* 5, 6–7). Moral decline affected all sectors of society. Bribes started to be taken not only by individual officials, but by entire *collegia* in a body. Corruption also fully affected the *ephorate*, to which ordinary citizens had access. Aristotle even believed that the *Ephorate* was the most corrupt institution in Sparta, because ‘the *Ephors* are appointed from the entire people, so that quite

---

<sup>13</sup> For an analysis of the ancient tradition regarding Sphodrias’ raid and the paradoxical defense of his actions in court, see esp.: PARKER 2007, 13–33; HODKINSON 1999, 43–66; DAVIES 2018, 480–499, esp. 480–486.

poor men often happen to get into the office, who owing to their poverty used to be easily bought' (*Pol.* II, 6, 14, 1270b). Moreover, Aristotle spoke not only about contemporary cases, he argued that 'this was often manifested in earlier times...' (II, 6, 14, 1270b).

We find a classic example of rampant corruption among the Spartan authorities in the writings of Pausanias *Periegetes*. He talks about the events of 346 BC when the Spartans as allies of the Phocians took part in the capture of Delphi: '... when the Phocian leaders had seized the temple at Delphi, the kings and every Spartan of repute privately, and the board of *ephors* and senate publicly, had a share of the god's property' (IV, 5, 4, translated by W.H.S. Jones and H.A. Ormerod).

\*  
\*\*

Finally, we must add that the Spartans not only willingly took bribes, but also often acted as bribe-givers. But until the last decade of the 5th century BC this was mainly done by the kings and their immediate family. So, at the beginning of the 5th century BC king Cleomenes I even decided to bribe the Delphic priests so that they would declare his opponent Demaratus illegitimate. Herodotus, familiar with the inner life of the Delphic Sanctuary,<sup>14</sup> talks in detail about Cleomenes' collusion with the Delphic priests and the subsequent scandal (VI, 66). Herodotus does not say directly how Cleomenes managed to enlist the support of an influential Delphic priest. Most likely, there was an instance of bribery<sup>15</sup>. Pausanias in connection with this story claimed that the Spartans were the only ones who dared to bribe the Pythia (III, 4, 5-6).

While it is the late and not very reliable writer Pausanias, an antiquarian and travel-writer of the second century AD, who labelled Cleomenes as a bribe-giver, the information about the regent Pausanias came from a much more reliable source – from Thucydides himself. The Athenian historian in his narrative about the fate of Pausanias remarks that the regent, at the call of the *ephors*, returned from Asia Minor to Sparta only because he hoped to 'dispose of the charge by the use of money' (I, 131, 2). We trust the Thucydides' report regarding Pausanias' intention to 'resolve issues' through bribes. The regent possessed great material resources<sup>16</sup>, belonged to the royal family and knew perfectly well about the attractiveness of wealth for his fellow citizens. Apparently, his confidence in impunity was based on these very grounds.

---

<sup>14</sup> On the close ties of Herodotus with Delphi see in particular: COMPTON 1994, 217–223.

<sup>15</sup> In the scientific literature, the version of Pythia's bribing is the main one. See: CARTLEDGE 1979, 146; KULISHOVA 2003, 65–88, esp. 85 f.

<sup>16</sup> Inherited capital, considerable military revenues (Hdt. IX, 81) and, possibly, Persian subsidies made him one of the richest people in Sparta. So, Pseudo-Plutarch, with reference to Chrysermus, reports that Xerxes transferred to Pausanias 500 talents in gold (Chryserm. *ap.* Ps.-Plut. *Parallela minora*. 10 = Stob. *Flor.* III, 39, 31), and Diodorus claims that Artabazos secretly transferred a lot of money to Pausanias to bribe the Hellenes (XI, 44, 4).

Perhaps, with the help of big money donated to the Delphic Apollo, the disgraced king Pleistoanax in 427 BC was able to return to his homeland after nearly twenty years of exile (Thuc. V, 16). In this case, Thucydides does not directly say that the priests acted in favor of the king, being bribed by him, but certain details make us think about a very high probability that Pleistoanax found sympathy with the oracle at Delphi solely through bribes and gifts<sup>17</sup>. According to Thucydides, rumors circulated in Sparta for a long time that his return was illegal (V, 16, 1).

At the turn of the 5th–4th centuries BC, when the circle of wealthy people expanded due to senior officers, among them also appeared people who were trying to solve their problems with the help of bribes. The most striking example of such behavior was shown by the famous Spartan admiral and the winner in the Peloponnesian war Lysander. Through his emissaries he tried to bribe the most respected Greek shrines in order to get from the priests the oracle he needed (Diod. XIV, 13, 3–7; Plut. *Lys.* 25, 3–4; *Nep. Lys.* 3, 1–4). Lysander dreamed of royal power and hoped that the priests would help him to acquire it<sup>18</sup>. Ephorus speaks of the large sums that Lysander and his agents used in unsuccessful attempts to bribe the oracles at Delphi, Dodona, and the Libyan oasis of Zeus-Ammon (Ephor. ap. Plut. *Lys.* 25, 3–4; Diod. XIV, 13, 33–7). The fact that the priests refused to help Lysander testifies not so much to their incorruptibility as to the fact that they preferred to distance themselves from the disgraced *nauarch*, who had become the enemy of the king Agesilaus.

About cases of corruption among the rest of the Spartans—contemporaries of Lysander—we know much less. This is due to the peculiarities of the tradition. *Laconophil* Xenophon, our main source for this era, carefully avoided any mention of disgraceful behavior of Spartans. But based on the little data that we have at our disposal we can make a very clear conclusion: corruption in Spartan society had spread wide. Now, not only the kings were involved in it, but the entire leadership of the country — the *gerontes*, the *ephors* and the highest military command. By the end of the 5th century BC corruption in Sparta reached such proportions that it began to exert its negative impact on all spheres of life in civil society, including dramatically worsening the moral climate in it. The old ‘*code of Spartiate*’, which included contempt for money, trade and enrichment, was forgotten and gave way to an unbridled thirst for profit. Numerous corruption scandals, the participants of which were, as a rule, representatives of the elites, undermined the moral foundations of society, destroying citizens’ faith in the equitable distribution of wealth, and increasing inequality

---

<sup>17</sup> It was probably not only money that played a role in Delphi's long-standing efforts to restore Pleistoanax to the throne (for the influence of Delphi on the fate of Pleistoanax see: POWELL 2009, 35–82, esp. 55–62). The Spartan kings, especially the *Agidai*, had close centuries-old ties with the Delphic oracle, which were reinforced by large donations from the kings. So, for example, the king Agesilaus donated a decent sum of over a hundred talents to the Delphic Sanctuary for two years (Xen. *Hell.* IV, 3, 21; *Ages.* I, 34).

<sup>18</sup> For a possible plot of Lysander against the hereditary *dyarchy* and his manipulation with oracles, see: POWELL 2009, 73–77.



widened the gap between the rich and the poor. Corruption, which especially intensified at the end of the 5th century BC, had a negative impact on the whole society, contributing to the collapse of the previously unified body of citizens. And the preservation of an archaic qualifying system resulted in the exclusion of impoverished *Spartiates* from the ranks of full citizens. Most of the Spartans, who had become outcasts, no longer wanted to defend the state, which had become alien to them. As a result, Sparta, after three decades, lost all the advantages that it had gained from the victory in the Peloponnesian War; and in 371 BC it was defeated at the battle of Leuctra turning from a great power into an ordinary *polis*.

## References

- CARTLEDGE, P. 1979. *Sparta and Lakonia. A Regional History 1300–362 BC*. London.
- CAWKWELL, G. 1997. *Thucydides and Peloponnesian War*. London.
- COMPTON, T. 1994. The Herodotean Mantic Session at Delphi. *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 137, 217–223.
- DAVID, E. 2004. Suicide in Spartan Society. In: Th.J. Figueira (ed.), *Spartan Society*, 25–47. Swansea.
- DAVIES, Rh. 2018. Equality and Distinction within the Spartiate Community. In: A. Powell (ed.), *A Companion to Sparta 2*, 480–499. Hoboken.
- HODKINSON, St. 1996. Spartan Society in the Fourth Century: Crisis and Continuity. In: Carlier (ed.), *Le IV<sup>e</sup> siècle av. J.-C.: Approches historiographiques*, Nancy, 85–10. Paris.
- HODKINSON, St. 1999. The Episode of Sphodrias as a Source for Spartan Social History. In: St. Hodkinson, A. Powell (eds.), *Sparta: New Perspectives*, 43–66. London.
- KULISHOVA, O.V. 2003. Spartanskij tsar' Kleomen y Delfy. In: Ed. Frolov (ed.), *Mnemon*. 2, 65–88. Saint Petersburg.
- LUPI, M. 2018. Sparta and the Persian Wars, 499–478. In: A. Powell (ed.), *A Companion to Sparta 1*, 271–290. Hoboken.
- MEYER, Ed. 1892. Lykurgos von Sparta. In: Idem. *Forschungen zur alten Geschichte* 1, 211–286. Halle.
- NAFISSI, M. 2004. Tucidide, Erodoto e la tradizione su Pausania nel V secolo. *Rivista Storica dell' Antichità* 34, 147–180.
- PARKER, R. 1989. Spartan Religion. In: A. Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta: Techniques behind her Success*, 142–173. London.
- PARKER, V. 2007. Sphodrias' Raid and the Liberation of Thebes: A Study of Ephorus and Xenophon. *Hermes* 135/1, 13–33.
- POWELL, A. 2001. *Athens and Sparta. Constructing Greek Political and Social History from 478 BC*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London–New York.
- POWELL, A. 2009. Divination, Royalty and Insecurity in Classical Sparta. *Kernos. Revue internationale et pluridisciplinaire de religion grecque antique* 22, 35–82.
- VAN WEES, H. 1994. 'Tyrtaeus' Eunomia. Nothing to do with the Great Rhetra'. In: St. Hodkinson and A. Powell (eds.), *Sparta. New Perspectives*, 1–41. Duckworth.





## Cicero and Clodius in the Work *Stoic Paradoxes* (Cic. *Parad.* 27–32)

Peter FRAŇO<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** This paper aims to analyse the fourth paradox from Cicero's work *Stoic Paradoxes* (Cic. *Parad.* 27–32). In this text, Marcus Tullius Cicero tries to argue based on stoic-philosophical arguments that he did not leave into exile (in 58 BC). He rather implies that it was the Publius Clodius Pulcher who went into exile because of his loss of mental capacity. In *Stoic Paradoxes* author philosophically disputes his exile and because of moral dispositions, he achieves the positions of stoic sage as the highest ethical ideal.

**Rezumat.** Această lucrare își propune să analizeze al patrulea paradox din lucrarea lui Cicero intitulată *Paradoxurile stoice* (Cic. *Parad.* 27–32). În acest text, Marcus Tullius Cicero încearcă să demonstreze cu argumente stoico-filosofice că el nu a plecat în exil (în 58 î.Hr.). El sugerează că Publius Clodius Pulcher a fost cel care a plecat în exil din cauza pierderii capacității sale mentale.

**Keywords:** Marcus Tullius Cicero, Publius Clodius Pulcher, *Stoic Paradoxes*, stoic sage, exile.

The work *Stoic Paradoxes* is considered to be the shortest work of Cicero's but is also a most neglect philosophical work.<sup>2</sup> The author wrote this somewhere between April and May 46 BC, during the political battle between Caesar and the rest of the Pompeian army in North Africa.<sup>3</sup> *Stoic Paradoxes* consists of an introductory prologue and six separate paradoxes that examine a specific ethical issue.<sup>4</sup> The first two paradoxes<sup>5</sup> describe examples of the behaviour of several historical Roman men. These men were so virtuous that they were

---

<sup>1</sup> University of SS. Cyril and Methodius Trnava; email: peter.frano@ucm.sk.

<sup>2</sup> WEBB 1985, 1.

<sup>3</sup> BRINGMANN 1971, 60.

<sup>4</sup> Paradox I: "That only what is morally noble is good" ("Ότι μόνον το καλὸν ἀγαθόν; *Quod honestum sit id solum bonum esse*); Paradox II: "That the possession of virtue is sufficient for happiness" ("Ότι αὐτάρκης ἡ ἀρετὴ πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν; *In quo virtus site ei nihil deesse ad beate vivendum*); Paradox III: "That transgressions are equal and right actions equal" ("Ότι ἴσα τὰ ἀμαρτήματα καὶ τὰ κατορθώματα; *Aequalia esse peccata et recte facta*); Paradox IV: "That every foolish man is mad" ("Ότι πᾶς ἄφρων μαίνεται; *Omnem stultum insanire*); Paradox V: "That only the wise man is free, and that every foolish man is a slave" ("Ότι μόνον ὁ σοφὸς ἐλεύθερος καὶ πᾶς ἄφρων δοῦλος; *Solum sapientem esse liberum, et omnem stultum servum*); Paradox VI: "That the wise man alone is rich" ("Ότι μόνον ὁ σοφὸς πλούσιος; *Solum sapientem esse divitem*). For a structural and content side of the *Stoic Paradoxes* see MACKENDRICK 1989, 87–91. English translation of the work *Paradoxa stoicorum* is from CICERO 1942.

<sup>5</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 6–19.

capable of sacrificing their lives for their country. The capability *pro patria mori* proves their high moral integrity, which should be an integral part of the character of every Roman politician. Cicero proposes his ideal conception of an ancient republic based on *mores maiorum* into the time of life these old legislators and commanders. This defence of the past serves as a reminder of ideal conditions that should be present in every state. The examples of virtuous men in this work are primarily old legislators (Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Lucius Iunius Brutus), commanders (Gaius Mucius Scaevola, Publius Horatius Cocles, Publius Decius Mus, Marcus Regulus, Gaius Marius), and righteous and modest statesmen (Gaius Fabricius Luscinus, Marcus Porcius Cato, Manius Curius Dentatus). In the third paradox,<sup>6</sup> Cicero focuses on proving the controversial stoic statement: “That transgressions are equal and right actions equal” (*Aequalia esse peccata et recte facta*). In the last three paradoxes, there are almost no examples of *pro patria mori*, but there is a critique of contemporary social and political circumstances. Cicero probably believed that in his time, there are no similar examples of leading a virtuous life; as he introduced them in the first two paradoxes. He tries to persuade the readers that he is the single existing example of a virtuous life. In the past, there were other virtuous men, but now Cicero remains as a lonely “sage” (*sapiens*) — as he persists against the supremacy of triad of enemies. He indirectly names these with Latin expressions *demens*, *imperator* and *dives*. Behind these three terms, we can presumably discover three specific persons of Roman politics: Publius Clodius Pulcher, Gaius Iulius Caesar,<sup>7</sup> and Marcus Licinius Crassus.<sup>8</sup>

In this article, we focus on character analysis of Publius Clodius Pulcher in the fourth paradox (Cic. *Parad.* 27–32). In this work, Clodius is given the greatest attention, but this interest is expressed indirectly.<sup>9</sup> The author never mentions Clodius by name in the work *Paradoxa stoicorum*. He labels him only with a singular second-person personal pronoun —“you” (*te*)—and grants him only negative character traits. Cicero in the text names himself with a singular first-person personal pronoun—“I” (*ego*)—and inserts himself in the positive role of “sage” (*sapiens*), as an excellent example of the perfect “citizen” (*civis*). Cicero’s main goal in the *Stoic Paradoxes* is to challenge the moral status of Clodius and emphasize his own. He does this with stoic interpretation of terms such as “sage” (*sapiens*), “virtue” (*virtus*), “state” (*civitas*), “citizen” (*civis*), and “exile” (*exul*). Roman philosopher wants to prove that real “exile” (*exul*) is not the one realized through the decision of some state authority (law interpretation), but the real “exile” is while one loses rational part of the soul (*demens*, *insane*) and becomes dependent on irrational elements (stoic ethical

---

<sup>6</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 20–26.

<sup>7</sup> M.V. Ronnick states that term *imperator* could mean the character of Marcus Antonius (see RONNICK 1991, 128).

<sup>8</sup> TAKAHATA 2004, 24.

<sup>9</sup> He addresses Clodius in second (Cic. *Parad.* 17–19) and in fourth paradox (Cic. *Parad.* 27–32).

interpretation).<sup>10</sup> On the contrary, the term “citizen” (*civis*) is connected with the possession of “virtues” (*virtutes*) and with the status of “sage” (*sapiens*), and not with the legal status of obtaining the citizenship. As a result of this intellectual substitution, real exile should be Clodius, and Cicero should be the real citizen. In *Stoic paradoxes*, both actors will imaginarily change their roles.

Cicero’s philosophical argumentation against Clodius takes place in fourth paradox in several steps. His first argumentation step stems from an introductory formulation of this paradox: “That every foolish man is mad” (“Ὅτι πᾶς ἄφρων μαίνεται; *Omnem stultum insanire*), and is rooted in contrast between mental dispositions of him and Clodius (Cicero = *sapiens* vs. Clodius = *demens*). Clodius symbolizes for Roman philosopher a person, who is “out of your mind” (*dementem*) and “mad” (*insanire*). Cicero appears in this work as a stoic “sage”<sup>11</sup> whose soul is endowed with “grandeur of purpose” (*magnitudine consilii*), “endurance of fortune” (*tolerantia fortunae*), “contempt for human affairs” (*rerum humanarum contemptione*) and “all the virtues” (*virtutibus omnibus*).<sup>12</sup> Roman philosopher, throughout the formulation of this thought, is proceeding from a stoic view that mental health of human resides in a state of calmness and mental stability; in such state dominates wisdom and rational part of the soul. The person who was missing the rational part of the soul was considered to be insane. According to Cicero, the idea that “all those who are not wise are insane” (*omnis insipientes esse non sanos*), stoics adopted from Socrates.<sup>13</sup> This discontent of mind is making a person forget his rational judgment and provides him with irrational impulses.<sup>14</sup> Therefore Clodius as a fool cannot have a true understanding of virtue and is thus subject to desires, torments and mental distress.

In the second argumentation step, this opposition of mental dispositions begins to focus on the legal-political area. If Cicero is truly *sapiens*, then ultimately, he could not have been expelled from the “state” (*civitas*) because, for orthodox stoics, a state is not defined legal-political but ethical. For stoics, a residence was not restricted to the birth origin, walls or borders of the city it was limited only by the world itself. Stoics perceived the whole world (gr. κόσμος) as area, in which humans live and can realize their potential as they become the citizens of the whole *cosmos* (gr. κοσμοπολίτης).<sup>15</sup> As Cicero claims in work *De finibus bonorum et malorum*: “Again, they hold that the universe is governed by divine will; it is a city or state of which both men and gods are members, and each one of us is a part of this universe” (*Mundum autem censent regi numine deorum eumque esse quasi communem urbem et civitatem*

<sup>10</sup> For stoic ethics and psychology see SCHOFIELD 2003, 233–256; BRENNAN 2003, 257–294; BETT 2006, 530–548.

<sup>11</sup> See BROUWER 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 27.

<sup>13</sup> Cic. *Tusc.* 3.5.10.

<sup>14</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 18.

<sup>15</sup> See BROWN 2006, 552–555.

*hominum et deorum, et unumquemque nostrum eius mundi esse partem*).<sup>16</sup> From this stoic perspective, Cicero's exile loses its real legitimacy. The Roman author in the text stylizes himself into a position of cosmopolite that does not care in which state he lives. As he says in the eighteenth chapter of *Paradoxa stoicorum*: “exile [is terrible] to those whose place of domicile is encircled by a bounding line, not to those who deem the whole world to be a single city” (*exilium [terribilis est] autem illis quibus quasi circumscriptus est habitandi locus, non eis qui omnem orbem terrarum unam urbem esse ducunt*).<sup>17</sup>

In the third argumentation step, Cicero leaves his philosophical perspective of state and begins to polemize about the acceptable legal characterization of the term state. He offers his imaginary opponent two questions to consider. Can we view the state as “every collection even of uncivilized savages?” (*omnisne conventus etiam ferorum et immanium?*),<sup>18</sup> or “every multitude even of runaways and robbers gathered into one place?” (*omnisne etiam fugitivorum ac latronum congregata unum in locum multitudine?*).<sup>19</sup> According to Cicero, even Clodius would not agree with these two expressive alternatives, but the state had similar characteristics, while Clodius was ruling. The function of the state is, according to Cicero, primarily bound with the ability to actually implement the rule of law.<sup>20</sup> If ever occurs to state that it is unable to implement laws, unable to make courts of justice decisions, the customs of ancestors cease to exist, or if the officers of government are expelled from the state by force and the prestige of the state is forgotten, then there is no longer a state in the true sense.<sup>21</sup> According to Cicero, these were the features of nullity concerning the state concept. This claim was valid during the 50s of 1st century BC; this was during the period of Cicero's exile. Following this logic, Cicero should not have been exiled because, throughout this time, the state did not exist. The author himself claims in the twenty-eight chapter of his work *Stoic Paradoxes* that: “According I was not exiled from the state, which did not exist, but I was summoned to the state by the existence in our commonwealth of a consul, who had previously been non-existent, a senate, which had previously fallen, a free and unanimous people, and memories once more recalled of justice and equity that are the bonds of the state” (*Itaque pulsus ego civitate non sum, quae nulla erat: arcessitus in civitatem sum, cum esset in republica consul qui tum*

---

<sup>16</sup> Cic. *Fin.* 3.19.64.

<sup>17</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 18.

<sup>18</sup> Roman philosopher uses the phrase *ferorum et immanium* also in other works (for example Cic. *Nat. Deor.* 2.161; *Off.* 1.44.157; *Inv.* 1.2; see CÍCÉRON 1971, 112).

<sup>19</sup> According to tradition, Romulus opened the gates of the newly established city for foreigners, who escaped into the city from a region of neighbouring tribes (Liv. 1.8; Iuv. *Sat.* 8.273; see CÍCÉRON 1971, 112).

<sup>20</sup> In the work *De re publica*, Scipio Africanus defines the states as follows: “the commonwealth is the concern of a people, but a people is not any group of men assembled in any way, but an assemblage of some size associated with one another through agreement on law and community of interest” (*res publica res populi, populus autem non omnis hominum coetus quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitatis communiione sociatus*) (Cic. *Rep.* 1.25.39).

<sup>21</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 27.

*nullus fuerat, esset senatus qui tum occiderat, esset consensus populi liberi, esset iuris et aequitatis, quae vincula sunt civitatis, repetita memoria*).<sup>22</sup> The function of the state is integrally connect with the presence of institutions and legal awareness. These two guarantee social order. From the stoic perspective and its logic, we could, according to Barbara Price Wallach, assemble Cicero's argument as follows:

“Our state was not both a lawless place peopled by lawless men and a state”.

“Our state (Rome) was a lawless place peopled by lawless men”.

“Therefore, our state was not a state”.<sup>23</sup>

After more thorough characterization of the term state, Cicero continues with the fourth argumentation step, which is concerned with the question of “citizen” (*civis*) and “exile” (*exul*). Stoic interpretation of citizenship is not based on origin or residence (in the legal sense). It is grounded in the deeds and character of the mind (philosophically). Exile is not bound with leaving the region or with loss of property, but it is tied with moral failure and with loss of mental character. In the text, Cicero proves that during his exile he did not suffer from the loss of property, because everything material that can be “carried away” (*aufferri*), “plundered” (*eripi*) or “lost” (*ramitti*), could not be in his real ownership or anyone else's.<sup>24</sup> Forced departure from Rome in 58 BC cannot be considered a real exile.<sup>25</sup> Cicero would leave into the real exile only if the Clodius seized the divine nature of his soul; the conviction that his loyalty, vigilance, and care held the state united; the immortal memory on his public service, or if he robbed him of his mind.<sup>26</sup> Demolished and burnt property and the real abandonment of the state is incompatible with the ethical definition of exile; this definition is bounded to the absence true mental dispositions. From the perspective of stoic logic, we could, according to Barbara Price Wallach, write down Cicero's argument as follows:

“If I despised your physical attacks against my property, then I knew that nothing that can be lost belongs to me”.

“I despised your physical attacks against my property”.

“Therefore, I knew that nothing that can be lost belongs to me”.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 28.

<sup>23</sup> This pattern is based on the subsequent formal form:

“Not both the first and the second”.

“The first; therefore”.

“Not the second” (WALLACH 1990, 176).

<sup>24</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 29.

<sup>25</sup> This translation affirms the fact that Cicero in his work never uses terms such as *exilium*, *exsul*, or *exsulo*, which can be connected to his exile. In the fourth paradox, during the description of the author's exile, we cannot encounter terms such as *pulsus*, *exitum*, *meo discessu* or *meum illud iter* (see ROBINSON 1994, 475–480).

<sup>26</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 29.

<sup>27</sup> This pattern is based on the subsequent formal form:

“If the first, then the second”.

“The first”.

“Therefore, the second” (WALLACH 1990, 176).

Cicero puts himself, as in the first paradox, into the character of Bias,<sup>28</sup> who was one of the seven Greek sages. According to legend Bias refused to save his material possessions, during the siege of his hometown Priéné, because the real fortune was inside of him and ultimately he had that with him (*omnia mecum porto mea*).<sup>29</sup> For the authentic sage, true ownership is his mind, memories, virtues, and not the fate-dependent material possessions. Cicero had to go into the exile, although morally he remained a citizen, and metaphorically the entire state went with him.<sup>30</sup> On the contrary, Clodius never left his homeland and remained in Rome, yet from an ethical perspective, he became a true exile. Author's philosophical self-stylization as a perfect stoic sage (also a moral victor) who was able withstand all the hardships of exile is a complete contrast of what letters tells about his mental condition.<sup>31</sup> In these letters, Cicero is mostly depicted as a mentally broken man without rationality. He experiences during exile the greatest misfortune, fear, and humiliation, which none philosophical thoughts can overcome.<sup>32</sup>

Last argumentation step consists in contrasting calculating of Clodius's moral delinquencies: "You caused a massacre in the forum, you held the temples with armed brigands, you burnt private persons' houses and consecrated buildings" (*Caedem in foro fecisti, armatis latronibus templa tenuisti, privatorum domos, aedes sacras incendisti*).<sup>33</sup> He supports these moral crimes with legalistic arguments. On the one hand, by listing laws under which a person should have been sent into exile, and on the other by naming Clodius's concrete actions that realized subject matter of violating these laws: "A person found with a weapon': your dagger was detected in front of the senate-house; 'who has killed a man': you have killed a great many; 'who has caused a fire': your hand set fire to the Temple of the Nymphs<sup>34</sup> and it was burnt down; 'who has seized temples'<sup>35</sup>: you encamped in the forum" (*Qui cum telo fuerit: ante senatum tua sica deprehensa est; qui hominem occiderit: tu plurimos occidisti; qui incendium fecerit: aedes nympharum manu tua deflagavit; qui templa occupaverit: in foro castra posuisti*).<sup>36</sup> Besides violating stated laws, Cicero in his text directly mentions the most famous

---

<sup>28</sup> See RONNICK 1991, 110.

<sup>29</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 8–9.

<sup>30</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 30.

<sup>31</sup> See Cic. *Att.* 3.7–9; 3.13; 3.15; 3.20; *Quint. Frat.* 1.3; *Fam.* 14.2; 14.4.

<sup>32</sup> For possible psychological explanations of Cicero's behaviour during his exile see DUGAN 2014, 9–22; EVANS 2007, 83–84.

<sup>33</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 30.

<sup>34</sup> According to the Roman author, the reason for this action (see Cic. *Mil.* 73) was the effort to destroy *tabulae censoriae* that should have been there. In reality, there were stored records of recipients of grain distribution (see NICOLET 1988, 64; CICÉRON 1971, 115).

<sup>35</sup> Cicero talks in speech *Pro Sestio*: "arms were openly carried into the temple of Castor" (*arma in templum Castoris palam comportabantur*) (Cic. *Sest.* 34; see RONNICK 1991, 125).

<sup>36</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 31.



“special bill” (*privilegium*) from 62 BC. In this year Clodius committed the desecration of the Good Goddess ceremony.<sup>37</sup>

Cicero grants Clodius paradoxical attributes because on the one side Clodius has the status of “citizen” (*civis*), but on the other side, as a result of all these proven actions, it appears as if he is an “enemy” (*hostis*). Cicero even compares him to Spartacus.<sup>38</sup> Roman philosopher emphasizes the negative deeds of Clodius so he could answer this contradiction (citizen vs. enemy). Once again, he uses one of the stoic arguments in the following form:

“Not both: you are an enemy and a citizen”.

“You are an enemy”.

“Therefore, you are not a citizen”.<sup>39</sup>

Cicero proves this way that Clodius through the loss of mental dispositions, in a philosophical sense, loses his claim for civil rights, and is becoming a moral exile and enemy of the state. Cicero doubts the relevancy of his exile because of his courage and position of stoic sage. Because of this, he is starting to be a bearer of moral citizenship.<sup>40</sup> By applying stoic principles to his person and through moral dishonour of Clodius, the Roman philosopher tries to defend, in fourth paradox, his exile and offer the reader his new philosophical interpretation.

## References

- BETT, R. 2006. Stoic Ethics. In: M.L. Gill, P. Pellegrin (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Philosophy*, 530–548. Malden–Oxford–Carlton.
- BRENNAN, T. 2003. Stoic Moral Psychology. In: B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, 257–294. Cambridge.
- BRINGMANN, K. 1971. *Untersuchungen zum späten Cicero*. Göttingen.
- BROUWER, R. 2014. *The Stoic Sage: The Early Stoics on Wisdom, Sagehood and Socrates*. New York.
- BROWN, E. 2006. Hellenistic Cosmpolitanism. In: M.L. Gill, P. Pellegrin (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Philosophy*, 549–558. Malden–Oxford–Carlton.
- CICERO. 1931. *De finibus bonorum et malorum*. With an English translation by H. Rackham. London.
- CICERO 1942. *On the Orator: Book 3. On Fate. Stoic Paradoxes. Divisions of Oratory*. Translated by H. Rackham. Cambridge, MA.
- CICERO 1958. *Pro Sestio. In Vatinius*. Translated by R. Gardner. Cambridge, MA.

---

<sup>37</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 32. For this incident see TATUM 1999, 62–86.

<sup>38</sup> Cic. *Parad.* 30.

<sup>39</sup> WALLACH 1990, 181.

<sup>40</sup> This defence of Cicero was not accepted by the latter Latin literary tradition. For example, Lucius Annaeus Seneca did not consider Cicero to be a person with great moral credit because a stoic sage should have been fitted to endure all the disfavours of fate. We can count among these the exile — but apparently, Cicero could not do this. See GAMBET 1970, 171–183.

- CICERO 1999. *On the Commonwealth and On the Laws*. Edited by James E. G. Zetzel. New York.
- CICERO 2002. *Cicero On the Emotions. Tusculan disputations 3 and 4*. Translated and with commentary by Margaret Graver. Chicago–London.
- CICÉRON. 1971. *Les Paradoxes des Stoïciens*. Paris.
- DUGAN, J. 2014. Non sine causa sed sine fine: Cicero's compulsion to repeat his consulate. *The Classical Journal* 110(1), 9–22.
- EVANS, K.M. 2007. 'Interrupted by fits of weeping': Cicero's Major Depressive Disorder and the death of Tullia. *History of Psychiatry* 18(1), 81–102.
- GAMBET, G.D. 1970. Cicero in the Works of Seneca Philosophus. *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 101, 171–183.
- MACKENDRICK, P. 1989. *The Philosophical Books of Cicero*. London.
- NICOLET, C. 1988. *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*. Berkeley–Los Angeles.
- ROBINSON, A. 1994. Cicero's References to His Banishment. *The Classical World* 87(6), 475–480.
- RONNICK, M. V. 1991. *Cicero's «Paradoxa Stoicorum»: A Commentary an Interpretation and a Study of Its Influence*. Frankfurt am Main–Bern–New York–Paris.
- SCHOFIELD, M. 2003. Stoic Ethics. In: B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, 233–256. Cambridge.
- TAKAHATA, T. 2004. *Das Bild des römischen Staates in Ciceros philosophischen Schriften*. Marburg.
- TATUM, W.J. 1999. *The Patrician Tribune. Publius Clodius Pulcher*. Chapel Hill–London.
- WALLACH, B.P. 1990. Rhetoric and Paradox: Cicero, 'Paradoxa Stoicorum' IV. *Hermes* 118(2), 171–183.
- WEBB, O.M. 1985. *Cicero's Paradoxa Stoicorum: A New Translation with Philosophical Commentary*.



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## Historiography and Lines of Research in the History of Women in Antiquity

María Pilar MOLINA-TORRES<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** *This paper provides an overview of the state of the art in Gender historiography and the roles played by Roman women. The lines of research on this subject have focused especially on the elite women who carried out their social activities in a public space. In a second place, some studies delve into the beliefs of anonymous women who do not hold religious positions and limit their roles to their private space. Finally, in a third place, we must emphasize the studies on Gender history in Antiquity—these have opened up a vast field of research that consists of different lines focused on the History of both aristocratic and devout women.*

**Resumen.** *Se ofrece en este trabajo una visión general sobre el estado de la cuestión de la historiografía de género y los roles que desempeñaron las mujeres romanas. Las líneas de investigación sobre esta temática se han centrado especialmente en torno a la mujer de las élites que desenvuelven sus actividades sociales en un espacio público. En un segundo lugar, se sitúan las investigaciones destinadas a las creencias femeninas de carácter anónimo que no desempeñan cargos religiosos y limitan su papel a su espacio privado. Por último, en un tercer lugar, destacan los estudios sobre Historia de género en la Antigüedad que han abierto un amplio campo investigador con distintas líneas centradas en la Historia de las mujeres, no solo de la aristocracia sino también de las devotas romanas.*

**Rezumat.** *Acest referat oferă o imagine de ansamblu asupra stării problemei istoriografiei de gen și a rolurilor jucate de femeile romane. Liniile de cercetare pe acest subiect s-au concentrat în special pe femeile elitelor care își desfășoară activitățile sociale într-un spațiu public. În al doilea rând, există investigații care vizează credințe feminine de natură anonimă care nu dețin poziții religioase și își limitează rolul la spațiul lor privat. În sfârșit, într-un al treilea rând, ies în evidență studiile asupra Istoriei de gen în Antichitate, care au deschis un larg domeniu de cercetare cu linii diferite axate pe Istoria femeilor, nu numai a aristocrației, ci și a devotatelor romane.*

**Keywords:** Antiquity, beliefs, religious ceremonies, Gender studies, historiography, women.

---

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Education Sciences, University of Córdoba; email: pilar.molina@uco.es; ORCID: 0000-0001-7157-0324.

## 1. Introduction

“El término y el concepto de feminismo, referidos a Roma, constituyen un anacronismo y carecen de sentido al basarse en hipótesis indemostradas e indemostrables. Parece bastante más prudente limitarse a observar que el proceso — indiscutiblemente — pone de manifiesto la existencia de un grave problema en la relación entre ambos sexos, sin duda enturbiada por un ambiente de desconfianza y de sospecha; desconfianza y sospecha que lejos de desaparecer con el tiempo se vuelven cada vez más intensas” (CANTARELLA 1997, 100)

It is unquestionable that municipal aristocracies of the Roman provinces are the subject of many research works, in comparison with that area of Gender historiography aimed at retrieving a woman who does not belong to any prominent stratum of society. Historical reflection on the religious spaces taken up by these women has filled collective volumes on religions, without actually giving Gender history its rightful place in the History of women in Antiquity.<sup>2</sup> One of the most significant aspects of Gender studies is that they cannot be reduced to a single national discourse. Thus, this cultural historiography is comprised of an extensive collection of Roman religious monographs interpreting material culture according to diverse approaches and methodologies to study gender, resulting in the so-called Gender Studies and Women’s Studies.<sup>3</sup>

In the 21st century, there are certain lines of study which are becoming increasingly important: these continue to have—as their main protagonists—elite women who stood out in their communities since they benefited from civic honours of a religious nature that were primarily achieved by men.<sup>4</sup> This knowledge of Roman society and religion is based on the religious customs of aristocratic women — only a discreet second place is reserved for those who do not belong to the more privileged social groups. However, there is a growing interest in Feminist history, especially in the construction of gender roles.<sup>5</sup> These publications arise from the interest and the greater abundance of data generated by the civic dimension, in comparison with the personal beliefs of the devout Roman woman.

In this sense, female representation in urban life was leveraged by a small group of women who had real options to share the civic space with male members of the municipal aristocracies.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the city embodies the political and religious scene, where it is

---

<sup>2</sup> MCAUSLAN, WALCOT 1996.

<sup>3</sup> HURCOMBE 2000; AHEARNE-KROLL, HOLLOWAY, KELHOFFER 2010; KRAEMER 2010; MILNOR 2010; DOLANSKY 2012; TRÜMPER 2012; CENTLIVRES 2013; FOXHALL 2013; MONTÓN 2013; KEEGAN 2014; PERRY 2014; DOMÍNGUEZ, MARINA 2015; FERRER, PEREIRA 2015; MOLINA 2015; 2018c; MARTÍNEZ, UBRIC 2017; ORIA 2017; MARTÍNEZ, GALLEGO, MIRÓN, ORIA 2019.

<sup>4</sup> MOLINA 2018b.

<sup>5</sup> CASCAJERO 2002.

<sup>6</sup> CANTARELLA 1991.

possible to see their integration in the local priesthood, as well as their public exposure serving their communities. Actually, it is obvious that the enjoyment of these civic privileges would be intended for women primarily related to judges or priestly positions and reserved for a select number of *matronae*.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the involvement in this world of beliefs eventually emphasizes the differences among Roman women according to their social category.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, their religiosity kept them faithful to those beliefs of their own, which they considered more important to maintain their traditions and the stability of their religious sphere. In many cases, this religious sphere was differentiated in public and private spaces, male and female, which poses a series of questions so as to interpret reality in certain contexts.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Gender studies and ceremonies in the public sphere

“Se puede considerar que el poder religioso público pertenecía casi por entero a los hombres” (SCHEID 1991, 446)

In the last two decades, a third line of gender studies has focused on research dealing with what may be defined as “more feminine” cultural and religious practices. In this line, historiographic production in the Anglo-Saxon world has been well received in monographs on Roman religion, with a research focus based on the interpretation of the material culture that facilitates diverse approaches and methodologies in the study of women and the symbolism of their ritual experiences.<sup>10</sup> As a matter of fact, there is a series of works trying to break—from a gender perspective—with the stereotyped model of the Roman woman with the purpose of creating an identity for them in the Antiquity.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, the public representation of women in political propaganda continues to be emphasized,<sup>12</sup> this further confirms their particular beliefs do not seem to be a priority in specialized literature.

From the archaeological point of view, this scientific discipline has cleared up some doubts related to the female religious universe. Research on Roman religion has gone beyond the architectural configuration of private space and its link with the personal universe of believers.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, female religiousness has not been a recurring theme in current historiography, nor has it encouraged a noticeable number of reflections. In addition to these works, some Spanish researchers have opened other lines which prove the importance of the

---

<sup>7</sup> CID 2007a.

<sup>8</sup> HOLLAND 2012.

<sup>9</sup> PARKER 2015.

<sup>10</sup> MAEHLE 2008.

<sup>11</sup> BOCK 1991; GARLICK 1992.

<sup>12</sup> HEMELRIJK 2009.

<sup>13</sup> CORRALES 2002.

material record in the so-called gender archaeology, in such fields as domestic architecture, iconography, numismatics or epigraphy in Hispania.<sup>14</sup>

Hence the lack of available material does not allow a historiographic analysis of Hispanic women from a strictly archaeological approach. Nor should it be forgotten that those women represented in such sources belong to the more favoured classes from a social point of view — those who can afford, for instance, a sculpture or a funeral painting, so the more socio-economically disadvantaged female group goes unnoticed.<sup>15</sup> In this way, we must take into account multiple factors that depend on the particular situations and economic conditions of these women, to establish a series of nuances of religiosity that are difficult to explain. According to Bendala:

en una ciudad de la Bética, durante mucho tiempo bajo la dominación romana, un individuo podría vestir toga, porque había adquirido la ciudadanía romana, comer a la manera turdetana, orar y venerar a sus dioses según la tradición púnica y enterrar a sus muertos según ritos mezclados de tradiciones púnicas, turdetanas y romanas, algunas de ellas parecidas o concluyentes (BENDALA 2006, 292).

However, it is not convenient to generalize that with the arrival of the Roman divinities the pre-Roman religious experiences will take a back seat, because the votive epigraphy exposes the existence and maintenance of their more traditional beliefs was a reality.

Likewise, the scarce attention given to these studies due to the lack of existing material has not conditioned the interest in updating the status of the matter through the handling of epigraphic sources.<sup>16</sup> In this sense, religious epigraphy shows the essence of private female worship, largely linked to traditional sacred rites rather than official religious propaganda. Unfortunately, there are not enough epigraphic examples to outline the archetype of the devotee in the different provinces of the Roman Empire. With regard to the above-mentioned trends, interest in the private sphere has aroused as opposed to the public sphere, gaining strength despite the lack of information about domestic rituals.<sup>17</sup> For some historians, it is difficult to guess the possible linkage of an implicit feeling of gratitude through the inscriptions and, in turn, to discover a closer appreciation of a woman's personal religiosity.

Anyhow, epigraphy plays a key role in building the religiosity of women and giving meaning to their experiences.<sup>18</sup> This is an accessible source that has been the subject of several catalogues, despite the difficulty to date and contextualize the pieces.

---

<sup>14</sup> SÁNCHEZ 2009.

<sup>15</sup> MOLINA 2015.

<sup>16</sup> ZARZALEJOS 2008.

<sup>17</sup> ZACCARIA 1995.

<sup>18</sup> CHANIOTIS 2009.



Figure 1. Ideal recreation of the painting of C. Voconius and Caecilia Anus made by M. Bendala (BENDALA 1972, 246).

From a public perspective, the contributions of some authors depict a certain role for a woman who is publicly exposed and involved in religious ceremonies, where they spend their personal money in order to support their husbands and children.<sup>19</sup> In addition, these contributions bring up the matrimonial interests and strategies that link local aristocracies for women to achieve priesthood. Certainly, civic activities undertaken by a small group of female aristocrats has been a recurring theme in Gender historiography.<sup>20</sup> These women, whose goal was to imitate members of the Roman oligarchies through public statutory tributes, had a real chance of receiving public honours.

In this civic context, papers on munificence have monopolized most of the sections on religion. It is also noteworthy that this feminine presence not only does manifest itself

---

<sup>19</sup> HEMELRIJK 2004.

<sup>20</sup> MACLACHLAN 2013.

in municipal and religious donations, but also in the payment of banquets, generous distributions of money among fellow citizens, the celebration of public games, or their integration into the imperial cult.<sup>21</sup> But, in any case, and despite the numerous studies about Roman priestesses, we do not know the requirements to achieve a religious position within their cities.

However, this is not the general trend in this line of research. The possibility that Roman women became priestesses as individuals, and not through marriage, is a historiographic advance in understanding the personal influence of these elite women, together with the use of civic cults for their own benefit. We do not necessarily have to consider this hypothesis, since family ties in a public context are particularly difficult to document, which is the reason why it is hard to establish the relationships that priestesses might have had with male administrative or religious positions.<sup>22</sup> Some authors argue that achieving and holding female positions was linked to the fact of being related to magistrates or priests. In fact, the privileges acquired by the male members of their families monopolize most of the studies that reconstruct the Roman municipal system.<sup>23</sup>

Put briefly, and despite the fact that the urban space was basically monopolized by men, the devotion to Juno Lucina and the importance of this marriage ceremony reinforced the presence of women in the institutional life.<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to point out how religious manifestations meant the particular intervention of Roman matrons in the civic sphere, which was beneficial to them, as well as to their male relatives, in order to receive the same public honours.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, in this unique process, the motivations that led these devotees to become involved in a sacred setting are synonymous with personal identity.

Regarding exclusively female rituals, the authors use the term *ordo matronarum* to refer to a matronal organization that celebrates a series of ceremonies of its own, which was configured as an instrument of socio-religious cohesion.<sup>26</sup> In spite of the amount of studies on this subject, we do not know if Rome introduced these matrimonial liturgies among the Iberian women, or if they were left out of their religious practices. Thus, it must be made clear that, despite the fact that certain deities are worshipped, we do not know of any exclusive and gender-differentiated celebrations of Hispanic matrons, such as *Matronalia*, *Bona Dea* or *Fortuna Muliebris*, which were characteristically Roman.<sup>27</sup> However, a small fragment of a lintel dedicated by a freedwoman, Iulia Saturnina, to Bona Dea had to be part of a temple to the goddess in Beja, which could mean that this cult was practiced in Hispania.

---

<sup>21</sup> HEMELRIJK 2007.

<sup>22</sup> MIRÓN 2007.

<sup>23</sup> FISHWICK 2012.

<sup>24</sup> CID 2007b.

<sup>25</sup> BUONOPANE, CENERINI 2005.

<sup>26</sup> GAGÉ 1963.

<sup>27</sup> CID 1999.



Until now, it seems that civic ceremonies had little to do with those held in private – the study of the latter has been practically neglected by historiography, although it constitutes an interesting line of research. Nonetheless, the concern of many authors regarding questions about the civic role of women, their participation in public worship and tributes, the particular control of their fortunes, and the relationships of clientelism open up new research approaches<sup>28</sup> that modify our expectations so as to understand the meaning and repercussions the private religious sphere of the devout Roman woman had.



Figure 2. Epigraphy to Bona Dea  
(Pax Iulia; Conventus Pacensis)  
(HEp 17, 2008, 212)  
(Photo by Susana Correia)

### 3. The private sphere of women

“Women had specific ritual obligations within the home, and they participated in observances alongside other family members” (SCHULTZ 2006, 136)

By approaching gender-specific iconography in the family sphere, the practices carried out in this space move away from civic cults. Iconographic studies have not paid much attention to these private activities compared to other public expressions. In this line of research, it has been considered that the scope of action of the matron would be the *domus*, and not the forum.<sup>29</sup> In fact, research generally sustains that, in the private sphere, the religious role of women is secondary, since domestic worships would be officiated exclusively by their husbands.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, the studies on the domestic sphere of the devotee do not reach the depth we would like, as they make such a sketchy analysis of the spaces of worship and domestic religious architecture.<sup>31</sup> For now, it is obvious that the main hindrance to understanding religion in the private sphere remains in a fragile line that establishes a difference between the sacred from the strictly ornamental. Furthermore, and although we do not have much information about it, the domestic ritual would follow certain guidelines during the course of the ritual.<sup>32</sup> In these ceremonies, which represent the beliefs of a family group, the general opinion—which some might say that falls into cliché—is that women,

---

<sup>28</sup> HEMELRIJK, WOOLF 2013.

<sup>29</sup> BOËLS-JANSSEN 1993.

<sup>30</sup> SCHEID 1991.

<sup>31</sup> MAÑAS, URIBE 2012.

<sup>32</sup> LIPKA 2009.

together with their spouses, were responsible for officiating the ritual according to an established procedure.

The concern of some authors to match men's and women's degree of responsibility in private liturgies does not clarify the role assigned to women as domestic priestesses. In this sense, one of the best preserved examples, the *Casa delle Pareti Rosse*, allows us to glimpse the representations that would be chosen by the offerers for their prayers.<sup>33</sup> Oftentimes, the choice of these deities included in the domestic altar would correspond to the images of the divinities found in the main public worship. As far as archaeology allows us to document, certain comparisons can be made with what is known for the rest of the Roman world, especially in Pompeii.<sup>34</sup> The divinities found in the domestic environment have been mainly studied in the form of small bronze sculptures that appear out of context, far from their original lararies, and thus do not allow an overall assessment.

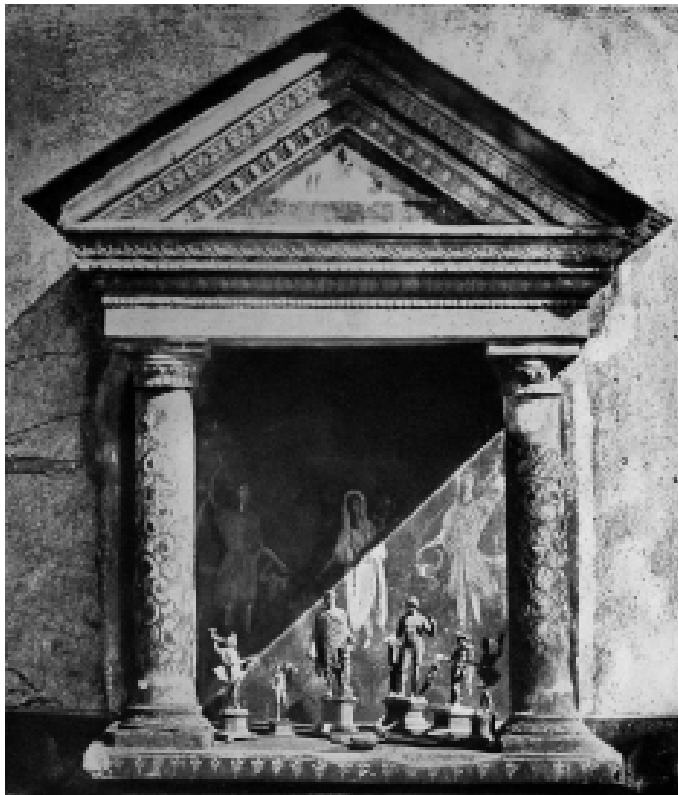


Figure 3. Lararium of House of the Red Walls (Pompeii) (PÉREZ 2014, 108)

---

<sup>33</sup> ALLISON 2010.

<sup>34</sup> BEARD 2008.

Related to this private environment, some works focus on analysing the symbolism of these figurines with an overall perspective, without us being able to know the motivations behind the choice of gods in the domestic sphere.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, other studies consider that women's religious preferences for certain tutelary gods of the home was intended to favour the protection of the private atmosphere. Consequently, and even though it is a complex subject, the devotee has been traditionally considered a depositary of the religious practices of her closest environment. Far from facing this reality, other authors refer to the Roman family with a broader vision that, naturally, does not see women as individual agents within the family group.<sup>36</sup>

That said, although we do not know for sure who held the religious powers or the distribution of responsibilities among the members of a family, the latest research suggests the existence of main and secondary lararies in Pompeii, the former being used to worship the protective gods, located in the kitchen or close to it.<sup>37</sup> In a way, this theory considers that these lararies found near the kitchens made meal preparation easier, as well as the relationship between the deities and the fire, although another line of study assumes the main ones would be those located in the atriums. Since it is as obvious in the Iberian Peninsula (Roman Hispania) as in the rest of the Roman provinces, the material record is the only element of study that allows us to infer the belief system, to which it is added that religious representations had a symbolism difficult to interpret.

As for this last aspect, the main obstacle to enter the spiritual intimacy of Roman women comes from the limited knowledge about the cultual practices dedicated to the protective deities of the home. In reference to Hispania, everything seems to indicate that the internal structure in Roman houses does not correspond to the architectural schemes commonly found in the different regions of the Empire.<sup>38</sup> This heterogeneity influenced the typology of the domestic constructions as well as the arrangement and use of the cult structures. With regard to the latter, the remains preserved are so few that it is not possible to know the degree of similarity they might have had. Thanks to the archaeological studies, as per the materials that have been found, we know that most of them are rooms for some kind of ritual process, but it is not possible to be more specific because of the lack of preserved remains.<sup>39</sup> In this space, it is really difficult to explain the use of a private room when the few cultual objects do not appear *in situ*, which makes it impossible for the authors to deepen in the study of women's religiousness.

---

<sup>35</sup> FERNÁNDEZ, ESPINOSA 2007.

<sup>36</sup> CENERINI 2002.

<sup>37</sup> GIACOBELLO 2008.

<sup>38</sup> TRÜMPER 2012.

<sup>39</sup> PÉREZ 2014.

Certainly, the devotions in a family group determined the symbolism of images of worship.<sup>40</sup> However, while for some authors the function of these bronze figurines is mainly aesthetic, for others these domestic deities have a strong religious content. According to this, we must understand that these images form the authentic religious expression of private worship practices. Significantly, researchers focus their analysis on the preference women had for deities with a protective character<sup>41</sup> — these women make up a large group of believers and hold a preeminent position in the most Romanized areas. The devotees did not limit themselves to worship goddesses of the Roman pantheon, but the cult of male deities such as Apollo, Jupiter, Mars or Mercury shows their preference for the prevailing ritual practices in the political and religious intricacies of Rome.



Figure 4. Relief of the sanctuary “Las Atalayuelas” (CC-SA-BY-2.0 by Á.M. Felicísimo)

Nonetheless, indigenous beliefs practised in collective or family worship spaces make difficult to define the syncretic character of these divinities. In fact, as we approach the religious sphere of these devotees, it is easier to detect the presence of specific rituals preferably reserved to the private sphere, where the public one remains in a secondary level. It is here where the beliefs shown in salutary sanctuaries unify different social groups that have a religious purpose and common interests in their personal and family environment. Consequently, native deities coexisted on an equal basis with the Roman religious world, which benefited the confluence of group—or even individual—devotions. This could be the case of *Aelia Belesiar* and the indigenous god *Betaton*. In all likelihood, the result of this belief is present in the relief found in the sanctuary of the Atalayuelas, in Jaén, Spain.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> BASSANI 2008.

<sup>41</sup> MOLINA 2018a.

<sup>42</sup> CORZO, PASTOR, STYLOW, UNTERMANN 2007; ORDUÑA 2009; MARCO 2018.

#### 4. Conclusions

In short, the different lines of research presented here show the negligence to develop a joint work aimed to reconstruct the religious universe of the Roman woman. In fact, the abundant works reflecting a woman who gained a certain degree of power and independence in the public religious sphere have given way to an interest in the field of private worship. Little by little, an interesting line of study is taking shape — it may be especially productive in the future and will allow us to formulate new hypotheses in order to understand the place that women held in their religious sphere.

Similarly, and as we mentioned earlier, for some authors the female religious function should be side-lined, since domestic cults would be officiated by husbands. It is even recognized that a woman must manage her home and devote herself solely and exclusively to the care of her family. From this perspective, most of their duties were carried out in private, far from a public context, since the Roman house would be the microsphere for women's participation in family cults. According to this approach, we know very little about the rituals in which they could—or were allowed to—participate. There are a few pieces of research which do not exclude the possibility of women's active participation alongside their husbands, or probably with a secondary role. Moreover, a woman would have a cultural duty to her gods that she could exercise individually to maintain her devotions. This line of work has been barely studied by researchers, which means that there is a historiographical gap in knowing about their beliefs.

Anyway, the presence of women in religious environments, both public and private, also confirms a categorization of the group clearly defined by the privileged position of Roman citizens in contrast to those who come from lower strata, compared to male presence in the same areas. On the other hand, the importance of certain religious festivals organized by women, which emphasize the maternal functions of a small group of matrons, is a sign of recognition in an eminently patriarchal society. Finally, and regardless of other factors, women were not excluded from the ritual practice since they had a respected space which exalted their traditional virtues, yet at the same time reinforced a consolidated form of religiosity.

**Acknowledgments.** This study is the result of a postdoctoral mobility stay, José Castillejo, enjoyed at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto in 2019, and funded by the Spanish Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades.

## References

- AHEARNE-KROLL, S.P., P.A. HOLLOWAY, J.A. KELHOFFER 2010. *Women and Gender in Ancient Religions*. Tübingen.
- ALLISON, P. 2010. Understanding Pompeian Households Practices through Their Material Culture. *Facta* 3, 11–33.
- BASSANI, M. 2008. *Sacraria: ambienti e piccoli edifici per il culto domestico in area vesubiana*. Roma.
- BEARD, M. 2008. *Pompeii: The Life of a Roman Town*. London.
- BENDALA, M. 1972. Los llamados columbarios de Mérida. *Habis* 3, 223–253.
- BENDALA, M. 2006. Hispania y la romanización. Una metáfora: ¿crema o menestra de verduras? *Zephyrus* 59, 289–292.
- BOCK, G. 1991. La historia de las mujeres y la historia del género: aspectos de un debate internacional. *Historia Social* 9, 55–57.
- BOËLS-JANSSEN, N. 1993. *La vie religieuse des matrones dans la Rome archaïque*. Roma.
- BUONOPANE, A., F. CENERINI 2005. *Donna e vita cittadina nella documentazione epigráfica, Epigrafia e Antichità* 23. Bologna.
- CANTARELLA, E. 1991. *La mujer romana*. Santiago de Compostela.
- CANTARELLA, E. 1997. *Pasado próximo: mujeres romanas de Tácita a Sulpicia*. Madrid.
- CASCAJERO, J. 2002. Feminismo, postmodernidad e Historia Antigua. Entre la igualdad y la diferencia. *Gerión* 20, 33–74.
- CENERINI, F. 2002. *La donna romana*. Bologna.
- CENTLIVRES, C.L. 2013. *Like Man, Like Woman. Roman Women, Gender Qualities and Conjugal Relationships at the Turn of the First Century*. Oxford.
- CHANOTIS, A. 2009. From Woman to Woman: Female Voices and Emotions in Dedications to Goddesses. In: C. Prêtre, *Le donateur, l'offrande et la deesse*, 51–68. Liège.
- CID, R. 1999. El ordo matronarum y los espacios femeninos en la Roma antigua. Las fiestas de matronalia y fortuna muliebris. In: M. Nash et al., *Pautas históricas de sociabilidad femenina: rituales y modelos de representación. Actas del V Coloquio Internacional de la Asociación Española de Investigación Histórica de las Mujeres (A.E.I.H.M.)*, 43–57. Cádiz.
- CID, R. 2007a. Las matrones y los prodigios. Prácticas religiosas femeninas en los márgenes de la religión romana. *Norba. Revista de Historia* 20, 11–29.
- CID, R. 2007b. Imágenes y prácticas religiosas de la sumisión femenina en la antigua Roma. El culto de Juno Lucina y la fiesta de matronalia. *Studia Historica. Historia Antigua* 25, 357–372.
- CORRALES, A. 2002. El ámbito doméstico como espacio de culto. *Baetica* 24, 263–274.
- CORZO, S., M. PASTOR, A. STYLOW, J. UNTERMANN 2007. Betatun: la primera divinidad ibérica identificada. *Palaeohispanica* 7, 251–262.
- DOLANSKY, F. 2012. Playing with Gender: Girls, Dolls, and Adult Ideals in the Roman World. *Classical Antiquity* 31.2, 256–292.
- DOMÍNGUEZ, A., R.M. MARINA 2015. *Género y enseñanza de la Historia: silencios y ausencias en la construcción del pasado*. Madrid.

- FERNÁNDEZ, P., T. ESPINOSA 2007. Lararios y cultos privados. Algunos aspectos. In: L. Hernández, *El mundo religioso hispano bajo el Imperio romano*, 101–120. Valladolid.
- FERRER, E., A. PEREIRA 2015. *Hijas de Eva. Mujeres y Religión en la Antigüedad*. Sevilla.
- FISHWICK, D. 2012. *Cult, Ritual, Divinity and Belief in the Roman World*. Farnham–Burlington.
- FOXHALL, L. 2013. *Studying Gender in Classical Antiquity. Key Themes in Ancient History*. Cambridge–New York.
- GAGÉ, J. 1963. *Matronalia: essai sur les dévotions et les organisations culturelles des femmes dans l'ancienne Rome*. Bruxelles.
- GARLICK, B. et al. 1992. *Stereotypes of Women in Power. Historical Perspectives and Revisionist Views*. New York.
- GIACOBELLO, F. 2008. *Larari pompeiani. Iconografia e culto dei Lari in ambito domestico*. Milán.
- HEMELRIJK, E. 2004. Patronage of cities: the role of women. In: L. de Light, *Roman Rule and Civic Life. Local and Regional Perspectives*, 415–427. Amsterdam.
- HEMELRIJK, E. 2007. Local Empresses: Priestesses of the Imperial Cult in the Cities of the Latin West. *Phoenix* 61, 318–349.
- HEMELRIJK, E. 2009. Women and Sacrifice in the Roman Empire. In: O. Hekster et al., *Ritual Dynamics and Religious Change in the Roman Empire: Proceedings of the Eighth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire*, Brill, 253–267. Leiden.
- HEMELRIJK, E., G. WOOLF 2013. *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*, Brill. Leiden.
- HOLLAND, L. 2012. Women and Roman Religion. In: S. James, S. Dillon, *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, 204–214. Oxford.
- HURCOMBE, L. 2000. *Gender and Material Culture in Archaeological Perspective*. Londres.
- KEEGAN, P. 2014. *Roles for Men and Women in Roman Epigraphic Culture and beyond: Gender, Social Identity and Cultural Practice in Private Latin Inscriptions and the Literary Record*. Oxford.
- KRAEMER, R.S. 2010. *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean*. Oxford.
- LIPKA, M. 2009. *Roman Gods: A Conceptual Approach. Religions of the Graeco-Roman World* 167. Leiden–Boston.
- MACLACHLAN, B. 2013. *Women in Ancient Rome. A Sourcebook*. London–New York.
- MAEHLE, I. 2008. Female cult in the struggle of the orders. In: A.H. Rasmussen, S.W. Rasmussen, *Religion and Society. Rituals, Resources and Identity in the Ancient Graeco-Roman World. The BOMOS-Conferences 2002–2005*, Quasar, 61–70. Rome.
- MAÑAS, I., P. URIBE 2012. Las ‘microesferas’ en la construcción del discurso histórico: el espacio doméstico en el mundo antiguo. *Antesteria* 1, 191–201.
- MARCO, FCO. 2018. La novedad en la memoria: el dios Betatun y un ritual de plegaria familiar en el santuario ibérico de las Atalayuelas Fuerte del Rey, Jaén. *Anejos de Veleia* 35, 301–312.
- MARTÍNEZ, C. 2012. Poder integrador de la mater familias romana. In: P. Díaz et al., *Impulsando la historia, desde la historia de las mujeres: la estela de Cristina Segura*, 157–168. Huelva.
- MARTÍNEZ, C. 2017. Cartografías de género en las ciudades antiguas: Memoria y poder de las mujeres. In: C. Martínez, P. Ubric, *Cartografías de género en las ciudades antiguas*, 11–28. Granada.
- MARTÍNEZ, C., H. GALLEGO, M.D. MIRÓN, M. ORIA 2019. *Constructoras de ciudad. Mujeres y arquitectura en el occidente romano*. Granada.
- MCAUSLAN, I., P. WALCOT 1996. *Women in Antiquity*. Oxford–New York.
- MILNOR, K. 2010. Women. In: A. Barchiesi, W. Scheidel, *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*, 815–826. Oxford–New York.

- MIRÓN, M.D. 2007. Las sacerdotisas béticas del culto imperial: ciudadanía, movilidad y control territorial. In: L. Hernández, *El mundo religioso hispano bajo el Imperio romano*, 165–178. Valladolid.
- MOLINA, M.P. 2015. Mujer y religión romana: una visión historiográfica en la Europa del s. XXI. In: C. Macías et al., *Europa Renascens: la cultura clásica en Andalucía y su proyección europea*, 327–345. Zaragoza.
- MOLINA, M.P. 2018a. La esfera religiosa de la mujer romana: espacio público vs privado. *Arenal: Revista de historia de mujeres* 25/1, 125–143.
- MOLINA, M.P. 2018b. La religiosidad de las mujeres hispanorromanas. *Revista de Historiografía* 28, 167–182.
- MOLINA, M.P. 2018c. *Las devociones femeninas en la Hispania romana*. Madrid.
- MONTÓN, S. 2013. The Development of Feminist, Gender and Queer Archaeologies: A Spanish Perspective. In: C. Smith, *Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology*, vol. 5, Springer, 2980–2981. New York.
- ORDUÑA, E. 2009. Nueva interpretación de la inscripción de Betatun. *Veleia: Revista de prehistoria, historia antigua, arqueología y filología clásicas* 26, 359–362.
- ORIA, M. 2017. Mujeres y religión en el mundo romano: enfoques cambiantes, actitudes presentes. *Arenal. Revista de Historia de las Mujeres* 24/1, 73–98.
- PARKER, R. 2015. Public and private. In: R. Raja, J. Rüpke, *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World*, 71–81. Malden.
- PÉREZ, M. 2014. *Al amparo de los lares: el culto doméstico en las provincias romanas Bética y Tarraconense*. *Anejos de Archivo Español de Arqueología* 68. Madrid.
- PERRY, M.J. 2014. *Gender, Manumission, and the Roman Freedwoman*. Cambridge.
- SÁNCHEZ, M. 2009. La arqueología de las mujeres y las relaciones de género en España: una revisión bibliográfica. In: M.E. Fernández et al., *Los estudios de las mujeres de España y Argentina: propuesta para el debate*, 79–102. Buenos Aires.
- SCHEID, J. 1991. Extranjeras indispensables. Las funciones religiosas de las mujeres en Roma. In: G. Duby, M. Perrot, *Historia de las mujeres en Occidente. La Antigüedad*, I, 421–461. Madrid.
- SCHULTZ, C.E. 2006. *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*. Chapel Hill.
- TRÜMPER, M. 2012. Gender and Space, Public and Private. In: S.L. James and S. Dillon, *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, 290–296. Oxford.
- ZACCARIA, A.P. 1995. *Spazio privato e spazio pubblico nella città romana*. Roma.
- ZARZALEJOS, M. 2008. Los estudios de arqueología del género en la Hispania romana. In: L. Prados, C. López, *Arqueología del género: 1er encuentro internacional en la UAM*, 297–326. Madrid.



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).





‘To the Emperor Caesar, the son of the deified Trajan, Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, Zeus Olympios and Eleutherios and Sabina Augusta, the New Demeter (under the government of Publius... the praetorian legate of the emperor), Larcia Gepaiyris, daughter of Larcus Asiaticus, on the orders of and wholly at the expense of her father erected and consecrated (the sanctuary with the imperial cult image) and other statues that are erected in it.’

The inscription is dated to 128–136 based on the imperial appellation Ὀλύμπιος,<sup>3</sup> and belonged to a lavishly decorated building, possibly with εἰκόνας and statues of the imperial family, which is interpreted as being the temple of Hadrian and Sabina in Perinthos.<sup>4</sup> The construction of this building is connected with Hadrian’s visit in the city in AD 131, although no explicit data for this visit is available.<sup>5</sup>

Several questions arise when one is dealing with the inscription, concerning the nature of the building itself, the date of the inscription and the purpose of this initiative. It seems that these questions are closely intertwined with each other.

As mentioned, the inscription is dated to 128–136 after the Ὀλύμπιος appellation of the emperor. Although a consensus in the literature is established for this date,<sup>6</sup> some comments may be made on both *termini*. I can take AD 136, for example, which may be called into question due to the fact that no actual denial of this appellation is attested so far on the epigraphic monuments in AD 136 or afterwards. Quite on the contrary, several imperial statue bases found for example in Lysimacheia, Peparethos, Skiathos, Aidepsos, Athenae, etc., are dated to AD 128–138 based exactly on this appellation of the emperor.<sup>7</sup> Besides, Sabina who was also honoured in the inscription was consecrated in a ceremony that was pursued not earlier than March 138.<sup>8</sup> Rumours according to which Hadrian poisoned her<sup>9</sup> were spread at that time. This gives me a good reason to believe that the later date of the inscription may be expanded at least to 137, if not even to the very last year of the reign of Hadrian in AD 138 as in fact it is the case with the other similar inscriptions cited above.

The Ὀλύμπιος appellation of the emperor itself gives a certain *terminus post quem* in AD 129 AD.<sup>10</sup> Thus, it is well known that in that year Hadrian begun the execution of his ambition plan to establish what A. Birley has called the ‘Hellenic Commonwealth’ of the Greeks from the old poleis as well as from others spread in the Eastern Mediterranean. For the purpose the great temple of Zeus, the Olympieion, was completed<sup>11</sup> and from this time

---

<sup>3</sup> SAYAR 1998, 219.

<sup>4</sup> SAYAR 1998, 220.

<sup>5</sup> SAYAR 1998, 220.

<sup>6</sup> RAYCHEVA 2015, 23.

<sup>7</sup> See the analysis in HOJTE 2005, 427–432.

<sup>8</sup> BIRLEY 1997, 294.

<sup>9</sup> HA *Had.* 23.9; *Epit. de Caes.* 14.8.

<sup>10</sup> In KIENAST 2011, 130 it is suggested 128/129 AD.

<sup>11</sup> BIRLEY 1997, 218–219.

on the emperor was regularly named in the Greek part of the empire as *Hadrianos Sebastos Olympios*, or *Hadrianos Sebastos Zeus Olympios* identified as the Olympian Zeus.<sup>12</sup> It took him, however, a couple of more years to advance to his next step with the organization of the Panhellenion league. It happened during the next imperial visit in Athens, which Hadrian reached coming from Thrace, possibly in early 132, if not in the very last days of 131.<sup>13</sup> The newly established association was based in Athens, presided over by an archon who held the office for four years and is called ‘the high priest of the god Hadrian Panhellenios’<sup>14</sup> and ‘*agonothete* of the Great Panhellenion’.<sup>15</sup> The Panhellenic games seem to have been founded at the very end of life of the emperor, not before AD 137.<sup>16</sup>

The newly established Panhellenion league affected the titulature of the emperor who was now honoured also as Πανελλήνιος or Ὀλύμπιος Πανελλήνιος. This may be found in official as well as private dedications, both those set up in cities that were members of the Panhellenion league, and those that were not. In the first group one would consider for example Megara,<sup>17</sup> while in the second — Chios,<sup>18</sup> Karystos (Euboia),<sup>19</sup> Miletos,<sup>20</sup> Teos,<sup>21</sup> Ephesos<sup>22</sup> etc.<sup>23</sup> The appellations Πανελλήνιος or Ὀλύμπιος Πανελλήνιος have no definite chronological value and therefore the lack of them is not decisive for the date of the inscription.<sup>24</sup> As suggested by M. Sayar, the construction of the building may have been related to the imperial visit in Perinthos in AD 131. If so, the fact that Larcia Gepaiipyris completed the work that had been started by her father Larcus Asiaticus may imply a date between AD 131 when the emperor visited Perinthos and his death, i.e. AD 131–138.

Another appellation by which the emperor is honoured in this inscription is Ἐλευθέριος. Indeed, the inscription itself implies that this title is connected with the cult to Zeus Eleutherios, but as the fact that this is the only case known so far from Thrace of Zeus honoured as Ἐλευθέριος as well as the close connection between the cult to Zeus and the imperial cult to Hadrian, as inscriptions from Mytilene reveal, may point out that in our case it was Hadrian that was cited as *eleutherios*. This imperial appellation is unique for Thrace,

---

<sup>12</sup> BIRLEY 1997, 220.

<sup>13</sup> It is known after his edict that was issued and set up in Maroneia that he was in that city since December, 10, 131 when his 16 tribunicia potestate begun — I. Aeg. Thrace E 185. On the edict — see recently JONES 2011.

<sup>14</sup> See most recently in CAMIA 2011, 44–46.

<sup>15</sup> OGIS 507.1–3; BRENT 2006, 299–300.

<sup>16</sup> ROMEO 2002, 21.

<sup>17</sup> IG VII 3491; IG VII 72; 71; 70.

<sup>18</sup> SEG 15, 530.

<sup>19</sup> IG XII Suppl. 527; SEG 3:758.

<sup>20</sup> Miletos 225; Milet VI.3 1099.

<sup>21</sup> One such is the inscription from Teos, dated between 132–138: ROBERT 1946, 86–89.

<sup>22</sup> IEph 271F; IEph 1501.

<sup>23</sup> Syros: IG XII Suppl. 239.

<sup>24</sup> BENJAMIN 1963, 59.

and as a whole not common for Hadrian or any other emperor at all. This is why its meaning is still debatable, although ‘Liberator’ is in some cases linked with the awarding of the status of ‘free city’ to the city in question,<sup>25</sup> and the privileges that might go with this status, such as for example tax immunity, but this is not the exclusive use of the title.<sup>26</sup> One good example for Hadrian as Ἐλευθέριος comes from a series of inscribed altars, possibly set up in a sanctuary in Mytilene.<sup>27</sup> These inscriptions seem to support the idea advanced by A. Birley as in some of them Hadrian is also honoured as ‘Founder’,<sup>28</sup> which, however, is not connected with the foundation of the Panhellenic league as has been suggested in other cases,<sup>29</sup> but to that of the city of Mytilene; in some of inscriptions he is explicitly cited as οἰκίστα τᾶς πόλιος.<sup>30</sup> This goes in line with the ‘freedom’ which Mytilene has received also as the worship of the emperor as ‘ktistes’ may imply granting of certain privileges.<sup>31</sup> It is noteworthy that this was the second ‘freedom’ that Mytilene received after that granted by Pompey,<sup>32</sup> which was evidently confirmed by Augustus who is also epigraphically attested as Ἐλευθ[έρι]ος.<sup>33</sup>

Unfortunately, no clue at all as to the architectural features or even the nature of the sanctuary is given in these inscriptions, but it seems that it is reminiscent of the Olympieion in Athens, where numerous statues of Hadrian were also set up by some Greek cities. I would not be surprised if the sanctuary in Mytilene was a mini-variant of the Olympieion, as regards the decoration of the interior space. The sanctuary seems to have been dedicated to the emperor, but also the Founder of the city, who in this case coincided with the emperor. Therefore, by worshipping the emperor the Founder was also worshiped and vice versa. In this way may be explained the numerous altars dedicated to Zeus, Roma, Dionysus and Maron in Maroneia, Thrace,<sup>34</sup> which possibly belonged to the sanctuary with similar interior of numerous identical statues. It should be reminded that in fact Hadrian spent some time at Maroneia at the end of AD 131 as already mentioned above.

Another example with Hadrian as Ὀλύμπιος and Ἐλευθέριος may be found geographically closer to Perinthos in a city located in NE Balkans, the metropolis of Moesia Inferior, Tomis. The case is discussed by A. Avram who published an inscription in which the ἔλευθερία is related with the construction of a building (*heroon*).<sup>35</sup> The latter seems to have

---

<sup>25</sup> BIRLEY 1997, 167–168.

<sup>26</sup> See the analysis in GUERBER 2009, 33–77.

<sup>27</sup> IG XII<sup>2</sup>, 183, 185, 191, 193, 195, 196, 197, 198; Suppl. 53.

<sup>28</sup> IG XII<sup>2</sup>, 184, 185, 186, 187,

<sup>29</sup> BENJAMIN 1963, 59.

<sup>30</sup> IG XII<sup>2</sup>, 189, 190.

<sup>31</sup> See on the emperor as ‘founder’ — PONT 2007, 526–552.

<sup>32</sup> See Tac. *Ann.* 6.18; BOWERSOCK 1965, 4.

<sup>33</sup> IG XII<sup>2</sup>, 156: Ἀὐτοκράτορι/ Καίσαρι Σε-/ βασιτῶ Ἐλε[v]-/ [θερίω].

<sup>34</sup> I. Aeg. Thrace, nos. 188–198.

<sup>35</sup> AVRAM 2014, 162–163.

been an imposing construction, probably a two-aisled stoa (porticus duplex) or two-faced stoa (porticus bifrons), with an altar.<sup>36</sup> It is suggested that the *heroon* was built on the occasion of the ‘restoration of Liberty’ and was dedicated to the mythical eponymous hero Tomos,<sup>37</sup> by which a clear link between the invention of the foundation legend and the cult itself and the privileges awarded by Hadrian is established. Two more inscriptions support this date, or a date range expanded to early in Antoninus Pius’s time.<sup>38</sup> It is without doubt that all the inscriptions are linked with the restoration of the civic status of Tomis as *ciuitas libera et immunis*, on which occasion Hadrian gained the appellations Ἐλευθ[έρι]ος, Ὀλυμπ[ίω]ς and Σωτήρ.<sup>39</sup> A. Avram assumes that in fact Hadrian restored the status of *ciuitas libera et immunis* which was granted to Tomis by Vespasian.<sup>40</sup>

The invention of the foundation myth is of interest, and it seems that it is defined in the time of the imperial visit to Thrace in AD 131, which was also a catalyst for similar processes in the cities visited.<sup>41</sup> Studying the case with Tomos a link is assumed between the Hadrianic Ἐλευθ[έρι]ος and the Hadrianic Panhellenion,<sup>42</sup> although Tomis was not a part of the Panhellenion league. By this, Tomis found its place among the numerous Asianic cities that at that time also manifested on various media the increasing worship, if not invention, of the cult of the mythical eponymous hero.<sup>43</sup>

Of all these cases, the one that is the closest parallel to Perinthos is that of Mytilene, with inscription where Hadrian is honoured only as Ἐλευθέριος and Ὀλυμπ[ίω]ς.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, these inscriptions are numerous, but it is the only one in which the emperor is attested also as Δῖ.<sup>45</sup> In this, the Perinthian inscription differs not only from the remaining inscriptions of Mytilene, but also from that in Tomis.

If one follows the examples considered, one should assume that Perinthos has also received the civic status of ‘free city’ (*ciuitas libera et immunis*) for which, however, no evidence is attested at all in the inscriptions, local coinage or literary sources. No evidence also is attested for privileges such as for instance tax exemption or something else that the city was awarded by Hadrian. The appellation Ὀλυμπίως, however, implies granting of certain privileges as it is known that it was not a name assumed by the emperor on his own

<sup>36</sup> AVRAM 2014, 163–167.

<sup>37</sup> AVRAM 2014, 163.

<sup>38</sup> AVRAM 2018, 453–466.

<sup>39</sup> AVRAM 2018, 458–459; see the inscription in IScM II 47: Αὐτοκρά[το]-/ ρι Καίσαρι [Ἄδρι]-/ α(ι)νῶ Σεβα[σ]-/ τῶ Ἐλευθ[έρι]-/ ω, Ὀλυμπ[ίω],/ [σ]ωτήρι,/ [χα]ριστήρι-/ [ο]ν.

<sup>40</sup> AVRAM 2018, 458.

<sup>41</sup> TOPALILOV 2020a; 2020b.

<sup>42</sup> AVRAM 2018, 459, n. 30.

<sup>43</sup> AVRAM 2018, 456.

<sup>44</sup> IG XII<sup>2</sup> 183; 192; 193; 194; 195; 196; 197.

<sup>45</sup> IG XII<sup>2</sup> 183.

initiative, but conferred by grateful citizens.<sup>46</sup> It seems that in our case the answer is elsewhere.

Indeed, the case with Tomis is the closest geographically, but it is of great importance for our study because the emperor evidently did not visit the city and this initiative was made while touring in neighbour Thrace. If so, a very close relation may be established between the initiatives in both cities with their manifestation in the same way. Like the increased worship of the mythical eponymous hero in Tomis, Hadrian's visit was also a catalyst if not of the invention itself, at least of the increased worship of the mythical eponymous hero Perinthos which appeared in the local coinage in the time of Antoninus Pius.<sup>47</sup>

Both cases have another close feature by which they differ from the other two, the Hadrianic Panhellenion. Indeed, the case of Mytilene may also be connected to this institution, but the lack of any close economic, religious, and political links with Perinthos make this connection doubtful. Unlike Tomis and Mytilene, Perinthos was among the founding members of the Panhellenion league which may attach a significant value to the inscription under consideration and the sanctuary itself as well in this aspect.

It is known that Perinthos was founded in 602 BC as a colony of Samos<sup>48</sup> and through the ages it preserved its close link with the metropolis. This is especially visible with the predominance of the cult to Hera and persistent devotion to her in Perinthos, but also the existence of a Heraion near by the city,<sup>49</sup> probably Heraion Teichos. The image of Hera of Samos was presented on the local coinage from the imperial era (Nero).<sup>50</sup> In fact, the Perinthian elite propagated its Ionian origin on the local coinage with legends as  $\text{ΙΩΝΩΝ ΚΤΙCΤΗΝ}$ ,  $\text{ΙΩΝΩΝ ΤΟΝ ΚΤΙCΤΗΝ}$  and  $\text{ΙΩΝΩΝ}$ .<sup>51</sup> but this may be seen as closely linked to the Perinthian participation in the Panhellenion league rather than something else; no such legend or idea of it is attested in the sources in 1–2 c. AD. Given all this it seems logical that the city found its place among the founders of the Panhellenion league.

Numerous examples, however, and especially those outside Old Hellas reveal that not all of the foundation members had a clear Greek past,<sup>52</sup> which was officially admitted as most important criteria. Besides, some of most important cities in the Aegean region, such as for instance Miletos and Ephesus, did not enter the Panhellenion league, at least not at the very beginning.<sup>53</sup> It seems that the cities were attached to the league due to other reasons, mostly

---

<sup>46</sup> See JONES 2006, 153.

<sup>47</sup> The cult to Tomos is also attested on the local coinage of Tomis as early as the time of Antoninus Pius — see AVRAM 2018, 456, n. 15.

<sup>48</sup> Ps.-Skymnos 714–715; Strabo 7, frg. 56; Plut. *Mor.* 303E; Hieron. *Chron.* 98b, Helm.

<sup>49</sup> LOUKOPOULOU, ΛΑΙΤΑΡ 2004, 920.

<sup>50</sup> SCHÖNERT 1965, 24, 102–103, Nos. 76–84.

<sup>51</sup> SCHÖNERT 1965, 53, 56 (with the image of Herakles).

<sup>52</sup> SPAWFORTH, WALKER 1985, 79–82.

<sup>53</sup> A. Birley believes that eventually they joined the league.

concerned with the Roman interest, including strategic location. This is an argument that the creation of the league was imperial initiative, rather than of the Greek cities, and may reveal the imperial personal attitude to some of the cities. It is without any doubt that the emperor was also assisted in his judgment by the prominent citizens of local municipalities and provinces<sup>54</sup> which may explain the presence of some members that have no clear Greek past, but obviously had the persuasive politics and elite to include their city in the league.

It is possible that the main work on the list of the founding members of the Panhellenion league was done in the period between AD 129 when the imperial intention was officially declared by constructing the *Olympeion*, along with the launch of construction on the temple of Hera and Zeus Panhellenion as well as the Pantheon,<sup>55</sup> and the real establishment of the league council in late AD 131/132. During this period the emperor visited some of the future founding members such as for example Tralles, Thessalonika, Cilician cities etc., but many remained out of the scope of his tours. It seems that this was also a period of a huge correspondence that was pursued between the emperor and the other members of the league. Visiting Perinthos was also a part of the imperial itinerary on his way to Athens to establish the Panhellenion league. Given the above specifics of the manner in which the league was established I would not be surprised if the emperor was convinced to include Perinthos among the founding members of the league by a notable member of the local political and cultural elite while he was at the provincial capital of Thrace. The Perinthian inscription gives his name: Larcius Asiaticus. He initiated the construction of the sanctuary dedicated to the imperial family, and the appellation of Hadrian as Ἐλευθέριος and Ὀλυμπίως seems to have tied him with the Perinthos' status in the Panhellenion. Thus, the question arises of who Larcius Asiaticus was.

The name of Larcius Asiaticus is typical, but it reveals an Eastern provincial origin. The name of his daughter Larcia Gepaiyris shows his Thracian origin as the name Gepaiyris itself is considered a common one in the Thracian aristocracy.<sup>56</sup> The examples known from Thrace are rare,<sup>57</sup> but if Larcius Asiaticus known from the Perinthian inscription has a Thracian origin, it seems that in this case it may be dealing with someone from among the *homines novi*, i.e. these provincials that achieved a high career ranking in the imperial capital and the provinces.<sup>58</sup> His possible influence convincing the emperor to put Perinthos among the founding members of the Panhellenion league may be regarded in this context.

Certainly, this practice was not something new in Thrace and especially in Perinthos which as seems had lost its status of metropolis in the early Trajanic period through the

---

<sup>54</sup> ROMEO 2002, 22; BIRLEY 1997, 218–219.

<sup>55</sup> BIRLEY 1997, 219.

<sup>56</sup> SAYAR 1998, 220 and the bibliography cited there.

<sup>57</sup> See most recently DANA 2014, 187, but not only.

<sup>58</sup> On them — see HALFMANN 1979.

intervention of another *novus homo*, the *procurator Augusti* T. Claudius Sacerdos Iulianus.<sup>59</sup> Now, it was Perinthos' turn. Whether Larcus Asiaticus was acting as a provincial legate is unclear, but most probably he was one of most distinguished members of the provincial society in Thrace.

It remains unclear also what was the nature of the building. Indeed, it is restored as τὸ [ἱερὸν, but also τὸ[ν ναόν is possible.<sup>60</sup> As mentioned, M. Sayar suggested that in this case it is dealing with the temple of Hadrian and Sabina.<sup>61</sup> Some reasonable scepticism, however, has been expressed recently with the reminder that no imperial temple is attested in Perinthos prior to the time of the Severans when the city received its neokorate.<sup>62</sup> What is known about the building is that it is lavishly decorated with εἰκόνας and statues of the imperial family and it may be assumed that it was located on the *acropolis* which makes it one of the major sanctuaries for the provincial capital. A suggestion may be found in the local coinage with the manifestation of the cult to the Eponymous hero Perinthos on coins with Marcus Aurelius as Caesar.<sup>63</sup> As mentioned, the imperial presence was a catalyst for the manifestation of the cult to the Founder in the coastal cities in Thrace, which in fact finds close parallel with the nature of the sanctuary at Mytilene, dedicated to the emperor as a 'Founder' too. So, I would not be surprised if the sanctuary that was richly decorated with statues and icons of the imperial family in Perinthos and the sanctuary of Mytilene that was also richly decorated with statues of Hadrian given the numerous bases found were part of a practice that spread around in the Asianic provinces and Aegean isles of construction of temples and sanctuaries dedicated to Hadrian based on the idea of the *Olympeion* in Athens. The numerous bases found in Maroneia with the name of Maron, the eponymous hero, mentioned above, may also attribute this sanctuary to that group.<sup>64</sup> If so, this may raise the question of an existing closer link between the cult to the emperor and the cult to the Founder in the cities in the Greek part of the Roman empire in the time of Hadrian, especially after AD 129. Certainly, this is only an assumption that need more evidence.

As mentioned, the appellations to the emperor as Ἐλευθέριος and Ὀλυμπίως may imply granting of certain privileges. In this case, they may concern personal privileges that were given to the father of Larcia Gepaiyris — Larcus Asiaticus. What are they, if any, remain unclear, but it may be suggested on analogy some tax exemption for instance or what is more likely to me — a certain position in the newly founded Panhellenion league. The list of the holders of the various offices in the league is still incomplete, and some speculations could

---

<sup>59</sup> See on this — TOPALILOV 2018, 457–463.

<sup>60</sup> This opinion was expressed by Adrian Robu whom I express my sincere gratitude.

<sup>61</sup> SAYAR 1998, 220.

<sup>62</sup> RAYCHEVA 2015, 24.

<sup>63</sup> SCHÖNERT 1965, nos. 411–418.

<sup>64</sup> Whether Maroneia may be added to the founding members of the Panhellenion league is unclear.



be made moreover another Perinthian will later hold some offices. For instance, I am aware of a certain (Aurelius?) Rufus who held the *agonothesia* and the office of *archon* between 177 and 217.<sup>65</sup> The dedication to the emperor as Zeus and the permission to build the new sanctuary on the *acropolis* of the provincial capital is a good evidence for the Panhellenion league option, rather than some prosaic privileges bestowed on a certain family in the city.

## References

- AVRAM, A. 2014. Die 'Freiheit' von Tomis in der Kaiserzeit. In: V. Cojocaru, Chr. Schuler (eds.), *Die Außenbeziehungen pontischer und kleinasiatischer Städte in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit, Akten einer deutsch-rumänischen Tagung in Constanța, 20-24 September 2010*, 161-172. Stuttgart.
- AVRAM, A. 2018. Tomos, le héros fondateur de Tomis. *Pontica* 51, 453-466.
- BENJAMIN, A. 1963. The Altars of Hadrian in Athens and Hadrian's Panhellenic Program. *Hesperia. The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 32/1, 57-86.
- BIRLEY, A. 1997. *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor*. London.
- BOWERSOCK, G. 1965. *Augustus and the Greek World*. Oxford.
- BRENT, A. 2006. *Ignatius of Antioch and the Second Sophistics. A Study of an Early Christian Transformation of Pagan Culture*. Tübingen.
- CAMIA, F. 2011. *Theoi Sebastoi. Il culto degli imperatori romani in Grecia (provincia Achaia) nel secondo secolo d.C., Meletemata 65*. Athens.
- DANA, D. 2014. *Onomasticon Thracicum. Répertoire des noms indigènes de Thrace, Macédoine Orientale, Mésies, Dacie et Bithynie, Meletemata 70*. Athènes.
- GUERBER, E. 2009. *Les cités grecques dans l'Empire romain. Les privilèges et les titres des cités de l'Orient hellénophone d'Octave Auguste à Dioclétien*. Rennes.
- HALFMANN, H. 1979. *Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum bis zum Ende des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* Göttingen.
- HOJTE, J. 2005. *Roman Imperial Statue bases from Augustus to Commodus, Aarhus Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity VII, Acta Jutlandica 80:2, Humanities Series 78*. Aarhus.
- JONES, C. 2011. An Edict of Hadrian from Maroneia. *Chiron* 41, 313-325.
- JONES, C.P. 2006. Letter of Hadrian to Naryka (Eastern Locris). *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19, 151-62.
- KIENAST, D. 2011. *Römische Kaisertabelle: Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie*. 5. Darmstadt.
- LOUKOPOULOU, L., A. LAITAR 2004. Propontic Thrace. In: M. Hansen, Th. Nielsen (eds.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis. An Investigation Conducted by The Copenhagen Polis Centre for the Danish National Research Foundation*, 912-923. Oxford.
- PONT, A.-V. 2007. L'empereur «fondateur»: enquête sur les motifs de la reconnaissance civique. *Revue des Études Grecques* 120, 526-552.
- RAYCHEVA, M. 2015. The Imperial Cult in Perinthos. *Archaeologia Bulgarica* 19/2, 23-34.
- ROBERT, L. 1946. La dédicace du temple de Dionysos à Téos. *Hellenica* 3, 86-89.
- ROMEO, I. 2002. The Panhellenion and Ethnic Identity in Hadrianic Greece. *Classical Philology* 97/1, 21-40.

---

<sup>65</sup> See the lists in SPAWFORTH, WALKER 1985, 84-87.

- SAYAR, M. 1998. *Perinthos-Herakleia (Marmara Ereğlisi) und Umgebung. Geschichte, Testimonien, griechische und lateinische Inschriften*. Denkschriften [DAW], 269. Vienna.
- SCHÖNERT, E. 1965. *Die Münzprägung von Perinthos*. Berlin.
- SPAWFORTH, A.J., S. WALKE 1985. The World of the Panhellenion. I. Athens and Eleusis. *The Journal of Roman Studies* 75, 78–104.
- TOPALILOV, I. 2018. Once More on the Benefactor of the Metropolis Philippopolis, Thrace, T. Claudius Sacerdos Iulianus. In: P. Pavuk, V. Klontza-Jaklová, A. Harding, (eds.) *EYΔAIMΩN. Studies in Honour of Jan Bouzek, Opera Facultatis philosophicae Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis* 18, 457–463. Prague.
- TOPALILOV, I. 2020a. *Some Notes on the 'Founder' cult in Western Pontic cities in Roman period* (in print).
- TOPALILOV, I. 2020b. Hadrian's tour of Thrace in 131 AD. In: M. Tasaklaki, M. Chryssaphi (eds.), *Conference Proceedings Volume of 3rd International Roman and Late Antique Thrace Conference, Komotini, 18–22 October 2018* (in print).



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## Ancora sulla *Dacia restituta*

Nelu ZUGRAVU<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** *On Dacia restituta again.* The paper reprises the discussion concerning the phrase *Dacia restituta* within Pan. IV [8] uttered on March 1st, 297 at Augusta Treverorum by an anonymous orator on the occasion of celebrating the Quinquennalia, in the honour of Constantius becoming a Caesar. The first part features an overview of the opinions formulated regarding the localisation of *Dacia* mentioned by the orator. Hence, some believe that it is the North-Danubian province, “taken back” by the Empire around 289 or even 297. Others point out that it is the extreme southern area of the former province, controlled permanently by the Romans through the fortifications on the left bank of the river. Others yet, without denying that the orator was referring to the former trans-Danubian province, only credit the information with the value of rhetorical expression, as more of an ideological than a realistic claim. Finally, certain researchers pinpoint that the orator must have referred to the South-Danubian province of *Dacia* as a whole or to one of the provinces by that name (*Dacia Ripensis*, *Dacia Mediterranea*) situated on the left side of the river. The following lines feature the significations of the term *restituta* (-us), in general, then in the Panegyrici Latini. The paper also includes an internal analysis of the fragment where the phrase *Dacia restituta* is featured, as well as of other contexts within the speech where the lexeme in question is used, leading to the conclusion that the phrase can only refer to a *Dacia* that the Empire considered an integrant part of it—a provincia—and that was restored, reintegrated in the initial structures (administrative, legal, tax-related, etc.) of the state, after the perturbation of the natural evolution by the barbarian incursions. Hence, it could not have been the former province of *Dacia* in the north of the Danube, given that its legal Roman status had ceased de jure and definitively upon the official abandonment of the province, but the province of *Dacia* in the south of the Danube, in close connection with the events requiring the presence of Diocletian on the Danubian front in 289, 290–291, 293–294, 296. A further argument to support this idea is the frequency of the opposition *amissa-recepta*, not *amissa-restituta*. Finally, the foreign policy ideology of the 297 speech is worth highlighting; namely, the view according to which the Empire was a closed space, a stable world, where territorial acquisitions on the left bank of the Danube were excluded.

**Riassunto.** L'articolo riprende la discussione sul sintagma *Dacia restituta* del Pan. IV [8] pronunciato il 1 marzo 297 ad Augusta Treverorum (Treviri) da un oratore anonimo alla festa dei Quinquennalia celebrata in occasione dell'investitura di Costantino al rango di Caesar. Nella prima parte sono passate in rassegna le opinioni formulate riguardo alla localizzazione della *Dacia* menzionate dall'oratore. Alcuni hanno quindi ritenuto che si tratti della provincia nord-danubiana “recuperata” dall'Impero verso il 289 o persino il 297; altri ritengono che si tratti dell'estremità sud dell'ex-provincia, permanentemente controllata dai romani tramite i forti sulla sponda sinistra del fiume; altri, senza negare il fatto che il retore faccia

---

<sup>1</sup> Università „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” di Iași; email: nelu@uaic.ro; z\_nelu@hotmail.com.

*referimento all'ex-provincia transdanubiana, non danno credito all'informazione e la ritengono soltanto un'espressione retorica, un'ostentazione più ideologica che realistica; in fine, alcuni studiosi reputano che l'oratore debba aver pensato alla provincia sud-danubiana della Dacia nel suo insieme o a una delle province con questo nome (Dacia Ripensis, Dacia Mediterranea) ubicate sulla sponda destra del fiume. In seguito, vengono passati in rassegna i significati del vocabolo restituta (-us), in generale, poi nei Panegyrici Latini. Si fa un'analisi interna del frammento in cui compare il sintagma Dacia restituta, ma anche di altri contesti del discorso dove viene utilizzato il vocabolo in questione, il che porta alla conclusione che il sintagma si può riferire soltanto a una Dacia che l'Impero considerava sua parte costitutiva — una provincia — e che era stata restaurata, reintegrata nelle sue strutture iniziali (amministrative, giuridiche, fiscali ecc.) dello Stato dopo che la sua evoluzione naturale era stata perturbata dalle incursioni barbariche; e questa non poteva essere l'ex-provincia della Dacia sud-danubiana, in quanto che era in stretto collegamento con gli avvenimenti che avevano richiesto la presenza di Diocleziano sul fronte danubiano negli anni 289, 290-291, 293-294, 296. Un argomento supplementare per sostenere questa ipotesi è offerto dalla frequenza dell'opposizione amissa-recepta, e non di quella amissa-restituta. In conclusione, l'ideologia della politica estera che traspare dal discorso del 297; si tratta della concezione secondo la quale l'Impero era uno spazio chiuso, un mondo stabile, in cui le acquisizioni territoriali sulla sinistra del Danubio erano escluse.*

**Rezumat.** Din nou despre Dacia restituta. Articolul reia discuția asupra expresiei Dacia restituta din Pan. IV [8] rostit la 1 martie 297 la Augusta Treverorum de un orator anonim cu prilejul sărbătorii Quinquennialia celebrate în cinstea ridicării lui Constantius la rangul de Caesar. În prima parte sunt trecute în revistă opiniile formulate în legătură cu localizarea Daciei menționate de orator. Astfel, unii au apreciat că este provincia nord-dunăreană, „recuperată” de către Imperiu prin 289 sau chiar 297; alții consideră că este vorba de zona sudică extremă a fostei provincii, controlată permanent de romani prin intermediul fortificațiilor de pe malul stâng al fluviului; alții, fără a nega faptul că retorul se referă la fosta provincie transdanubiană, nu creditează informația altfel decât ca pe o exprimare retorică, o pretenție mai mult ideologică decât realistă; în sfârșit, anumiți cercetători opinează că oratorul trebuie să fi avut în vedere provincia sud-dunăreană Dacia în ansamblul ei sau una dintre provinciile cu acest nume (Dacia Ripensis, Dacia Mediterranea) aflate în dreapta fluviului. În continuare, sunt trecute în revistă semnificațiile termenului restituta (-us), în general, apoi în Panegyrici Latini. Este realizată o analiză internă a fragmentului în care apare expresia Dacia restituta, dar și a altor contexte din discurs unde se folosește lexemul respectiv, care conduce la concluzia că expresia nu se poate referi decât la o Dacia pe care Imperiul o considera o parte componentă a sa — o provincie — și care a fost restaurată, reintegrată în structurile inițiale (administrative, juridice, fiscale etc.) ale statului după ce evoluția firească îi fusese perturbată de incursiunile barbare; or, aceasta nu putea fi fosta provincie Dacia de la nordul Dunării, al cărei statut juridic roman încetase de drept și definitiv odată cu abandonarea oficială, ci provincia Dacia sud-dunăreană, fiind în strânsă legătură cu evenimentele care au necesitat prezența lui Diocletian pe frontul dunărean în 289, 290-291, 293-294, 296. Un argument suplimentar în susținerea acestei idei îl oferă frecvența opoziției amissa-recepta, iar nu a celei amissa-restituta. În sfârșit, ideologia politicii externe pe care o deținea discursul din 297: este vorba despre concepția conform căreia Imperiul era un spațiu închis, o lume stabilă, în care achizițiile teritoriale în stânga Dunării sunt excluse.

**Keywords:** panegyrics, Dacia restituta, amissa - recepta, South-Danubian province of Dacia.

## I. *Dacia restituta* in Pan. IV [8] (297); significato del sintagma

In un panegirico pronunciato il 1° marzo del 297 a Treviri da un oratore anonimo originario della *civitas Aeduorum* (Autun) in occasione dei *Quinquennialia* celebrati in onore della promozione di Costantino alla carica di Cesare<sup>2</sup>, nel quale si elogiavano le azioni di Costantino del 296 conclusesi con la cancellazione della separazione della Britannia<sup>3</sup>, compare anche un sintagma che ha giustamente attirato l'attenzione degli storici — *Dacia restituta*. Questo sintagma si trova nell'*exordium* del discorso (capp. 1-5), dove il panegirista fa un riepilogo dell'opera di restaurazione realizzata dall'intero collegio tetrarchico — “la rinascita dello Stato” (*renascens res publica*), nelle sue parole<sup>4</sup> — dovuta, soprattutto, alla politica aggressiva nei confronti degli *hostes* esterni e ai successi militari degli *invictissimi principes* contro tali *hostes* (*omni hoste perdomito*)<sup>5</sup>. L'anonimo accosta considerazioni generiche e considerazioni focalizzate su eventi particolari, senza che questi ultimi siano resi in un ordine cronologico preciso: i tetrarchi, rivela, non si lasciarono sfuggire nessuna occasione per difendere e ingrandire lo Stato (*vos nullum ulciscendae augendaeque rei publicae vacuum tempus amiseritis*): ottennero molte vittorie (*tot... partae victoriae*); molte genti barbare furono sterminate ovunque (*tot excisae undique barbarae nationes*); molti coloni furono trasferiti nelle campagne romane (*tot translati sint in rura Romana cultores*); molti confini furono estesi (<tot> *prolati limites*); **molte province ristabilite** (*tot provinciae restituae*)<sup>6</sup>; fu catturato il re di un popolo molto selvaggio (*captus... rex ferocissimae nationis*)<sup>7</sup>; l'Alemannia, situata tra il ponte sul Reno e il passaggio sul Danubio vicino a Guntia (oggi Günzburg) fu completamente messa a ferro e fuoco (*a ponte Rheni usque ad Danubii transitum Guntiensem deusta atque exhausta penitus*

<sup>2</sup> Di questo discorso, il contesto e la data quando fu pronunciato, cf. GALLETIER 1949, 73; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 105–106; LASSANDRO 2000, 11, 134 (n. 8).

<sup>3</sup> Questa era stata iniziata da Carausio (Augusto tra l'autunno del 286 – l'inizio dell'estate del 293) e continuata da Alletto (Augusto tra 293–296) — GALLETIER 1949, 73–76; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS 1994/2015, 106–108, 118–120 (n. 21–24 e 26), 223–224 (n. 19); CHRISTOL 1996, 193, 195–198, 250 (n. 6 e 10); CASEY 2005, 32–33, 43–44, 96–97, 97–104; BIRLEY 2005, 375–393; BIRLEY 2007, 54–55; LEADBETTER 2009, 56–60, 65; ROBERTO 2014, 75–77, 79–80, 97–98, 104–107; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 259, 267–270, 274.

<sup>4</sup> IV [8], 1, 3.

<sup>5</sup> IV [8], 3, 2.

<sup>6</sup> IV [8], 1, 4.

<sup>7</sup> IV [8], 1, 4. Non si sa di quale *rex* e di quale *natio* si tratti (GALLETIER 1949, 83, n. 2; MICUNCO 2000, 134, n. 6). Nel panegirico del 289 dedicato a Massimiano, Mamertino descrive le *omnes nationes* transrenane che avevano invaso *universae Galliae* (*Burgundiones, Alamanni, Chaibones, Eruli*) (Pan. II [10], 5, 1–2) come *feras... indomitasque gentes* (Pan. II [10], 7, 6); in special modo, i Franchi sono chiamati *lubrica... fallaxque gens barbarorum* (Pan. II [10], 11, 4). Lo stesso oratore ricorda il re Gennobaude dei Franchi, divenuto vassallo dell'Impero (Pan. II [10], 10, 3–5; III [11], 5, 4); CHRISTOL 1997, 193; MICUNCO 2000, 86 (n. 38), 109 (n. 29); LEADBETTER 2009, 9.

*Alamannia*<sup>8</sup>; i Parti furono respinti oltre il Tigri (*Partho quippe ultra Tigrim redacto*)<sup>9</sup>; **la Dacia fu ristabilita**<sup>10</sup>; i confini della Germania e della Rezia furono estesi sino alle fonti del Danubio (*porrectis usque ad Danubii caput Germaniae Raetiaeque limitibus*)<sup>11</sup>; fu disposta la punizione della Batavia e della Britannia (*destinata Bataviae Britanniaeque vindicta*)<sup>12</sup>; grazie al loro valore militare, gli imperatori estesero i confini del potere romano (*qui Romanae potentiae terminos virtute protulerant*)<sup>13</sup>; le spedizioni contro i Sarmati (*Sarmaticae expeditiones*) portarono alla loro estinzione (*gens prope omnis exstincta est*), tanto che il loro nome veniva associato ormai solo a una popolazione di schiavi<sup>14</sup>; i trofei del Nilo fecero tremare gli Etiopi e gli Indi (*trophaea Niliaca sub quibus Aethiops et Indus intremuit*)<sup>15</sup>; i Carpi patirono poco prima una schiacciante sconfitta (*proxima illa ruina Carporum*)<sup>16</sup>; i Mauri furono sterminati (*Mauris immissa vastatio*)<sup>17</sup>;

<sup>8</sup> IV [8], 2, 1; vide anche 10, 4: *totiens proculcata esset Alamannia*. Massimiano lottò contro i Franchi nel 286, poi contro gli Alamanni nel 287, mentre nel 288, per ristabilire completamente la situazione, intervennero anche Diocleziano dalla Pannonia (*Pan. II* [10], 2, 6; 5; 7; 9, 1-2; III [11], 5, 4; 7, 2; 16, 1); nel 292 (?), ha lottato con Alamanni — CHRISTOL 1997, 192-193, 250 (n. 5); MICUNCO 2000, 78-79 (n. 26), 82 (n. 30), 108 (n. 27); LEADBETTER 2009, 54, 98; ROBERTO 2014, 74-75, 77-80; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 258-259, 262, 264, 274.

<sup>9</sup> IV [8], 2, 1; vide anche 10, 4. L'oratore fa riferimento, molto probabilmente, alla guerra contro i Parti del 287-288 (*Pan. II* [10], 2, 6; 7, 5; 9, 2; 10, 6; III [11], 5, 4; 7, 1), ma i conflitti erano in corso proprio nel momento in cui l'oratore anonimo pronunciava il suo discorso (*Fest.*, 25) — CHRISTOL 1997, 197, 199, 251 (n. 11-13); MICUNCO 2000, 82 (n. 31), 135 (n. 12), 158 (n. 65); LEADBETTER 2009, 87-95, 100; ROBERTO 2014, 71-74, 109-114; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 257, 259, 264, 272, 274; CASELLA 2017, 35-45.

<sup>10</sup> IV [8], 3, 3. Altre traduzioni: rom.: „Dacia **restabilită**” (ILIESCU 1970, 81); fr.: „la Dacie **recouvrée**” (GALLETIER 1949, 84); engl.: „Dacia **restored**” (NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 113); it.: „Dacia **era stata riconquistata**” (MICUNCO 2000, 135); germ.: „Dakien **wiederhergestellt**” (MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 51).

<sup>11</sup> IV [8], 3, 3. Si tratta della campagna del 288 guidata da Diocleziano (*Pan. II* [10], 9, 1: *ingressus est nuper illam quae Raetiae est obiecta Germaniam similique virtute Romanum limitem victoria protulit*; III [11], 5, 4: *limitem Raetiae repentina hostium clade promotum*; 7, 1; 16, 1) — CHRISTOL 1997, 193; MICUNCO 2000, 108, n. 27; LEADBETTER 2009, 60; ROBERTO 2014, 78-79; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 257-259.

<sup>12</sup> IV [8], 3, 3; vide anche 7, 4; V [9], 21, 2; vide la bibliografia *supra*.

<sup>13</sup> IV [8], 3, 5.

<sup>14</sup> IV [8], 5, 1; vide anche *infra*, 10, 4: *totiens obstricta Sarmatia*. Si tratta della vittoria nell'autunno del 289, ricordata da Mamertino nel panegirico del 291 (*Pan. III* [11], 5, 4: *Sarmatiae vastationem oppressumque captivitatis...*; 7, 1; 16, 1), ma le lotte contro i Sarmati guidate da Diocleziano continuarono anche negli anni seguenti, fino al 299, e anche nei primi anni del IV secolo — Eutr., IX, 25, 2; GALLETIER 1949, 85, n. 3; CHRISTOL 1997, 197; LEADBETTER 2009, 98-100; KOVÁCS 2011, 143-154; BENEÀ 2013, 338-339; ROBERTO 2014, 80, 83; BARNES 2014, 179-180; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 257-259, 264, 272, 274.

<sup>15</sup> IV [8], 5, 2. Il panegirista fa riferimento alle campagne in Egitto guidate da Galerio a partire dal momento della sua associazione in qualità di Cesare nel 293, che sarebbero continuate dopo il 297, fino al 305 — *Pan.*, III [11], 17, 4; Eutr., IX, 22, 1; 23, 1; GALLETIER 1949, 85, n. 4; CHRISTOL 1997, 197, 199-200, 251 (n. 11 e 14); MICUNCO 2000, 138, n. 23; LEADBETTER 2009, 81-87; ROBERTO 2014, 99-100, 114-118; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 257, 272, 274; CASELLA 2017, 31-33.

<sup>16</sup> IV [8], 5, 2; vide anche 10, 4: ... *Carpi totiens profligati*. I Carpi furono sconfitti entro l'autunno del 296 da Diocleziano, e non da Galerio, come sostengono alcuni studiosi — *Aur. Vict., Caes.*, 39, 43; Eutr., IX, 25, 2; GALLETIER 1949, 86, n. 1; MICUNCO 2000, 138, n. 24; LEADBETTER 2009, 98-102; KOVÁCS 2011, 150; ROBERTO 2014, 107-109; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 257, 259, 264, 272, 274.

così, con la loro luce portatrice di salvezza, gli imperatori rendono felici non soltanto le **provincie** dove il giorno nasce, passa e scompare, ma anche quelle delle regioni nordiche (*nec solum qua dies oritur et praeterit et conditur, sed etiam ex illa septentrionali plaga salutari beatis luce provincias*), mentre i loro benefici, più numerosi persino di quelli degli dei, si riversano sul mondo intero (*vestra in orbem terrarum distributa beneficia prope plura sunt quam deorum*)<sup>18</sup>.

Nella storiografia moderna sono state formulate svariate opinioni sul significato del sintagma *Dacia restituta*, con riferimento alla localizzazione del toponimo, alla data e all'oggetto dell'azione insiti in esso. Le opinioni formulate in merito si basavano sia sulle informazioni fornite dal frammento del panegirico dove si trova il sintagma, cioè gli eventi politico-militari evocati, verificabili anche in altre fonti, sia sul contesto storico generale o sull'intenzionalità ideologica del discorso. Pertanto alcuni hanno considerato che la *Dacia* menzionata dall'oratore anonimo sia la provincia nord-danubiana "recuperata" dall'Impero verso il 289 o persino il 297, sia dai Goti, ai quali l'aveva ceduta Aureliano nel 275, sia dai Carpi, sia da questi ultimi alleati con i Sarmati, che erano penetrati nello spazio intra-carpatico dopo il ritiro romano sul confine danubiano<sup>19</sup>. Uno dei sostenitori di questa ipotesi parte da un'interpretazione inesatta del termine *provinciales* menzionato dalla *Historia Augusta* (*Divus Aurelianus*, XXXIX, 7)<sup>20</sup> e ritiene che la *Dacia*, senza essere stata reintegrata nei confini dell'Impero, sia stata "restituita" ai "provinciali" abbandonati da Aureliano, ma liberati nel 297 dal dominio barbaro (carpico)<sup>21</sup>. L'archeologo Nicolae Gudea ritiene invece che la *Dacia restituta* si riferisca soltanto alla zona meridionale estrema dell'ex-provincia, controllata permanentemente dai Romani tramite le fortificazioni sulla sponda sinistra del fiume<sup>22</sup>. Altri storici, senza negare che il retore potesse fare riferimento all'ex-provincia transdanubiana, corroborano l'informazione solo come espressione retorica, una presunzione

<sup>17</sup> IV [8], 5, 2. L'oratore fa riferimento alla campagna in corso di Massimiano contro le cosiddette *nationes quingentanae* (Aur. Vict., *Caes.*, 39, 22; Eutr., IX, 22, 1; 23, 1), che si sarebbe conclusa un anno più tardi — Pan. V [9], 21, 2; GALLETIER 1949, 86, n. 2; CHRISTOL 1997, 200, 251 (n. 15); MICUNCO 2000, 138, n. 25; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 262, 264, 266, 274.

<sup>18</sup> IV [8], 4, 3.

<sup>19</sup> CHRYSOS 1992, 175–193, in particolare 183–186; MICUNCO 2000, 135, n. 13: „La *Dacia*, un tempo conquistata da Traiano, ceduta ai Goti da Aureliano, fu liberata dai Carpi e dai Sarmati da parte di Diocleziano (289)”.

<sup>20</sup> Il vocabolo compare nel frammento in cui l'autore anonimo parla dell'abbandono della *Dacia* da parte di Aureliano: SHA, *Aur.*, XXXIX, 7: *Cum vastatum Illyricum ac Moesiam deperditam videret, provinciam Transdanuvina<m> Daciam a Traiano constitutam sublato exercitu et provincialibus reliquit, desperans eam posse retineri, abductosque ex ea populos in Moesia conlocavit appellavitque suam Daciam, quae nunc duas Moesias dividit*; vide DIACONESCU 2003, 17–34, 73–91, 132–150. Per la correzione di questa interpretazione, si veda anche ZUGRAVU 2006, 89–98; per il vocabolo *provinciales*, vide anche CAÑIZAR PALACIOS 2010, 285–303.

<sup>21</sup> MADGEARU 2008, 31–32; 2011, 37–38; 2012, 94–96. Se la *Dacia* è stata "restituita" "ai provinciali" nel 297, mentre il discorso è stato pronunciato il 1 marzo del 297, ciò significa che l'azione romana di "restituzione" si è svolta in pieno inverno del 297, fino almeno verso la metà di febbraio (affinché ci fosse il tempo necessario che la notizia giungesse in Occidente, a Treviri), cioè precisamente nel periodo dell'anno in cui i romani non andavano in guerra!

<sup>22</sup> GUDEA 1974, 180, n. 30.

più ideologica che realistica<sup>23</sup>. In fine, alcuni studiosi reputano che l'oratore debba essersi riferito alla provincia sud-danubiana della Dacia nel suo insieme, oppure a una delle province con questo nome (Dacia Ripensis, Dacia Mediterranea) situate sulla sponda destra del fiume, cadute preda dei Sarmati verso il 289–291 e liberate verso il 293<sup>24</sup>.

Le rispettive opinioni, alcune argomentate, altre basate su semplici intuizioni, conducono ad almeno due osservazioni: la prima è che nessuna di esse è fondata su un'analisi profonda del sintagma che parta dal significato del termine *restituta* nelle fonti precedenti, nel *panegyricus* del 297, in altri discorsi del *corpus panegyricorum* nonché nelle fonti tardo-antiche; la seconda è che, per sapere se l'oratore si riferisce alla Dacia nord-danubiana, perduta intenzionalmente dai Romani (*Dacia amissa est*), nessuno ha tentato di scoprire se veramente *restituta* fosse il termine prediletto che stabilisce il collegamento con *amissa* per dimostrare semanticamente e cognitivamente l'idea di abbandono e di "restituzione" oppure se si trattasse di un altro vocabolo. Ciò è quanto ci proponiamo di illustrare nel presente contributo, basandoci soprattutto sull'analisi interna del testo e sul metodo comparativo. Nell'abbordare la questione da un'altra prospettiva, riteniamo che la nostra sia un'impresa originale e altrettanto utile, in quanto che il discorso in cui compare il sintagma *Dacia restituta* fu pronunciato a un quarto di secolo circa dall'abbandono della provincia nord-danubiana della Dacia (dunque piuttosto vicino all'epoca in questione), perciò le relative informazioni possono contribuire a meglio comprendere la situazione esistente prima e dopo l'abbandono della provincia.

## II. Il significato del termine *restituta(-us)* — aspetti generali

*Restituta* fa parte della famiglia di *restituere* — verbo polisemantico ma prevalente in contesti giuridici e politici: restaurare, ristabilire o ripristinare qualcosa o qualcuno nella condizione, stato, posizione o dignità posseduti precedentemente; recuperare; riportare indietro qualcosa (un bene materiale perduto, rubato, una transazione fraudolenta, un diritto non rispettato o abolito ecc.) o qualcuno (esiliato, prigioniero, condannato, degradato civilmente, malato ecc.) allo stato giuridico, legale, sociale, fisico iniziale, originale, corretto; annullare o ribaltare un atto affinché lo *status quo* sia ristabilito; riporre in vigore ciò che è stato sospeso (*libertas, iudicia, collegia, leges*); restaurare l'ordine e la pace dopo periodi di disordini, disfunzionalità istituzionali e turbamenti tra *cives*; riparare, rifare o restaurare, parzialmente o totalmente,

<sup>23</sup> ZAWADZKI 1973, 65–68, in particolare 67; WHITTAKER 1994, 205; PETOLESCU 1995, 164; 2000, 337; 2010, 318–319; 2018, 126; BENEÀ 1996, 31–32; 2013, 339; tuttavia, sia Petolescu che Benea non chiariscono questo problema, sebbene entrambi siano basati sull'articolo di Zawadzki.

<sup>24</sup> SESTON 1946, 133, n. 5: Dacia ripensis (idea respinta da ZAWADZKI 1973, 66); ILIESCU 1970, 81, n. 19; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 113, n. 11: „This is the «new» Dacia, south of the Danube”; BONDOC 2009, 30–32; ROBERTO 2014, 80: „Con enfasi Mamertino (sic!) parla di *Dacia restituta*, di completa restaurazione del dominio romano sulla regione compresa tra Pannonia Inferiore e Mesia Superiore”.



una costruzione (monumento, edificio ecc.), un posto (proprietà, sito ecc.) deteriorati o distrutti; ricostruire, recuperare una perdita; rientrare nelle grazie di qualcuno; rifare, ripristinare una linea di battaglia; rinnovare; risanare qualcosa di abolito o caduto in disuso (un'istituzione, una pratica, una cerimonia, un rito ecc.) e così via<sup>25</sup>. L'azione di restaurare, di restituire, di retrocedere si dice *restitutio*<sup>26</sup>. *Restitutor* è chi restaura uno stato precedentemente perduto (di pace, di prosperità, di salute, di legalità ecc.), che rende, ristabilisce o risana una condizione iniziale, che ricostruisce, ripristina, restituisce<sup>27</sup>. *Restitutus, restituta, restitutum*, participio perfetto, con valore nominale o verbale, mette in risalto la finalità dell'atto restauratore (restitutivo).

In epoca imperiale, i vocaboli in questione sono entrati nel repertorio lessicale dei messaggi e dei programmi politici specifici di vari sovrani o gruppi di potere senatoriali o provinciali propagati tramite alcuni “strumenti di comunicazione” — generi letterari (in particolare i *gratiarum actiones*, discorsi celebrativi), monumenti epigrafici, emissioni monetarie. Com'è naturale, prevalgono le attestazioni dell'agente dell'azione — il *restitutor* (nella stragrande maggioranza dei casi, l'imperatore) — mentre il loro numero aumenta sino a inflazionare epigrafi e monete durante la crisi dell'Impero del III secolo<sup>28</sup>. Il determinativo *restituta* ha un'incidenza più ridotta. Per esempio, in epoca augustea, *restituta* compare sull'epitaffio chiamato *Laudatio Turiae*, datato tra il 15 e il 9 a.C. (*res[titut]a re publica queta*), in un contesto in cui si ricorda la pacificazione del mondo (*pacato orbe terrarum*) e l'instaurazione di tempi felici (*deinde n[obis et felicia]/ tempora contigerunt*)<sup>29</sup>, e in un passaggio dell'opera liviana *Ab Vrbe condita* che riguarda eventi del 460 a.C., ma con analogie agli anni 20 a.C. (*erecti patres restitutam credebant rem publicam*)<sup>30</sup>. Sulla *restituta vis legibus*, con riferimento ad Augusto, scriveva anche Velleio Patercolo<sup>31</sup>. Insieme a *restituit*, altrettanto raramente attestato<sup>32</sup>, il determinativo è stato giocoforza utilizzato nel controverso dibattito della storiografia moderna sulla cosiddetta *res publica restituta* — tema dell'ideologia politica dei

<sup>25</sup> OLD, p. 1637, s.v. *restituo*; TODISCO 2007, 344–345.

<sup>26</sup> OLD, p. 1637–1638, s.v. *restitutio*.

<sup>27</sup> OLD, p. 1638, s.v. *restitutor*.

<sup>28</sup> E.g.: MASTINO 1986, 63–162; PEACHIN 1990, *passim*; WEISSER 1998, 649–659; WATSON 2008, *passim*; DAGUET-GAGEY 2004, 175–199; CONTI 2004, nr. 123, 128, 144, 167, 176, 177; ALLARD 2006, 149–171; LICHTENBERGER 2011, 281–317 (ch. V. *Restitutor Urbis*); ROTHENHÖFER, HOLLAENDER 2012, 153–160; WIENAND 2015, 63–99; FUDULI, SALAMONE 2015, 210–215; CAMODECA 2017, 23–46.

<sup>29</sup> CIL VI, 1527 = EHD 30715 = EDR 93344, r. 37–38; TODISCO 2007, 341–358; LICANDRO 2015, 98, n. 134.

<sup>30</sup> Liv., III, 20, 1; HURLET, MINEO 2009, 12; MINEO 2009, 296.

<sup>31</sup> Vell., II, 89, 3.

<sup>32</sup> [--- *quod rem p(ublicam)] / p(opulo) R(omano) rest[it]ui[t] o decreta quod iura] / p(opuli) R(omani) rest[it]u[it] di Fasti Praenestini (CIL I<sup>2</sup>, 231 = EHD 4754 = EDR 76931; TODISCO 2007, 341–358; LICANDRO 2015, 98, n. 134); *leges et iura p(opuli) R(omani) restituit* su un aureus di 28 d.C. (RICH, WILLIAMS 1999, 169–213; LICANDRO 2015, 91, con la bibliografia nelle note 93–94); *patriam ipsam restituit* usato da Tito Livio con riferimento agli eventi del 365 a.C., ma in analogia alla situazione degli anni '20 a.C. (Liv., VII, 1, 9; HURLET, MINEO 2009a, 12; MINEO 2009, 296).*

primi anni del principato del giovane Cesare, caratterizzata da una serie di misure e gesta, ricordate in vari modi anche da altre fonti<sup>33</sup>, rilevanti nella direzione del ristabilimento della pace, del ripristino delle norme giuridiche e morali eluse o sospese nel periodo delle dispute interne per il potere, del risanamento e della rimessa in atto delle tradizioni politiche della Repubblica, del ritorno alla normalità<sup>34</sup>.

Sotto Tiberio, in una dedica del 32–33 in onore dell'imperatore, chiamato *c]onservator p[atriae]*, un gruppo di *augustales* di Brindisi (Brundisium) dava voce alla gioia generale (*publi[ca] laetitia*) per il ritorno alla libertà (*[libertate res]tituta*)<sup>35</sup>; si trattava della ripresa di un'atmosfera politica distesa dopo l'allontanamento nel 31 di Seiano, il discusso prefetto del pretorio, *hostis perniciosissimus p[opuli] R[omani]*, come era chiamato in un'iscrizione su una statua della *Libertas Publica populi Romani* eretta nel 31 su ordine del Senato<sup>36</sup>.

Le didascalie *Roma restituta* e *Libertas restituta* presenti sulle serie di monete coniate con molta probabilità in Gallia e Hispania nel 68 d.C. ponevano l'accento, come ha molto convincentemente dimostrato Pierre Assenmaker, sulle linee di condotta che gli mittenti anonimi sollecitavano al futuro regime monarchico in seguito al superamento della condizione di *interregnum* in cui si era trovato lo Stato nell'ultimo anno del regno di Nerone: il ritorno alla legalità, gravemente infranta dal suo principato autoritario, e il restauro del modello di *princeps* augusteo, salvatore e liberatore dei cittadini, in buoni rapporti con il Senato — dunque la riconferma dell'"equilibrio istituzionale e ideologico" istituito dal fondatore dell'Impero<sup>37</sup>. Questo desiderio sembrava essersi realizzato sotto Galba<sup>38</sup>, come viene suggerito da vari tipi di monete con la didascalia *LIBERTAS RESTITVTA*<sup>39</sup> e un *signum Libertatis restitutae* offerto nello stesso anno da più *s[ervi] Galbae Imperatoris Aug[ust]i* in onore dell'*imagine[m] domus Aug[ust]ae cultorib[us]*<sup>40</sup>. *LIBERTAS RESTITVTA* continua

<sup>33</sup> Vide, per esempio, RG, 1, 1; 34, 1; Ovid., *Fast.*, I, 589: *reddita est omnis populo provincia nostro*; Vell., II, 89, 3–4: *Finita vicesimo anno bella civilia, sepulta externa, revocata pax, sopitus ubique armorum furor, restituta vis legibus, iudiciis auctoritas, senatui maiestas, imperium magistratuum ad pristinum redactum modum, tantummodo octo praetoribus adlecti duo. Prisca illa et antiqua rei publicae forma revocata. Rediit cultus agris, sacris honos, securitas hominibus, certa cuique rerum suarum possessio...*; Tac., *Ann.*, III, 28; Suet., *Aug.*, 28, 1: *de reddenda re p. bis cogitavit*; Dio Cass., LIII, 2.

<sup>34</sup> JUDGE 1974, 279–311; HURLET, MINEO 2009a; LANGE 2009, in particolare 159–190; BÖRM, HAVENER 2012, 202–220; LE DOZE 2015, 79–108, con ricca bibliografia; DALLA ROSA 2015, 171–200 (194: „un mito della storiografia moderna su Augusto”); LICANDRO 2015, 57–130, con ricca bibliografia; URSO 2019, 485–493.

<sup>35</sup> EHD 17533 = EDR 74453.

<sup>36</sup> EDR 130091.

<sup>37</sup> ASSENMAKER 2015, 203–238 (la citazione da p. 238). A proposito di queste monete, vedi anche ELKINS 2017, 126.

<sup>38</sup> Suet., *Otho*, 12, 5: *Galbam ab eo non tam dominandi quam rei p. ac libertatis restituendae causa interemptum*.

<sup>39</sup> RIC I, Galba 7–9, 37–39, 479; ELKINS 2017, 127–128.

<sup>40</sup> EDR 128951.

a comparire sulle monete emesse durante il breve regno di Vitellio<sup>41</sup> e all'inizio del principato di Vespasiano<sup>42</sup>.

Sempre alla *Libertas restituta* il 18 settembre del 96 il Senato e il popolo romano dedicano un monumento, per segnare il ritorno, dopo la tirannide di Domiziano, al regime monarchico "liberale", "costituzionale", con l'elezione di Nerva<sup>43</sup>.

Sotto Traiano, le didascalie *rest(ituta) Ital(ia)*, *rest(ituta) Italia* o *Italia rest(ituta)* presenti sulle emissioni monetarie dell'anno 108 o 110 e l'appellativo [*restitutor*] *Italiae* attribuito al sovrano in una dedica degli anni 113–116 rinvenuta a Liternum (comune di Giugliano) celebrano il programma di ripresa del potenziale demografico e, ultimamente, il rin vigorimento economico della penisola messo in atto attraverso l'*institutio alimentaria (alimenta Italiae)*<sup>44</sup>.

*Restituta* (-us) compare, inoltre, su monumenti epigrafici e in fonti letterarie classiche o tarde, in contesti che evocano l'una o l'altra delle seguenti situazioni: la rimessa in ordine dello Stato o la sua riunificazione dopo i momenti di crisi<sup>45</sup>; il ripristino, il restauro, il recupero (economico, giuridico, demografico, fiscale, edile ecc.) di alcune province o località conquistate temporaneamente da barbari o interessate, devastate da altri eventi distruttivi<sup>46</sup>; il ritorno a una posizione di potere anteriormente posseduta, perduta in circostanze sfavorevoli<sup>47</sup>; il ripristino, il restauro, la ripresa di una situazione (militare, fisica, morale ecc.) precedente, compromessa da vari fattori<sup>48</sup>; la riparazione o la ricostruzione

<sup>41</sup> ELKINS 2017, 128–129.

<sup>42</sup> ELKINS 2017, 129.

<sup>43</sup> EDR 158672 (Roma): *Libertati ab Imp(eratore) Nerva Caesare Aug(usto) anno ab / urbe condita DCCCXXXIII XIII [K(alendas)] Oc[t(obres)] restitu[tae] / S(enatus) p(opulus)q(ue) R(omanus)*; ELKINS 2017, 133.

<sup>44</sup> EDR 100049; de CARLO 2002–2003, 293–301.

<sup>45</sup> EDR 104093 (Roma, a. 202–203): *ob rem publicam restitutam*; SHA, Aur., I, 5: «*totus Romano nomini orbis est restitutus*»; SHA, Aur., X, 14, 2: *Multa postea per eundem Iulianum egregia adversum barbaros gesta sunt summotique ultra Rhenum Germani et finibus suis Romanum imperium restitutum*.

<sup>46</sup> EDR 142666 (Perusia, a. 1–14): *Perusia resti[t]uta*; EDR 142667 (Perusia, a. 1–14): *Perusia restit[uta]*; EDR 142668, 142669 (Perusia, a. 1–14): *Perusia restituta*; EDCS 1490064 (Cillium, Africa proconsularis, Constantinus–Licinius): *ornamenta [[liberta(tis)]] restituta et vetera civi/tatis insignia*; EHD 43825 (Colonia Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, Dacia, a. 172): *[co]lonia Ulp(ia) Traian(a) Aug(usta) Dac(ica) / [Sarmizegetusa] ancipiti periculo virtu/tib(us) restituta*; Eutr., X, 14, 1: *A quo modicis copiis apud Argentoratum, Galliae urbem, ingentes Alamannorum copiae extinctae sunt, rex nobilissimus captus, Galliae restituta*; SHA, Aur., XLI, 8: «*Illo vincente Illyricum restitutum est*»; EDR 115838 (Roma, 565): *ac totius Italiae restituta*; vide anche *infra*.

<sup>47</sup> Liv., Per. XLVI, 9: *pulsus regno a minore fratre missis ad eum legatis restitutus est*; XLVII, 7: *pulsus regno a senatu restitutus est*; LXII, 5: *Atherbalem regno expulit; is a senatu restitutus est*; Fest, 11, 3: *Ariobarzanes rex Cappadocum, a Mithridate expulsus, Romanorum armis est restitutus*; 11, 5: *Paphlagoniam Pylaemenes rex, amicus populi Romani, tenuit. Saepe ex ea pulsus regno a nobis est restitutus* (FELE 2009, 333–334); *Origo gentis Romanae*, XXII, 4: *avum regno restitutum*; Amm., XXX, 1, 15: *regno incolumnis restitutus*; Oros., VII, 34, 10: *Valentinianus in Orientem refugiens a Theodosio paterna pietate susceptus, mox etiam imperio restitutus est*; 35, 10: *Igitur Valentinianus iunior regno restitutus...*

<sup>48</sup> EDCS 23200445 (Mactaris, Africa proconsularis, a. 169): *[pro] restituta sa[lute]*; EDCS 74100012 (Murgi, Baetica); EDCS 34900742 (Allifae): *pro restituta / valetudine*; EDR 7243 (Roma, a. 193–195): *cuius memoria per vim oppressi in /*

di alcuni edifici e lavori pubblici (*opera, thermae, balnea, macella, basilicae, aquae, pontes, nymphae, templa, aedes, sacraria, porticus, theatra, fora, viae, castra, stationes, miliaria* ecc.) degradatisi col passare del tempo o per altri motivi<sup>49</sup>; il rinnovo, il riconoscimento di alcuni antichi privilegi o facilitazioni sospesi in certe circostanze<sup>50</sup>; la riconferma dei limiti di alcune proprietà<sup>51</sup>; il restauro di alcuni manufatti o simboli sacri distrutti o deteriorati e la loro restituzione ad alcune costruzioni sacre<sup>52</sup>; il ripristino delle risorse di cibo<sup>53</sup> ecc.

### III. *Restituta(us)* nei *Panegyrici Latini*

1. In un lavoro pubblicato quasi tre decenni fa, Marie-Claude L'Huillier sottolineava il fatto che nelle orazioni gallo-romane dei secoli III–IV, *restitutor, restitutio, restituta* fanno parte del bagaglio lessicale della vittoria dei sovrani, esaltata dai panegiristi<sup>54</sup>. Ci soffermeremo sull'aspetto che ci interessa nella presente analisi, evidenziando prima di tutto le attestazioni di *restituta (-us)* in altri panegirici del *corpus*. Come nelle fonti dell'epoca classica tarda, i vocaboli in questione presentano molteplici significati e compaiono in contesti in cui gli oratori ricordano vari atti, gesta, misure restitutive, riparatorie, dei principi elogiati nel senso di ripristino, ripresa, di rinnovamento di una situazione precedente, iniziale<sup>55</sup>: il restauro, il risanamento, il rifiorire dello Stato: *cis pauculos dies in novum ac florentem statum re publica restituta*<sup>56</sup>; il miglioramento, attraverso *liberalitas*, della deplorabile situazione economico-

---

*integrum secundum amplissimi ordinis / consultum restituta est; SHA, Pert., VI, 8: eorum memoria restituta, qui occisi fuerant; Aur., XXV, 3: subito vi numinis... per pedites etiam equites restituti sunt.*

<sup>49</sup> EDR 7243, 71667, 72893, 74190, 104280, 105389, 112466, 117029, 11715, 121547, 121603, 121630, 133050, 144175, 153992, 158903, 160515, 162991, 14900309, 4000362, 335004457, 26100010, 13000965, 18200230, 10400409, 20900082, 515000069, 7800888, 60100008, 60200011, 60200025, 60200047, 60300331, 28501078, 16200844, 22700765, 10900452, 33000710, 11000557 ecc.; SHA, Ant. Pius, VIII, 2: *Opera eius haec extant: ... Graecostadium post incendium restitutum.*

<sup>50</sup> EDCS 27800834, 27800839 (Ephesus, Asia, a. 43–46).

<sup>51</sup> EDCS 23200445 (Ostippo, Baetica, a. 49): *te/rmin[i] agror(um) decu/manor(um) [resti]tuti et / novat[i]; EDCS299900022 (Diluntum, Dalmatia, a. 41–54): i]nter Ber[a]/[sti]nos et Pitunti/nos termini r[ec]/[o]gniti et restitu[t]i.*

<sup>52</sup> EDR 160515 (Falerii Novi, sec. I): ----- / *vetustate conlapsam / secundum pollicitationem su[am] / ab solo cum omni cultu / et instrumento / restitutam sua impensa / -----*; EDR 73234 (Roma, sec. III–IV): *[Si]mulacrum restitu/tum deo Soli Invicto [Mith(rae)?]; EDR 135295 (Roma, a. 367–368): [Deorum C]onsentium sacrosanta simulacra cum omni lo[ci] totius adornatio]ne cultu in f[ormam antiquam restitutu]o; EDCS 10701375 (Regium Iulium, a. 281–330): *sacrario / a solo restituto; EDCS 22700247 (Veii, a. 249): ar-c-(ae) // Victoriae / August(ae) / sacrum / restituae post anti/quissimam vetusta/tem; EDCS 4000321 (Thubursicu Numidarum, Africa proconsularis): signum co[l]o[s]i --- / --- restitutum.**

<sup>53</sup> EDR 73007 (Roma, a. 400–405): *F(avo) Stilichoni ---/ --- qu]od Gildone hoste p[ublico de]/[victo alimoniis Roma[norum] resti]/[tutis felicitat]em au[xerit ---].*

<sup>54</sup> L'HUILLIER 1992, 190, 278–279.

<sup>55</sup> Abbiamo citato nel testo soltanto i passi con *restituta*, riportando nelle note anche quelli che contengono gli altri termini.

<sup>56</sup> XI [3] (a. 362), 15, 1; II [10] (a. 289), 1, 5: *Re vera enim... merito quis te tuumque fratrem Romani / Diocleziano e Massimiano/ imperii dixerit conditores: estis enim, quod est proximum, restitutores, V [9] (a. 298), 17, 5: in restituendo orbe; VIII [5] (a. 312), 4, 3: ille rei publicae restitutor / Costantio/;*

fiscale di una comunità o la ricostruzione dell'aspetto edile di una *civitas: patria mea... quia statim erit restituta si videris*<sup>57</sup>; la ricostruzione, il rifacimento, il restauro di alcuni edifici: *Nam quid ego alarum et cohortium castra percenseam toto Rheni et Histri et Euphrates limite restituta?*<sup>58</sup>; il recupero dello stato civile, della condizione morale o dello stato materiale perso a causa di abusi: *cuncti domibus suis, cuncti coniugibus ac liberis, cuncti denique (quod est dulcius) innocentiae restituti sunt*<sup>59</sup>; la riammissione di una persona in una posizione politica di diritto<sup>60</sup>.

2. Nel *Panegyricus dictus Constantio Caesari*, salvo per la sezione 3, 3 contenente il sintagma *Dacia restituta*, il participio *restituta* con valore nominale o verbale si incontra tre volte: in 1, 4 (*tot provinciae restituae*)<sup>61</sup>, 17, 2 (*O victoria multiiuga et innumerabilium triumphorum, qua Britanniae restituae... sunt!*)<sup>62</sup> e 18, 4 (*Itaque hac victoria vestra non Britannia solum servitute est liberata, sed omnibus nationibus securitas restituta quae maritimo usu tantum in bello adire periculi poterant quantum in pace commodi consequuntur*)<sup>63</sup>. Tutte e tre le occorrenze rientrano nella stessa idea: l'oratore fa riferimento a strutture territoriali ritenute come appartenenti di diritto all'Impero (*quidquid variis temporum vicibus fuit aliquando Romanum*)<sup>64</sup> e che, dopo essere

<sup>57</sup> VII [6] (a. 310), 22, 7; V [9] (a. 298), 3, 2: *sed omnes potius quibus divina principum liberalitatis, quibus urbis istius restituta* 20, 2: *Videat praeterea in illis portibus iuventus et cotidie spectet omnes terras et cuncta maria et quidquid invictissimi principes urbium gentium nationum aut pietate restituunt, aut virtute devincunt aut terrore devinciunt*; VIII [5] (a. 312), 1, 1: *tibi... restitutori suo /civitas Flavia Aeduorum/*.

<sup>58</sup> V [9] (a. 298), 18, 4; 2, 1: *ex hac postulatione quam de restituendis patriae meae Maenianis*; 4, 1: *ut tanto esset inlustrior gloria restitutorum quanto ipsa moles restitutionis immanior*; 11, 3: *Hoc ego salarium... ad restitutionem huius operis... destinare*; 16, 5: *ad restitutionem operum singulorum*.

<sup>59</sup> XII [2] (a. 389), 45, 6; VII [6] (a. 310), 16, 1: *Quid de iustitia qua spoliatis amissa restituit?*

<sup>60</sup> XII [2] (a. 389), 47, 5: «*vidi illum principis /Valentiniano II/ restitorem /Theodosio/!*».

<sup>61</sup> Traduzioni: fr.: „tant de provinces reconquises” (GALLETIER 1949, 83); engl.: „so many provinces restored” (NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 110); it.: „tante province recuperate” (MICUNCO 2000, 133); germ.: „so zahlreiche Provinzen wiederhergestellt” (MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 49).

<sup>62</sup> Traduzioni: fr.: „O victoire féconde et riche en triomphes innombrables qui nous a rendu tout la Bretagne” (GALLETIER 1949, 96); engl.: „O manifold victory of innumerable triumphs, by which the Britains have been recovered” (NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 138); it.: „O vittoria molteplice e di trionfi senza numero: la Britannia fu di nuovo nostra” (MICUNCO 2000, 153); germ.: „Oh Sieg, vielfältig, von Triumphen ohne Zahl, dem wir es zu verdanken haben, dass die britannischen Länder zurückgegeben” (MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 69).

<sup>63</sup> Traduzioni: fr.: „Aussi votre victoire n'a pas seulement libéré la Bretagne de la servitude, mais elle a rendu la sécurité à toutes les nations auxquelles l'usage de la mer pouvait, pendant la guerre, faire courir autant de risques qu'il leur procure d'avantages en temps de paix” (GALLETIER 1949, 97); engl.: „And so by this victory of yours not only has Britain been liberated, but security has been restored to all nations which could incur as many dangers from the employment of the sea in time of war as advantages from its employment in peacetime” (NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 139); it.: „Pertanto, questa vostra vittoria non ha soltanto liberato la Britannia dalla schiavitù, ma ha ridato sicurezza a tutte le genti, che nell'uso del mare avrebbero potuto correre, in tempo di guerra, tanti pericoli quanti sono i vantaggi che traggono in tempo di pace” (MICUNCO 2000, 155); germ.: „Und so ist durch euren Sieg nicht nur Britannien von der Knechtschaft befreit, sondern es ist für alle die Völker Sicherheit wiederhergestellt, die sich aufgrund ihres Lebens am Meer und seiner Nutzung ebenso großer Gefahr im Krieg aussetzen konnten, wie sie andererseits Vorteile in Friedenszeiten daraus gewinnen” (MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 69, 71).

<sup>64</sup> IV 20, 2.

state saccheggiate<sup>65</sup> o tenute in dura prigionia (*miserrima captivitas; servitium*)<sup>66</sup> a causa delle invasioni e dell'usurpazione<sup>67</sup>, sono state recuperate<sup>68</sup>, liberate<sup>69</sup> e ridate all'amministrazione imperiale<sup>70</sup>, restituite come *provinciae*<sup>71</sup> di uno Stato coerente e stabile (*solidum imperium*)<sup>72</sup>, ripopolate e risanate economicamente da *barbari cultores* provenienti da *translati incolae* oppure da *Laeti* restituiti secondo il diritto del *postliminium* (*Laetus postliminio restitutus*)<sup>73</sup>, riabilitate urbanisticamente (*exstructione veterum domorum et refectione operum publicorum et templorum*)<sup>74</sup>, rimesse, riportate, insieme ai loro abitanti, alla normalità specifica dell'Impero (*tandem vera imperii luce recreati*)<sup>75</sup> — condizione politico-giuridica libera (*liberi, Romani, provinciales*)<sup>76</sup>, *iustitia*<sup>77</sup>, sicurezza (*securitas, salus*)<sup>78</sup>, pace (*pax*)<sup>79</sup>.

Per completare la discussione, menzioniamo che nello stesso contesto vanno integrati altri due vocaboli della famiglia di *restituere*, che riguardano in particolar modo la Britannia e colui che l'ha reintegrata nell'unità romana — il Cesare Costanzo, celebrato, per questo motivo, sul retro di un multiplo d'oro coniato dalla zecca di Treviri nel 297 come *redditor lucis aeternae*<sup>80</sup>. Si tratta, prima di tutto, del termine *restitutio* presente in 18, 7: *Atque ipsam*

<sup>65</sup> IV [8], 12, 1.

<sup>66</sup> IV [8], 19, 2.

<sup>67</sup> IV [8], 12, 1: *istum verum nefarium latrocinium; indignissimum latrocinium*; 10, 4: *contumelia*.

<sup>68</sup> IV [8], 20, 4: *recuperata*.

<sup>69</sup> IV [8], 8, 1: *vindicata atque purgata*; 18, 4: *Britannia... servitute est liberata*; 19, 1: *princeps e vindex et liberator*.

<sup>70</sup> IV [8], 18, 6: *in administratione*.

<sup>71</sup> IV [8], 1, 4; 4, 3; 9, 1-2; 10, 1; 12, 1; 17, 4; 21, 2.

<sup>72</sup> IV [8], 20, 2.

<sup>73</sup> IV [8], 1, 4; 8, 4; 9, 1-4 (GALLETIER 1949, 89, n. 1-2; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 121-122, n. 28); 21, 1: *sicut postea tuo, Maximiane Auguste, nutu Nerviorum et Trevirorum arva iacentia Laetus postliminio restitutus et receptus in leges Francus excoluit*. Traduzioni: fr.: „de même que plus tard, sur un signe de toi, Maximien Auguste, les champs en friche des Nerviens et de Trévires furent cultivés par les Lètes **rétabli** dans leur pays et par les Francs assujettus à nos lois” (GALLETIER 1949, 99); engl.: „and as later, at your bidding, Maximian Augustus, the Laeti, **restored** by right of *postliminium*, and the Franks, admitted to our laws, have cultivated the empty fields of the Arvii and the Treveri” (NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 142); it.: „come poi a un tuo cenno, o Massimiano Augusto, le campagne abbandonate dei Nervii e dei Treviri furono coltivate dai Leti **rimandati** nella loro terra e dai Franchi assogettati alle nostre leggi” (Giuseppe Micunco, in *Panegirici Latini*, p. 159); germ.: „wie danach auf deinen Wink, Maximianus Augustus, die brachliegenden Fluren der Arvier und Trevirer der Laete, der nach dem Rückkehrrecht **weidereingesetzt** ist, und der Franke, der in die Ordnung unserer Gesetze aufgenommen ist” (MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 73). A proposito di *Laeti* e *postliminium ius*, vedi, con bibliografia, NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 142-143, n. 76; LASSANDRO 2000, 37, n. 60; MICUNCO 2000, 158, n. 66; MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 235, *comm. ad* 21.1; BARBATI 2014, 587-813; MAROTTA 2015, 117-157.

<sup>74</sup> IV [8], 21, 1-2.

<sup>75</sup> IV [8], 19, 2.

<sup>76</sup> IV [8], 9, 1: *provinciales*; 17, 1: *provinciales*; 19, 2: *tandem liberi tandemque Romani, tandem vera imperii luce recreati*.

<sup>77</sup> IV [8], 19, 3.

<sup>78</sup> IV [8], 17, 1: *provincialibus... dederint salutem*; 18, 4: *securitas*; 18, 5: *nunc secure est*.

<sup>79</sup> IV [8], 20, 2.

<sup>80</sup> CHRISTOL 1997, 198; ROBERTO 2014, 106-107.

*Britanniam, quae sedem tam diuturno sceleri praebuisset, constat victoriam vestram sola sui restitutione sensisse*<sup>81</sup>. In secondo luogo, del gerundio ablativo *restitutendo* del 17, 3, con il quale il panegirista elogia il recupero di un prestigio, di un primato perduto, rispettivamente l'antico e glorioso potere marittimo di Roma<sup>82</sup>, sfidato per un decennio dall'*inimica classis*<sup>83</sup> di quella *piratica factio* della Britannia<sup>84</sup>: *Gloriare tu vero, Caesar invicte... qui Romanae potentiae gloriam restituendo navalem addidisti imperio terris omnibus maius elementum*<sup>85</sup>.

Riteniamo che l'analisi interna del testo del *Panegyricus dictus Constantio Caesari*, correlata con altre informazioni riguardanti il significato del vocabolo *restituta*, sia in grado di condurci alla conclusione che il sintagma *Dacia restituta* possa riferirsi soltanto a una Dacia che l'Impero considerava come una sua parte componente — una *provincia* — e che era stata restaurata, reintegrata nelle strutture iniziali (amministrative, giuridiche, fiscali ecc.) dello Stato dopo che la sua evoluzione naturale era stata sconvolta dalle incursioni barbariche. Questa dunque non poteva essere l'*ex-provincia* della Dacia a nord del Danubio, il cui statuto giuridico romano era cessato *di diritto e definitivamente* con l'abbandono *ufficiale*, ma la *provincia* della Dacia sud-danubiana, in stretto legame con gli eventi che avevano richiesto la presenza di Diocleziano sul fronte danubiano negli anni 289, 290–291, 293–294, 296<sup>86</sup>.

---

<sup>81</sup> Traduzioni: fr.: „Quand à la Bretagne, qui avait pendant si longtemps offert asile au crime, il est certain qu'elle ne s'aperçut de votre victoire qu'en **recouvrant** la liberté” (GALLETIER 1949, 97); engl.: „And it is evident that Britain itself, which had furnished for so long a base for this crime, perceived your victory solely in terms of its own **recovery**” (NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 140); it.: „La stessa Britannia, sede per tanto tempo di quella scelleratezza, sappiamo che si è accorta della vostra vittoria solo quando **ha riavuto** la libertà” (MICUNCO 2000, 155, 157); germ.: „Und was Britannien selbst angeht, das doch einer verbrecherischen Aktion von so langer Dauer Wohnstatt gewährt hatte: es hat euren Sieg, das steht fest, allein darin zu spüren bekommen, dass es in seinen einstigen Stand **weidereingesetzt** wurde” (MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 71).

<sup>82</sup> IV [8], 11, 3–4.

<sup>83</sup> IV [8], 15, 1.

<sup>84</sup> IV [8], 6, 1; 7, 3; 12, 1–2.

<sup>85</sup> Traduzioni: fr.: „Mais c'est à toi, invincible César, de te glorifier... **en restituant** à la puissance de Rome son prestige sur mer” (GALLETIER 1949, 96); engl.: „Well may you boast, invincible Caesar... you who in **restoring** naval glory to Roman power...” (NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 139); it.: „Tu puoi davvero gloriarti, o Cesare invitto...: tu **hai restituito** alla potenza romana la gloria navale” (MICUNCO 2000, 153, 155); germ.: „Du aber, unbesiegbarer Caesar, rühme dich... der du für die Macht Roms den Ruhm zur See **weidergewonnen**...” (MÜLLER-RETTIG 2008, 69).

<sup>86</sup> La presenza di Diocleziano nella regione del Danubio Medio e Inferiore è attestata come segue: primavera-autunno del 289, la campagna contro i Sarmati; gennaio-febbraio 290, sosta nella Dacia per la riorganizzazione del territorio dopo la campagna sarmatica; l'11 gennaio si trova a Sirmio (cf. *CI* X, 3, 4); di nuovo a Sirmio a luglio-metà dicembre del 290 (cf. *CI*, IX, 16, 4 del 29 novembre 290); maggio 291 a Sirmio (cf. *CI*, IX, 41, 12 di 13 maggio); dicembre del 291 si trova a Oescus, nella *Dacia Ripensis* (cf. *CI*, VIII, 47 [48], 5); gennaio-febbraio del 293 è di nuovo a Sirmio; agosto 293–agosto 294: sul confine danubiano, attestato a Sirmio tra maggio e 1 agosto del 294 (cf. *CI*, VI, 59, 1; IX, 12, 4; IV, 18, 1; VI, 58, 8<sup>m</sup>; V, 16, 22; VI, 24, 10; IX, 18, 2); settembre–ottobre 294: sconfigge i Sarmati e ispeziona il confine danubiano; estate–autunno del 296: lotte contro i Carpi sul Danubio; vittoria e sottomissione dei barbari — cf. ROBERTO 2014, 328–331; ZAHARIADE 2014–2015, 127.

A sostegno di quest'idea, secondo noi l'unica reale e corretta, possiamo ricordare sintagmi simili o molto vicini riguardanti altri territori romani. Così, nel *Breviarium ab urbe condita* redatto verso il 369–370<sup>87</sup>, Flavio Eutropio adopera il sintagma *Galliae restitutae* per sottolineare il ritorno all'ordine delle rispettive province dopo la vittoria di Giuliano, ad Argentoratum, contro gli Alamanni che, anteriormente, vi avevano causato terribili distruzioni<sup>88</sup>. Inoltre, nel breviario compilato tra il 369/370 e il 372<sup>89</sup>, Rufio Festo scriveva, con riferimento alla finale pacificazione della Mesopotamia sotto Diocleziano, che era stata reintegrata nell'Impero (*Mesopotamia est restituta*)<sup>90</sup>, essendo questa una provincia creata già da Traiano<sup>91</sup>; di conseguenza, il confine di diritto dello Stato romano era stato ristabilito al di là del fiume Tigri (*supra ripas Tigridis limes est reformatus*)<sup>92</sup> in quanto *limes Orientalis supra ripas Tigridis est institutus* fin dai tempi dell'imperatore antoniniano<sup>93</sup>. Nella biografia di Aureliano dell'*Historia Augusta*, l'autore anonimo elenca, tra gli altri successi del principe, il ripristino della provincia dell'Ilirico («*Illo vincente Illyricum restitutum est*»)<sup>94</sup>, che in precedenza, verso il 271–272, era stata saccheggiata dai Goti (*Cum vastatum Illyricum*)<sup>95</sup>. In fine, l'Italia, che non ha mai cessato di essere considerata parte dell'Impero, anche quando nella penisola c'era il regno degli Ostrogoti, appare su un'iscrizione realizzata a Roma nel 565 sempre con il determinativo *restituta*; l'epigrafe cita che Narsete, dopo aver ottenuto la vittoria contro i Goti, avendo sconfitto e sterminato i loro re con straordinaria velocità in un confronto pubblico, e aver ripristinato la libertà della città di Roma e dell'intera Italia (*post victoriam Gothicam ipsis, eorum regibus celeritate mirabili conflictu publico superatis, atque prostratis libertate urbis Romae, ac totius Italiae restituta*), procedette al rifacimento di alcuni monumenti di interesse pubblico e agì come in un territorio romano che necessitava dell'intervento dell'autorità legittima: riedificò in condizioni migliori rispetto a prima il ponte sulla via Salaria, fino all'acquedotto che il tiranno fuorilegge (usurpatore) Totila aveva distrutto, e, allo stesso tempo, pulì il letto del fiume (*pontem viae Salariae us/que ad aquam a nefandissimo Totila tyranno destructum, purgato fluminis alveo, in meliorem statum, quam quondam fuerat, renovavit*)<sup>96</sup>. In fine, per concludere con un esempio preso dal *corpus panegyricorum*, ricordiamo il sintagma *respublica restituta* tratto dalla *gratiarum actio* di Claudio Mamertino, pronunciata

---

<sup>87</sup> Cf. FELE 2009, 30, con bibliografia.

<sup>88</sup> Eutr., X, 14, 1.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. FELE 2009, 39.

<sup>90</sup> Fest., 14, 6.

<sup>91</sup> Fest., 14, 3.

<sup>92</sup> Fest., 14, 6. Come ha notato FELE 2009, 368, qui *reformare* è sinonimo di *restaurare*, nel significato di “ripristinare”, “riportare nella posizione in cui era stato” — quindi, nello stesso senso come *restituere*.

<sup>93</sup> Fest., 14, 6.

<sup>94</sup> SHA, Aur., XLI, 8.

<sup>95</sup> SHA, Aur., XXXIX, 7.

<sup>96</sup> EDR 115838.



il 1° gennaio del 362 a Costantinopoli. L'oratore vi elenca le azioni riparatrici intraprese dal sovrano, che generarono il superamento dello stato di totale desolazione (*maesta omnia*) prevalente fino a quel momento (*paulo ante*)<sup>97</sup>, il ritorno alla normalità e il rilancio, da parte dello Stato, in pochi giorni, di una nuova fioritura (*cis pauculus dies in novum ac florentem statum re publica restituta*)<sup>98</sup>: il rilassamento fiscale e una liberalità poco comune nei confronti degli abitanti, vessati in precedenza da tasse insostenibili (*intoleranti tributi*) e dilapidazioni condannevoli (*in cupiditates proprias*), resero possibili il rifacimento delle città cadute in rovina (*in ruinas lacrimabiles; in miserandam ruinas*), quasi distrutte (*seminuda oppida*) o con le mura in stato di degrado (*desolata moenia*), la ripopolazione degli insediamenti (*urbes frequentes*), la ricostruzione degli edifici privati (*privatae aedes*) e pubblici (*publica tecta*) (*mura, aquae, fora, deambulacra, gymnasia*), la ripresa delle celebrazioni tradizionali (*dies festos... veteres*), il lavoro nei campi ecc.<sup>99</sup>; il contenimento delle spese esorbitanti e ingiustificate della Corte (*magnitudine sumptuum*) e l'orientamento delle risorse verso i bisogni generali (*in usus publicos reservatur*)<sup>100</sup>; l'istituzione di una gestione in cui il potere assoluto (*imperium*), basato sulla violenza, sulla corruzione e sul favoreggiamento, veniva invece temperato dalla giustizia (*iustum principatum*), dalla moralità irreprensibile e dalla meritocrazia<sup>101</sup>.

#### IV. L'asindeto avversativo *amissa / recepta*, non *amissa / restituta*

In questa sezione aggiungeremo alla nostra dimostrazione un altro argomento di natura filologico-letteraria. Siamo partiti dall'opinione di quegli studiosi che ritengono che la *Dacia restituta* sia la provincia nord-danubiana, di cui alcune fonti tarde affermano che fu *amissa* sotto Gallieno<sup>102</sup>. Com'è noto, *amissa* è il participio del verbo *amitto*, che significa, tra l'altro, "abbandonare (di propria volontà), rinunciare, lasciare", ma anche "perdere (soffrire un danno)"<sup>103</sup>. Abbiamo dunque tentato di vedere se il vocabolo *amissa* sia frequentemente

<sup>97</sup> Pan. XI [3], 10, 1.

<sup>98</sup> Pan. XI [3], 15, 1.

<sup>99</sup> Pan. XI [3], 8, 3; 9, 1-4; 10, 1-3.

<sup>100</sup> Pan. XI [3], 10, 3; 11, 1-4.

<sup>101</sup> Pan. XI [3], 13, 1-3; 15, 4; 19, 3-5; 20, 2-4; 21, 1-5.

<sup>102</sup> Aur. Vict., Caes., 33, 3: *et amissa trans Istrum, quae Traianus quaesiverat*; Eutr., IX, 8, 2: *Dacia, quae a Traiano ultra Danubium fuerat adiecta, tum amissa est*; Fest., 8, 2: *Traianus Dacos sub rege Decibalo uicit et Daciam trans Danuuium in solo barbariae prouinciam fecit, quae in circuitu habuit deciens centena milia passuum; sed sub Gallieno imperatore amissa est* (FELE 2009, 282); Iord., Rom., 217: *Sed Gallienus eos dum regnaret amisit*; BENEÀ 2012, 205-218. Una recente analisi di queste fonti presso PISO 2018, 429-431.

<sup>103</sup> ThLL I, col. 1921-1935; e.g.: Eutr., VII, 14, 4: *In re militari nihil omnino ausus Britanniam paene amisit*; Amm., XX, 6, 16: *Verebatur enim, quod accidit, ne amissionem castrorum ingentium ferentes aegre Romani ad eadem obsidenda viribus magnis accingerentur*; XXVII, 4, 4: *post multiplices pugnarum aerumnas saepe res Romana vexata postremo omnem amisit exercitum cum rectore*; XXXI, 5, 15: *Duobus navium milibus perrupto Bosporo et litoribus Propontidis Scythicarum gentium catervae transgressae ediderunt quidem acerbas terra marique strages, sed amissa suorum parte maxima reverterunt*;

associato a *restituta* oppure a un altro vocabolo oppositivo, ciò che i filologi classici definiscono come *asindeto aversativo*. Lo spunto ci è stato offerto dal *Breviarium rerum gestarum populi Romani* di Rufio Festo, che abbiamo pubblicato più di un decennio e mezzo fa. In 14, 4, con riferimento alle dispute tra i Romani e i Parti per il controllo della Mesopotamia, l'autore scriveva: *Sed post Antoninis duobus, Marco et Vero, ac Seuero Pertinaci ceterisque principibus Romanis, qui aduersum Parthos euentu uario dimicarunt, quater **amissa**, quater **recepta** Mesopotamia est*<sup>104</sup>. Di conseguenza, si tratta dell'“opposizione concettuale” *amissa / recepta*<sup>105</sup>, non *amissa / restituta*. L'autore latino si è servito del participio perfetto del verbo *recipio* (“riportare indietro, riprendere, riacquistare, riconquistare, riguadagnare, riottenere, ricuperare”), che sembra più adeguato per sottolineare l'idea di recupero di un danno territoriale maggiore sofferto dall'Impero, avvenuto come conseguenza delle conquiste straniere<sup>106</sup>, della contestazione del principe legittimo<sup>107</sup> o delle pretese di controllo fondate su diritti

---

Fest., 20, 1: Nero ... **amisit** Armeniam; SHA, Marc, XIV, 3: Quadi autem **amiss-~~o~~** rege suo...; Oros., VII, 7, 12: in Oriente magnis Armeniae prouinciae **amissis**.

<sup>104</sup> 14, 5 in FELE 2009, 98–99, 363–364 (comm. ad 14, 5).

<sup>105</sup> FELE 2009, 363.

<sup>106</sup> E.g.: Pan., XI [3], 3, 1: An ego nunc **receptas** virtute tua Gallias, barbariam omnem subactam pergam quasi nova et inaudita memorare?; VIII [5], 2, 5: et nuper... diuum Claudium parentem tuum ad **recuperandas** Gallias soli vocaverunt...; 4, 2: Attende, quaeso, quantum sit, imperator, quod diuum Claudium parentem tuum ad **recuperandas** Gallias primi sollicitaverunt...; XI [3], 3, 1: An ego nunc **receptas** virtute tua Gallias, barbariam omnem subactam pergam quasi nova et inaudita memorare?; Aur. Vict., Caes., 37, 3: Qua causa, **receptis** omnibus pactisque ...; Eutr., III, 14, 5: Ita, omnis Sicilia **recepta**...; IV, 13 1: ... Q. Caecilius Metellus ... Macedoniam **recepit**...; V, 9, 1 : ... Siciliam Pompeius **recepit**; VI, 8, 2: L. ergo Lucullus post pugnam Cyzicenam, qua vicerat Mithridatem... persecutus est eum et **recepta** Paphlagonia atque Bithynia etiam regnum eius inuasit...; VII, 9, 1: Armeniam a Parthis **recepit**; VIII, 3, 1: Armeniam quam occupauerant Parthi **recepit**; 19, 1: Severus... novissimum bellum in Britannia habuit, utque **receptas** provincias omni securitate muniret, vallum per CXXXII passum milia a mari ad mare deduxit; IX, 10, 1: Defensa Syria, **recepta** Mesopotamia, usque ad Ctesiphontem Odenathus penetravit; Fest., 20, 2: Armeniam **recepta** Parthis...; Amm., XVI, 3, 1: Nullo itaque post haec repugnante ad **recuperandam** ire placuit Agrippinam ante Caesaris in Gallias adventum excisam; XVIII, 2, 5: Post haec impetrata restabat adigente necessitatum articulo **receptarum** urbium moenia reparari nullo etiamtum interturbante; XXV, 9, 9: sed ne ob **recepta** quidem, quae direpta sunt, verum ob amplificata regna triumphales glorias fuisse delatas; 9, 10: Vnde Publio Scipioni ob **recuperatas** Hispanias...; XXVIII, 3, 7: instaurabat urbes et praesidiaria, ut diximus, castra limitesque vigiliis tuebatur et praetenturis **recuperatam**que provinciam, quae in dicionem concesserat hostium, ita reddiderat statui pristino...; XXXI, 13, 17: Pari clade **recuperatis** Hispaniis Scipionum alterum cremata turri, in quam confugerat, absumptum incendio hostili comperimus; SHA, Gord., XXVI, 5–6: Illic frequentibus proeliis pugnavit et vicit ac Sapore Persarum rege <post Artaxerxen> summoto [et post Artaxerxen], et Ant[h]ioc-h-iam **recepit** et Carras et Nisibi-n>, quae omnia sub Persarum imperio erant; Trig. tyr., XV, 3: Nisibin primum et orientis pleraque cum omni Mesopotamia in potestatem **recepit**...; Aur., XXV, 4: **Recepto** igitur orientis statu Emesam victor Aurelianus ingressus est...; XXVI, 7: «Aurelianus imperator Romani orbis et **receptor** orientis...»; XXXII, 3: ... Nam Aegyptum statim **recepit**.

<sup>107</sup> E.g.: Pan. IV [8], 20, 3–4 ... ultra Oceanum vero quid erat praeter Britanniam? [4] Quae a vobis ita **recuperata** est...; VII [6], 5, 3–4: Qui eodem exercitu virtute capto... dum aedificandis classibus Britanniae **recuperatio** comparatur... Nam quid ego de **receptione** Britanniae loquar?; 6, [1]: ... **recepta** libertas; IX [12], 7, 7: non Transpadana provincia videbatur **recepta**, sed Roma; 25, 2: **Recuperavit** ille Britanniam, tu nobilissimas Africi maris insulas, quae populi Romani fuere provinciae; X [4], 31, [2]: Nil ex hostico accepit sed se ipsam **recuperavit**... imperium **recepit** quae servitium sustinebat; XII [2], 46, 4: vidisti civile bellum hostium caede, militum pace, Italiae **recuperatione** tua libertate finitum; Aur. Vict., Caes., 37, 3: Qua causa, **receptis** omnibus pactisque...; Eutr., IX, 22, 2: Qui ductu Asclepiodoti, praefecti praetorio, oppressus est. Ita Britanniae decimo anno **receptae**,

precedenti di un'altra entità politica<sup>108</sup>. Questa è la formula usuale, frequente – *amissa/ recepta*, dell'asindeto avversativo incontrata in numerose fonti classiche e tarde<sup>109</sup>, in alcune delle quali sono riportate persino rispettivamente la perdita e la ripresa di alcune fortezze o territori<sup>110</sup>.

Un esempio in questo senso sembra essere fornito proprio dal panegirico del 297. Per iperboleggiare i successi eccezionali dei principi del suo tempo, l'oratore anonimo ricorre al "passato recente" („the recent past”), come lo chiamava C. E. V. Nixon<sup>111</sup>, ricordando al pubblico il momento disonorevole (*indignum*) e infelice (*tristis*) che lo Stato romano aveva attraversato sotto il principato di Gallieno (*sub principe Gallieno*)<sup>112</sup>, quando era stato mutilato di quasi tutte le sue membra (*omnibus fere membris erat truncata res publica*)<sup>113</sup>. Si tratta della perdita del controllo su ampi territori – *cum paene omnibus careretur*<sup>114</sup> –, a causa dei barbari diventati *ac prope incolas*, come scriveva Aurelio Vittore dei Goti<sup>115</sup>, e della formazione di alcune entità politiche parallele a Roma, che portarono l'Impero sulla soglia dello smembramento. L'oratore è bene informato. Allora (*tunc*)<sup>116</sup>, diceva, sia per la debolezza

13, 2: *nobilem triumphum quasi receptor Orientis Occidentisque egit*; 23, 2: *Ita Britanniae decimo anno receptae*, Fest., 37, 3: *Qua causa, receptis omnibus pactisque...*; Oros., VII, 25, 6: *quem Asclepiodotus praefectus praetorio oppressit Britanniamque post decem annos recepit*; VII, 35, 5: *Valentinianus recepto Italiae potitus imperio est*.

<sup>108</sup> Amm., XVII, 5, 6: «Ideoque Armeniam *recuperare* cum Mesopotamia debeo avo meo composita fraude praereptam»; XXVI, 4, 5: *Persarum rex manus Armeniis iniectabat eos in suam dicionem ex integro vocare vi nimia properans, sed iniuste, causando, quod post Ioviani excessum, cum quo foedera firmarat et pacem, nihil obstare debebit, quo minus ea recuperaret, quae antea ad maiores suos pertinuisse monstrabat*.

<sup>109</sup> E.g.: Cic., *De domo sua*, 78: *qui erant rerum capitalium condemnati non prius hanc civitatem amittebant quam erant in eam recepti*; Liv., V, 12, 4: *Namque Veis castra quae amissa erant recuperata* [*< recupero – v.t. recipio*] *castellis praesidiisque firmantur*; IX, 15, 7: *receptis omnibus signis armisque quae ad Caudium amissa erant*; XLI, 3, 7: «*egregiam gloriam legionis fore, si castra metu secundanorum amissa sua uirtute recipiant Et recipi facile esse...*»; XLI, 23, 4: *atque iis maxime, qui praeter sper recepturi essent amissa mancipia*; XLII, 50, 3: «*quibus non amissa modo riciperare*»; XLIV, 8, 4: *ut tunc tandem sentiret recuperanda esse, quae prius culpa amissa forent*; Iust., HPH, VI, 3: *Nam et ipse dux Conon non tam Persis quam patriae studebat, et sicuti adflictis Atheniensium rebus auctor amissae dominationis fuerat, sic volebat idem haberi redditae patriamque vincendo recipere quam victus amiserat*; X, 3, 3: *In eo adversus provocatorem hostium Codomannus quidam cum omnium favore processisset, hoste caeso victoriam suis pariter et prope amissam gloriam restituit*, Tac., Ann., II, 41: *ob recepta signa cum Varo amissa*, Amm., XVIII, 9, 8: *recuperata cum coniuge, quam paucos post menses amiserat*, Sulp. Sev., Chron., I, 13, 8: *mercedem denique divini testimonii consecutus, sanitati redditus omnia quae amiserat in duplum recepit* etc.; vide ThLL I, col. 1920-1935, s.v. *amitto*, in particolare II.2, col. 1931-1935.

<sup>110</sup> E.g.: Liv., XXVII, 25, 5: «*neque enim recipiundum fuisse, nisi amissum foret*»; XXX, 30, 13: «*amissas Hispanias reciperasti quattuor inde Punicis exercitibus pulsis*»; XLV, 13, 5: *regnum patrium prope amissum recepissent*, Iust., HPH, XXVI, 2, 11: *Huius filius Demetrius, puer admodum, absente patre reparato exercitu non solum amissam Macedoniam recepit*.; Suet., Nero, 40, 2: *Britannia Armeniaque amissa ac rursus utraque recepta*.

<sup>111</sup> NIXON 1990, 4, 17.

<sup>112</sup> IV [8], 10, 1.

<sup>113</sup> IV [8], 10, 2.

<sup>114</sup> IV [8], 10, 3.

<sup>115</sup> Aur. Vict., Caes., 34, 3.

<sup>116</sup> IV [8], 10, 2.

dell'autorità pubblica (*incuria rerum*), sia per cause indipendenti della volontà umana (*inclinatione fatorum*), *harum provinciarum a Romana luce discidium*<sup>117</sup>; con il plurale *harum provinciarum* il panegirista intende, secondo noi, Gallia e Britannia ricordate in precedenza<sup>118</sup>, ciò significa che allude alla loro inclusione nell'*Imperium Galliarum* (260–268)<sup>119</sup>. Poi mostra che i Parti si erano dimostrati arroganti e i Palmireni si erano creduti uguali ai Romani (*Parthus extulerat et Palmyrenus aequaverat*), il che aveva portato alla secessione dell'intero Egitto e delle province siriane (*tota Aegyptus Syriae extulerat*)<sup>120</sup>; molto probabilmente l'oratore fa riferimento alle minacce e aggressioni costanti dell'Impero sasanide retto da Sapore I (240/1–272) in Oriente<sup>121</sup>, alle usurpazioni dell'Egitto e della Siria degli anni 260–262<sup>122</sup> e all'affermazione militare e poi l'estensione del regno di Palmira, conclusasi con la conquista dell'Egitto (269–270) e di alcune parti della Siria (270)<sup>123</sup>. In seguito, ricorda la situazione deplorabile di alcune province centro-europee: la Rezia, il Norico e la Pannonia. Riguardo alle ultime due afferma che erano state saccheggiate (*vastatae*)<sup>124</sup> — naturalmente dai barbari<sup>125</sup> —, mentre la Rezia era stata perduta (*amissa Raetia*)<sup>126</sup>, affermazione confermata epigraficamente soltanto nel senso che era stata *penetrata* dai Germani<sup>127</sup>, ma anche che, tra il 260 e il 262, su di essa era stato istituito il controllo dell'impero gallico secessionista, guidato da Postumo<sup>128</sup>.

<sup>117</sup> IV [8], 10, 1.

<sup>118</sup> IV [8], 9. Alcuni studiosi sostengono che si tratti soltanto delle province britanniche — cf. NIXON 1990, 21: „Does Gaul perhaps lurk in the introduction to the passage in the phrase *harum provinciarum... discidium*? It cannot... The plural *harum provinciarum* for Britain is perfectly correct — Britain had been divided into two in Severan times ...”; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 122, n. 30: “By ‘these provinces’ the speaker refers to Britain...; it had been divided into two provinces in the Severan era...”.

<sup>119</sup> CHRISTOL 1997, 139–141, 146–147, 152–156; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 107, 122–123 (n. 30); BIRLEY 2005, 337; 2007, 49–51; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 209.

<sup>120</sup> IV [8], 10, 2.

<sup>121</sup> Aur. Vict., Caes., 33, 3; Eutr., IX, 8, 2: *Parthi Mesopotamia occupata Syriam sibi coeperant vindicare*; Fest., 23, 1–2; CHRISTOL 1997, 141, 147–148; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 123, n. 31; BARTOLUSSI 2004, 223–242; OLARU 2017, 44–48, 85–89, 127–157.

<sup>122</sup> Callisto (Ballista) (260–261), Macriano senior, Macriano iunior, Quietus (260–261) e Ballista (261) nelle province orientali e in Egitto, Emiliano (261–262) e Memor (262) in Egitto: Aur. Vict., Caes., 33, 3; SHA, Gall., I, 2–5; II, 5–7; III, 1; Tr. tyr., XII–XIV, XVIII; CHRISTOL 1997, 141–142, 145, 147–148, 150; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 216–220.

<sup>123</sup> Aur. Vict., Caes., 33, 3; Eutr., IX, 10, 1; 11, 1; 13, 2; Fest., 23, 2; 24, 1; SHA, Val., IV, 2–4; Gall., III, 1–5; V, 6; X; XII, 1; 6; XIII, 1–5; Tr. tyr., XIV, 1; XV–XVII; XVIII, 1; XXIV, 4; XXVII; XXX; Aur., XXII, 1; XXV–XXVIII; XXX, 1–2; XXXIII, 2; XXXIV, 3; XXXVIII, 1; CHRISTOL 1997, 156, 159–160, 172 (n. 7–9); NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 123, n. 31–32; SOUTHERN 2008; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 230–232.

<sup>124</sup> IV [8], 10, 2.

<sup>125</sup> Le devastazioni provocate dai Sarmati e dai Quadi: Eutr., IX, 8, 2: *Pannonia a Sarmatis Quadisque populata est*; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 123–124, n. 33.

<sup>126</sup> IV [8], 10, 2.

<sup>127</sup> Oros., VII, 22, 7: *Raetia totaque Italia penetrata*.

<sup>128</sup> EHD 44953 = EDCS 03700636; BAKKER 1993, 369–386; KÖNIG 1997, 341–354; CHRISTOL 1997, 139–140; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 123–124, n. 33; SOMMER 2014, 41.

In fine, lamenta la situazione dell'Italia, le cui città erano state distrutte (*excidia*)<sup>129</sup> — naturalmente, sempre dai barbari<sup>130</sup>. Dopo questa concisa *rememoratio* dello smembramento dello Stato di allora (*tunc*), sotto Gallieno, l'anonimo esalta l'unità territoriale dell'Impero al suo tempo (*nunc*), cioè quello della tetrarchia, quando, grazie al valore eccezionale dei principi, tutti i territori una volta Romani erano stati recuperati, idea sottolineata con l'aiuto del participio del verbo *recipere* — *nunc vero orbe terrarum... qua Romanus fuerat virtute vestra recepto*<sup>131</sup>.

Dunque, ritornando alla questione di fondo di questo testo, riteniamo che, se l'oratore avesse voluto riferirsi alla provincia nord-danubiana della Dacia, abbandonata volutamente sotto Gallieno, allora avrebbe utilizzato il sintagma *Dacia recepta*, non *Dacia restituta*, perché, come abbiamo visto, l'opposizione frequente è *amissa / recepta*, non *amissa / restituta*. Naturalmente, l'ultima formula non manca, ma è abbastanza rara e non evoca situazioni del tipo che abbiamo qui mostrato<sup>132</sup>.

### V. *Imperium solidum* — *imperium restitutum*

La discussione sulla *Dacia restituta* non può essere estranea al questione del carattere della politica estera dell'Impero che il panegirico del 297 trasmette, come altre orazioni del *corpus panegyricorum*, in quanto strumento di comunicazione e di consenso con distribuzione binaria — dagli imperatori e dalla Corte all'ambiente politico provinciale (*top-down*; “communication descendente”) e da quest'ultimo verso i settori del potere sovrano (*bottom-up*; “communication ascendente”)<sup>133</sup>. L'idea che ne risulta — certamente ufficiale e consensuale<sup>134</sup> — è che, dal punto di vista territoriale, alla fine del III secolo, l'Impero era visto come uno spazio chiuso, un mondo stabile: lo Stato rifatto dai tetrarchi dopo i disastri interni ed esterni precedenti era diventato più sicuro (*certa securitas*)<sup>135</sup>, comprendeva in un'atmosfera di pace

<sup>129</sup> IV [8], 10, 3.

<sup>130</sup> L'invasione degli Alamanni nel 260: Aur. Vict., Caes., 33, 3; Eutr., IX, 8, 2; Oros., VII, 22, 7; CHRISTOL 1997, 145; NIXON, SAYLOR RODGERS, 1994/2015, 124, n. 34; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 209.

<sup>131</sup> IV [8], 10, 4.

<sup>132</sup> E.g.: Cic., *Pro Sex. Roscio Amerino*, 114: *damnatus per arbitrum et rem restituere et honestatem omnem amittere!*; Liv., III, 68, 3: «Tribuni vobis *amissa* reddent ac *restituere!*»; V, 7, 13: *exercitus Veios non amissa modo restituit opera*; Iust., *HPh*, X, 3, 3: *victoriam suis pariter et prope amissam gloriam restituit*.

<sup>133</sup> SABBAAH 1984, 378; WARE 2018, 132–134.

<sup>134</sup> Il discorso è pronunciato alla presenza dell'imperatore (IV [8], 1, 1: *praesertim cum apud maiestatem tuam divina virtutum vestram miracula praedicarem*; 1, 5: *facis Caesar auditor, praesertim cum favente numine tuo*) e l'oratore rappresenta gli abitanti di Augustodunum, a nome dei quali parla (21, 2: *quin etiam illa, cuius nomine mihi peculiariter gratulandum, devotissima vobis civitatis Aeduorum...*).

<sup>135</sup> IV [8], 3, 2.

tutto quello che era stato romano in vari momenti storici (*tenet uno pacis amplexu Romana res publica quidquid variis temporum vicibus fuit aliquando Romanum*)<sup>136</sup>, mentre la sua grandezza, spesso sprecata perché eccessiva, aveva trovato la propria coerenza in un impero finalmente consolidato (*et illa quae saepe veluti nimia mole diffluerat magnitudo tandem solido cohaesit imperio*)<sup>137</sup>; era un impero destinato a durare *saecula*<sup>138</sup>, mentre il potere imperiale, un'eternità<sup>139</sup>; il regno dei tetrarchi, *perpetui parentes et domini generis humani*<sup>140</sup>, era un'epoca di benessere generale<sup>141</sup>, un tempo di felicità (*felicitas saeculi*)<sup>142</sup>, come veniva descritto nel 298 da un altro oratore, Eumenio, un tempo in cui era rinata quell'età d'oro che non era stata florida abbastanza sotto Saturno<sup>143</sup>. Di conseguenza, l'oratore e, attraverso la sua voce, gli ambienti aulici e, insieme, le *élites* provinciali non esaltano l'espansionismo e l'acquisizione di nuovi territori. Certo, mostra l'anonimo, ci sono ancora aree del mondo che possono essere conquistate, se la volontà degli imperatori e la ragion di Stato lo richiedono (*et ex aliis quidem partibus aliqua restant, quae, si voluntas vel ratio rem desiderent, possitis acquirere*)<sup>144</sup>; si può persino arrivare a lambire le sponde dell'oceano (*fines ipsius... Oceani*)<sup>145</sup>; tuttavia, per il momento, non c'è alcun motivo per andare oltre (*nulla progrediendi causa superest*), in quanto tutto ciò che è degno di imperatori non sconfitti è già in loro possesso (*omnia, inquam, invictissimi principes, vestra sunt quae digna sunt vobis*)<sup>146</sup>. Quando l'oratore loda l'opera di espansione dello Stato intrapresa dai tetrarchi attraverso l'allargamento dei confini (*limites, termini*)<sup>147</sup>, ciò non va inteso nel senso di una dominazione effettiva dello spazio extra-imperiale, ma di un controllo basato, a seconda delle circostanze, sia sulla paura, sia sulle armi, sia sul rispetto (*aut metu quietum est aut armis domitum aut pietate devinctum*)<sup>148</sup>. Di conseguenza, l'ideologia imperiale, una costante della letteratura latina che si incontra fino in epoca tarda<sup>149</sup>, compresi i panegirici<sup>150</sup>, rimane piuttosto al livello di qualcosa di desiderabile, di ottimismo bellico, fondato sul sentimento di fiducia dato dai successi ottenuti come conseguenza dei fruttuosi

---

<sup>136</sup> IV [8], 20, 2.

<sup>137</sup> IV [8], 20, 2.

<sup>138</sup> IV [8], 3, 2: *Quanta enim, invictissimi principes, et vobis et rei publicae saecula propagatis orbis vestri participando tutelam?*

<sup>139</sup> IV [8], 3, 1: *O kalendae Martiae, sicut olim annorum volventium, ita nunc aeternorum imperatorum.*

<sup>140</sup> IV [8], 20, 1.

<sup>141</sup> IV [8], 5, 4: *quamvis in communibus rei publicae bonis*; 20, 1.

<sup>142</sup> V [9], 18, 1.

<sup>143</sup> V [9], 18, 5: *aurea illa saecula, quae non diu quondam Saturno rege vigerunt, nunc aeternis auspiciis Iovis et Herculis renascuntur.*

<sup>144</sup> IV [8], 20, 3.

<sup>145</sup> IV [8], 20, 5.

<sup>146</sup> IV [8], 20, 5.

<sup>147</sup> IV [8], 1, 4; 3, 3: *aucta atque augenda res publica*; 3, 5; 10, 4; 20, 3-5.

<sup>148</sup> IV [8], 20, 3.

<sup>149</sup> E.g.: Claud., *Stilich.* (a. 400), III, 159-160: *nec terminus unquam/Romanae dicioni erit.*

<sup>150</sup> ZUGRAVU 2019, 234-236.

benefici delle riforme militari di Gallieno e di Diocleziano<sup>151</sup>. Essa era temperata dal realismo politico. Ciò è provato persino dagli eventi contemporanei al nostro anonimo: dopo la conclusione della pace vittoriosa con i Persiani nel 298 o 299, l'Impero non aveva formato una provincia al di là del Tigri, ma si era limitato a creare “un *glacis protecteur*” (Michel Christol) formato da più regioni (*Transtigritanae regiones*) semiautonome, clientelari, controllate militarmente attraverso lo stanziamento di truppe; come rilevato da Michał Marciak riprendendo la terminologia in uso presso il breviatore Festo nel IV secolo, dal punto di vista giuridico esse si trovavano nella condizione di *dicio*, non di *dominium*<sup>152</sup>. Dunque, la sovranità e il controllo militare di un territorio situato *extra fines* non equivale all'esistenza di una provincia, anche se, come diceva nel 289 un altro oratore, Mamertino, l'Impero ha come confini soltanto quelli dell'esercito romano (*probasti Romani imperii nullum esse terminum nisi qui tuorum esset armorum?*)<sup>153</sup>; l'organizzazione di una provincia (*ius provinciae*)<sup>154</sup> è molto più complessa, in quanto presuppone strutture amministrativo-fiscali, socio-economiche, giuridiche ecc.<sup>155</sup>. Invece, nell'ultimo decennio del III secolo, l'Impero rimane stabile sui confini naturali, rifatti e consolidati dai tetrarchi, da cui è esclusa una provincia situata al di là del Danubio; questo aspetto è fermamente sottolineato, a un anno dal *Panegyricus dictus Constantii Caesari*, dall'oratore Eumenio in *Pro instaurandis scholis oratio: Nam quid ego alarum et cohortium castra percenseam toto Rheni et Histri et Euphrates limite restituta?*<sup>156</sup>. Siamo qui all'origine di un cambiamento di grande rilevanza nell'ideologia imperiale, che si sarebbe sviluppato nel corso del IV secolo, cioè quella dell'*imperium restitutum: finibus suis Romanum imperium restitutum*, diceva Eutropio riguardo alla finalità delle azioni di Giuliano nella Gallia<sup>157</sup>; è un Impero difensivo, statico, immobile territorialmente — *stetit immobilis*, per riprendere un'espressione delle *Res gestae* ammiane<sup>158</sup> —, mentre i territori che si trovavano *trans flumen Histrum* non erano sotto giurisdizione romana (*Romanum ius*)<sup>159</sup>.

<sup>151</sup> ZECCHINI 2008, 203–204.

<sup>152</sup> Aur. Vict., Caes., 39, 36–37: *Adeo uictor ut, ni Valerius, cuius nutu omnia gerebantur, incertum qua causa, abnuisset, Romani fasces in prouinciam nouam ferrentur. Verum pars terrarum tamen nobis utilior quaesita*; Fest., 14, 5: *ac Diocletiani temporibus... pace facta Mesopotamia est restituta et supra ripam Tigridis limes est reformatus, ita ut quinque gentium trans Tigridem constitutarum **dicionem** adsequeremur*; 25, 3: */Persae/ Mesopotamiam cum Transtigritanis regionibus reddiderunt*; Amm., XVII, 5, 6; XVIII, 9, 2; XXV, 7, 8–9; CHRISTOL 1997, 199; FELE 2009, 234–235, 432–433, 314; ROBERTO 2014, 123–124; CASELLA 2017, 41–42; MARCIAK 2017, 141–154, 159–160, 248–252, 266–267, 429–431; KIENAST, ECK, HEIL 2017, 257–259, 272, 274. <sup>153</sup> II [10], 7, 2.

<sup>154</sup> Fest., 11, 5: *prouinciae ius... inpositum est*.

<sup>155</sup> Tac., Ann., XV, 6, 4: *se tributa ac leges et pro umbra regis Romanum ius uictis inpositurum*; Symm., Or. II, 31: «*Dicam senatui plebique Romanae: Fasces in prouincias nouas mittite, trans Rhenam iudices praeperate*».

<sup>156</sup> III [11], 18, 4.

<sup>157</sup> Eutr., X, 14, 2.

<sup>158</sup> Amm., XV, 4, 7; XVI, 12, 3; XXIII, 5, 8.

<sup>159</sup> Amm., XXIX, 6, 2.

## VI. Conclusioni

L'analisi interna del testo del panegirico del 297 e lo studio comparativo con altre fonti ci conducono all'idea che il sintagma *Dacia restituta* non si riferisce all'ex-provincia della Dacia sulla sponda sinistra del Danubio, ma alla Dacia sud-danubiana, riconsolidata da Diocleziano dopo che aveva attraversato momenti difficili provocati da attacchi esterni. Perché non è stata recuperata la Dacia settentrionale? Oltre all'attuazione della strategia difensiva di cui parlavo, ci possono essere altre molteplici motivazioni. Ma, se si tratta di trovare una risposta accettabile nello stesso panegirico che abbiamo qui studiato, allora il paragone con la *Britannia restituta* può essere accolto, crediamo, con favore: la Dacia di là del Danubio aveva perso non solo il ruolo strategico avuto una volta, ma anche qualsiasi importanza economica, fiscale, demografica, ecc., a differenza della Britannia, come risulta in maniera particolarmente esplicita dalle osservazioni dell'anonimo: *Et sane non, sicut Britanniae nomen unum, ita mediocris erat iacturae rei publicae terra tanto frugum ubere, tanto laeta numero pastionum, tot metallorum fluens rivis, tot vectigalibus quaestuosa, tot accincta portibus, tanto immensa circuitu*<sup>160</sup>.

## Bibliografia

- ALLARD, V. 2006. Aurélien, *restitutor orbis et triumphator*. In: M.-H. Quet (dir.), *La « Crise » de l'Empire romain de Marc Aurèle à Constantin. Mutations, continuités, ruptures*, avec un préface d'Andrea Giardina et des conclusions de Michel Christol, 149–171. Paris.
- ASSENMAKER, P. 2015. 'Roma restituta'. La rappresentazione dei fondamenti politici e religiosi della rivolta contro Nerone nelle coniazioni monetarie anonime del 68 d.C. In: J.-L. Ferrary, J. Scheid (a cura di), *Il princeps romano: autocrate o magistrato? Fattori giuridici e fattori sociali del potere imperiale da Augusto a Commodo*, 203–238. Pavia.
- BAKKER, L. 1993. Raetien unter Postumus. Das Siegesdenkmal einer Juthungenschlacht im Jahre 260 n. Chr. aus Augsburg. *Germania* 71, 369–386.
- BARBATI, S. 2014. Sui presupposti di applicazione e la natura giuridica degli effetti del *posliminium*. Estratto da: *Atti dell'Accademia Romanistica Costantiniana, XX, Convegno internazionale. Roma e barbari nella tarda antichità (Spello, 16–18 giugno 2011)*, a cura di Stefano Giglio, 587–813. Roma.
- BARNES, T. 2014. *Constantine. Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire*. Hoboken.
- BARTOLUSSI, L. 2004. L'ascesa di Odenato a Palmira e il conflitto con l'Impero Sasanide. *Rivista storia dell'Antiquità* 43, 223–242.
- BENEA, D. 1996. *Dacia sud-vestică în secolele III-IV*, I. Timișoara.
- BENEA, D. 2012. In Regard to a Possible Abandonment of the province of Dacia under Gallienus. *Acta Musei Napocensis* 47-48/I, 2010–2011 (2012), 205–218.

---

<sup>160</sup> IV [8], 11, 1.



- BENEA, D. 2013. *Istoria Banatului în Antichitate*. Timișoara.
- BIRLEY, A.R. 2005. *The Roman Government of Britain*. Oxford.
- BIRLEY, A.R. 2007. Britain during the third century crisis. In: O. Hekster, G. de Kleijn, D. Slootjes (eds.), *Crises and the Roman Empire. Proceedings of the Seventh Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Nijmegen, June 20-24, 2006)*, 45–55. Leiden–Boston.
- BONDOC, D. 2009. *The Roman Rule to the North of the Lower Danube during the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Period*. Cluj-Napoca.
- BÖRM, H., W. HAVENER 2012. Octavians Rechtsstellung im Januar 27 v. Chr. und das Problem der „Übertragung“ der *res publica*. *Historia* 61/2, 202–220.
- CAMODECA, G. 2017. La munificenza di Adriano: costruzioni e restauri di opere pubbliche nelle città d'Italia. *Newsletter di Archaeologia CISA* 8, 23–46.
- CAÑIZAR PALACIOS, J.L. 2010. *Populos y provinciales: la población bajoimperial y la inscriptio de las constituciones del Codex Theodosianus*. *Veleia* 27, 285–303.
- CASELLA, M. 2017. *Galerio. Il tetrarca infine tollerante*. Roma.
- CASEY, P.J. 2005. *Carausius and Allectus. The British Usurpers*, with translations of the texts by R.S.O. TOMLIN. London.
- CHRISTOL, M. 1997. *L'Empire romain du III<sup>e</sup> siècle. Histoire politique (de 192, mort de Commode, à 325, concile de Nicée)*, 2<sup>e</sup> tirage. Paris.
- CHRYSOS, E. 1992. Von der Räumung der Dacia Traiana zur Entstehung der Gothia. In: *Bonner Jahrbücher des Rhenischen Landesmuseums in Bonn* 192, 175–193.
- CIL = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Berlin.
- CONTI, S. 2004. *Die Inschriften Kaiser Julians*. Stuttgart.
- de CARLO, A. 2002-2003. Dediche imperiali da Liternum: a Traiano, *restitutor Italiae*, del 113–116 e Caracalla del 211–212. *Annali di archaeologia e storia antica*, N.S., 9–10, 293–301.
- DAGUET-GAGEY, A. 2004. Septime Sévère et ses fils, Restitutores Urbis: la personnalisation des mérites impériaux. *Revue Numismatique* 60, 175–199.
- DALLA ROSA, A. 2015. L'aureus del 28 a.C. e i poteri triumvirali di Ottaviano. In: T.M. Lucchelli, F. Rohr Vio (a cura di), *Viri militares. Rappresentazione e propaganda tra Repubblica e Principato*, 171–200. Trieste.
- DIACONESCU, T. 2003. *Etnogeneza românilor. The Romanian's Ethnogenesis. L'Ethnogenèse du peuple roumain*, Iași.
- EDCS = *Epigraphische Datenbank Clauss-Slaby*.
- EDR = *Epigraphic Database Roma*.
- EHD = *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg*.
- ELKINS, N.T. 2017. *The Image of Political Power in the Reign of Nerva, AD 96–98*. Oxford–New York.
- FELE, M.L. 2009. *Il Breviarium di Rufio Festo*, testo, traduzione e commento filologico con una introduzione sull'autore e l'opera, Hildesheim.
- FUDULI, L., G. SALAMONE 2015. *Hadrianus restitutor Siciliae*. Documenti monetali ed evidenza archeologica. *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Antiquité* 127/1, 210–215.
- GALLETIER, É. 1949. *Panegyriques Latins, I (I–V)*, texte établi et traduit par Édouard Galletier. Paris.
- GUDEA, N. 1974. Befestigungen am Banater Donau-Limes aus der Zeit der Tetrarchie. In: *Actes du IX<sup>e</sup> Congrès international d'études sur les frontières romaines*, 173–180. Bucarest–Köln.

- HURLET, F., B. MINEO 2009a. Introduction. *Res publica restituta*. Le pouvoir et ses représentations à Rome sous le principat d'Auguste. In: F. Hurlet, B. Mineo (sous la direction de), *Le Principat d'Auguste. Réalités et représentations du pouvoir. Autour de la Res publica restituta. Actes du colloque de l'Université de Nantes, 1<sup>er</sup>-2 juin 2007*, 9–22. Rennes.
- HURLET, F., B. MINEO 2009b. *Le Principat d'Auguste. Réalités et représentations du pouvoir. Autour de la Res publica restituta. Actes du colloque de l'Université de Nantes, 1<sup>er</sup>-2 juin 2007*. Rennes.
- ILIESCU, V. 1970. *Fontes Historiae Dacoromane II*, 78–87. București.
- JUDGE, E. A. 1974. "Res Publica Restituta". A Modern Illusion? In: J.A.S. Evans (ed.), *Polis and Imperium. Studies in Honour of Edward Togo Salmon*, 279–311. Toronto.
- KIENAST, D., W. ECK, M. HEIL 2017. *Römische Kaisertabelle. Grundzüge einer römischer Kronologie*, 6., überarbeitete Auflage. Darmstadt.
- KOVÁCS, P. 2011. Sarmatian Campaigns During the First Tetrarchy. *Anados* 10, 143–154.
- KÖNIG, I. 1997. Die Postumus-Inschrift aus Augsburg. *Historia* 46/3, 341–354.
- LANGE, C. H. 2009. *Res Publica Constituta. Actium, Apollo and the Accomplishment of the Triumviral Assignement*. Leiden–Boston.
- LASSANDRO, D. 2000. *Panegirici Latini*, a cura di Domenico Lassandro e Giuseppe Micunco. Torino.
- LE DOZE, Ph. 2015. *Res Publica Restituta. Réflexions sur la restauration augustéenne. Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz XXVI*, 79–108.
- LEADBETTER, B. 2009. *Galerius and the Will of Diocletian*. London–New York.
- LICANDRO, O. 2015. 'Restitutio rei publicae' tra teoria e prassi politica. Augusto e l'eredità di Cicerone. Estratto dagli *Annali del Seminario Giuridico dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo (AUPA)* LVIII, 59–130.
- LICHTENBERGER, A. 2011. *Severus Pius Augustus. Studien zur sakralen Repräsentation und Rezeption der Herrschaft des Septimius Severus und seiner Familie (193-211 n. Chr.)*. Leiden–Boston.
- L'HUILLIER, M.-C. 1992. *L'empire des mots. Orateurs gaulois et empereurs romains 3<sup>e</sup> et 4<sup>e</sup> siècles*. Besançon.
- MADGEARU, A. 2008. *Istoria militară a Daciei post-romane, 275-376*. Târgoviște.
- MADGEARU, A. 2011. *Istoria militară a Daciei post-romane, 275-614*. Târgoviște.
- MADGEARU, A. 2012. *Împăratul Galerius*. Târgoviște.
- MARCIAK, M. 2017. *Sophene, Gorgyene, and Adiabene. The Regna Minora of Northern Mesopotamia Between East and West*. Leiden–Boston.
- MAROTTA, V. 2015. Il problema dei laeti. Fonti e storiografia. In: F. Botta, L. Loschiavo (a cura di), *Civitas, Iura, Arma. Organizzazioni militari, istituzioni giuridiche e strutture sociali alle origini dell'Europa (secoli III-VIII)*. *Atti del Seminario Internazionale Cagliari, 5-6 ottobre 2012*, 117–157. Lecce.
- MASTINO, A. 1986. Orbiß, kósmoß, oíkouménh: aspetti spaziali dell'idea di impero universale da Augusto a Teodosio. In: *Popoli e spazio romano tra diritto e profezia. atti del 3. Seminario internazionale di studi storici „Da Roma alla terza Roma”, 21-23 aprile 1983, Roma, Italia*, 63–162. Napoli.
- MICUNCO, G. 2000. *Panegirici Latini*, a cura di Domenico Lassandro e Giuseppe Micunco. Torino.
- MINEO, B. 2009. La *Res publica restituta* livienne: un pari sur l'avenir. In: F. Hurlet, B. Mineo, *Le Principat d'Auguste. Réalités et représentations du pouvoir. Autour de la Res publica restituta. Actes du colloque de l'Université de Nantes, 1<sup>er</sup>-2 juin 2007*, 295–308. Rennes.
- MÜLLER-RETTIG, B. 2008. *Panegyrici Latini. Lobreden auf römische Kaiser, Lateinisch und deutsch, Eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentar von Brigitte Müller-Rettig, I, Von Diokletianus bis Konstantin*. Darmstadt.

- NIXON, C.E.V. 1990. The Use of Past by the Gallic Panegyrist. In: G. Clarke, B. Croke, A. Emmett Nobbs, R. Mortley (eds.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, 1–36. Rushcutters Bay.
- NIXON, C. E. V., B. SAYLOR RODGERS 1994/2015. *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors. The Panegyrici Latini*, introduction, translation, ad historical commentary with the Latin text of R. A. B. Mynors. Berkeley–Los Angeles–Oxford.
- OLARU, O. 2017. *L'imperatore prigioniero. Valeriano, la Persia e la disfatta di Edessa*. Bari–Roma.
- PEACHIN, M. 1990. *Roman Imperial Titulature and Chronology, A.D. 235–284*. Amsterdam.
- PETOLESCU, C.C. 1995. *Scurtă istorie a Daciei romane*. București.
- PETOLESCU, C.C. 2000. *Dacia și Imperiul Roman. De la Burebista până la sfârșitul Antichității*. București.
- PETOLESCU, C.C. 2010. *Dacia - un mileniu de istorie*. București.
- PETOLESCU, C.C. 2018. *La romanité daco-mésienne et l'ethnogenèse des Roumains*. Bucarest.
- PISO, I. 2018. Das verhängnisvolle Jahr 262 und die *amissio Daciae*. In: *Proceedings of the First International Roman ans Late Antiquity Thrace Conference "Cities, Territories and Identities"* (Plovdiv, 3<sup>rd</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> October 2016), 427–440. Sofia.
- RIC = *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. London.
- RICH, W., J.H.C. WILLIAMS 1999, 169–213. *Leges et iura p.R. restituit: a new aureus of Octavian and the settlement of 28–27 B.C. Numismatic chronicle* 159, 169–213.
- ROBERTO, U. 2014. *Diocleziano*. Roma.
- ROTHENHÖFER, P., J. HOLLAENDER 2012. Eine Inschrift Kaiser Julians aus der Germania secunda. *Bonner Jahrbücher des Rhenischen Landesmuseums in Bonn* 212, 153–160.
- SABBAH, G. 1984. De la Rhétorique à la communication politique: les Panégyriques latins. *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* 43, 363–388.
- SESTON, W. 1946. *Dioclétien et la tétrarchie, 1, Guerres et réformes (284–300)*. Paris.
- SOMMER, C. S. 2014. „... a barbaris occupatae ...”. Bezahlte Freunde? Zur Rolle der Germanen in Süddeutschland in den Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Gallischem Sonderreich und Rom. In: P. Henrich (Hrsg.), *Der Limes in Raetien, Ober- und Niedergermanien vom 1. Bis 4. Jahrhundert. 7. Kolloquium der Deutschen Limeskommission*, 35–51. Darmstadt.
- SOUTHERN, P. 2008. *Empress Zenobia. Palmyras's Rebel Queen*. London–New York.
- ThLL = *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*.
- TODISCO, E. 2007. La *res publica restituta* e i *Fasti Praenestini*. In: *Epigrafia e territorio. Politica e società*, VIII, 341–358. Bari.
- URSO, G. 2019. Alcune considerazioni sulle origini del principato in Cassio Dione. *Revue des études anciennes* 121/2, 485–493.
- WARE, C. 2018. Constantine, the Tetrarchy, and the Emperor Augustus. In: D.W.P. Burgersdijk, A.J. Ross (eds.), *Imagining Emperors in the Later Roman Empire*, 113–136. Leiden–Boston.
- WATSON, A. 2008. *Aurelian and the Third Century*. London–New York.
- WEISSER, B. 1998. Roma mit dem Palladion. Caracalla als „Restitutor Urbis” von Byzantion. In: U. Peter (ed.), *Stephanos nomismatikos. Edith Schönert-Geiss zum 65. Geburtstag*, 649–659. Berlin.
- WHITAKER, C. W. 1994. *Frontiers of the Roman Empire. A Social and Economic Study*. Baltimore–London.
- WIENAND, J. 2015. Deo et domino: Aurelian, Serdica und die Restitutio orbis. *Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte*, 65, 63–99.
- ZAHARIADE, M. 2014–2015. The *Dacia Ripensis* section in *Notitia Dignitatum* (XLII). *Thraco-Dacica*, S.N., 6–7 (29–30) (2014–2015), 119–154.

- ZAWADZKI, T. 1973. L'idée de la reconquête de la Dacie. *Dacoromania* 1, 65–68.
- ZECCHINI, G. 2008. Utopie militari tardoantiche? In: C. Carsana, M.T. Schettino (a cura di), *Utopia e utopie nel pensiero storico antico*, 195–208. Roma.
- ZUGRAVU, N. 2006. De nouveau sur les *provinciales*. À partir d'une idée de Demetrio S. Marin. *Classica et Christiana* 1, 89–98.
- ZUGRAVU, N. 2019. *Termini huius imperii*: The Frontiers of the Empire in the *Panegyrici Latini* (3rd–4th Centuries AD) – Between Propaganda and Reality. In: Lucrețiu Mihailescu-Bîrliba (ed.), *Limes, Economy and Society in the Lower Danubian Roman provinces*, 219–252. Leuven–Paris–Bristol CT.



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## Die Antike Biographie als Hintergrund des Evangeliums

Milan KOSTREŠEVIĆ<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** *This essay continues the critique of perceived evangelical exceptionalism by providing a detailed study of the genre of biography in antiquity. While some scholars claim that the Gospels were a literary anomaly without clear precedents, we instead claim that they are an innovative variation of the classical biographical tradition. By classifying the Gospels into this generic classification, we work to establish an access to this literature that is historically grounded and does not seek the presumed religious ‘community’ of the author in the rhetorical framework of their writings.*

**Zusammenfassung.** *Der vorliegende Aufsatz führt die Kritik des wahrgenommenen Exzeptionalismus der Evangelien fort, indem er eine ausführliche Untersuchung des Genres der Biographie in der Antike bietet. Während einige Gelehrte behaupten, dass die Evangelien eine literarische Anomalie ohne klare Präzedenzfälle waren, behaupten wir stattdessen, dass sie eine innovative Variation der klassischen biographischen Tradition sind. Durch die Einordnung der Evangelien in diese Gattungsklassifizierung arbeiten wir daran, einen Zugang zu dieser Literatur zu etablieren, der historisch begründet ist und nicht die vermutete religiöse „Gemeinschaft“ des Autors im rhetorischen Rahmen ihrer Schriften sucht.*

**Rezumat.** *Prezentul eseu continuă critica percepției Excepționalismului Evangheliilor, oferind un studiu detaliat al genului biografiei din antichitate. În timp ce unii savanți susțin că Evangheliile au fost o anomalie literară fără un precedent clar, noi afirmăm în schimb, că acestea sunt o variație inovatoare a tradiției biografice clasice. Prin clasificarea Evangheliilor în acest gen, încercăm să stabilim un acces la această literatură, care este întemeiată istoric și care nu caută presupusa „comunitate” religioasă a autorului în cadrul retoric a scrierilor sale.*

**Schlüsselwörter:** Evangelium, Biographie, Xenophon, Äsop, Alexanderroman.

Wir beginnen mit einer kurzen Besprechung des Genres der Biographie, gefolgt von einer Probe der Entwicklung der klassischen biographischen Tradition in der Antike. Auf dieser Grundlage wird dann die Bahn einer Lebensform beschrieben, die wir als *subversive Biographie* bezeichnen – eine Art von *Leben*, die die Fähigkeiten einer Figur hervorhebt, die in gewissem Masse ausserhalb der herrschenden Kultur zu stehen scheint. Anstelle einer Chronik der militärischen Verfolgung eines grossen Generals haben wir beispielsweise das Leben von

---

<sup>1</sup> Theologische Fakultät der Universität Bern; email: milan.kostresevic@gmail.com.

Äsop, das die Geschichte eines listigen und oft exzentrischen Sklaven erzählt, oder den *Alexanderroman*, der den findigen und klugen Herrscher als einen Antihelden darstellt. Wir verstehen die Schriften über Jesus im Sinne dieser Erzählweise, die alternativ zur Erzählweise klassischer antiker Biografien seine Weisheit, Bereitschaft und Wunder als Strategie zum Hervorbringen von Autorität und Erzielung eines Vorteils bei der Herausforderung mächtigerer Persönlichkeiten unterstreicht. *Subversive Biographie* ist charakteristisch für eine Untergattung, das die für den *autonomen Pol* charakteristischen Freiheiten hat. Anders ausgedrückt: Jesus ist ein Aussenseiter, der gezwungen ist, seine Fähigkeiten einzusetzen, um erfolgreich zu sein.

### Der Umfang der Biographie

Wo wir heute von *Biographien* reden, benutzten die Alten eher den Begriff *Leben* – auf griechisch *βίαι*, auf lateinisch *Vitae*. An sich ist der Unterschied in der Terminologie scheinbar unbedeutend, aber bei der Verwendung kann die Gleichung zwischen den deutschen und griechischen oder lateinischen Wörtern irreführend sein. *Biographie* in der heutigen Praxis deutet auf ein genau definiertes Genre hin, mit Normen und Konventionen, die weithin verstanden werden. Ein Biograph bietet eine *Cradle-to-Grave-Erzählung* des Lebens einer Person (das Werk ist explizit auf einen bestimmten Zeitraum in ihrem Leben beschränkt), und beansprucht, die Ereignisse, an denen das Subjekt teilgenommen hat, genau zu beschreiben, oft zusammen mit Details ihres Charakters und ihrer Gedanken. Bei der Rekonstruktion der Psychologie oder des Innenlebens des Subjekts ist ein gewisses Mass an Erfindung erlaubt. Dies ist insbesondere in der Literatur dieser Sorte der Fall, die im letzten Jahrhundert hergestellt wurde. Zum Beispiel nach *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*: „A new movement emerged from 1918, known as the new biography...in which biography was treated as an imaginative art in which invented dialogues, interior monologues and other techniques borrowed from the novel were employed... The 20th century also saw the emergence of psychobiography, informed by psychoanalytic theories of development, and of sensational biographies exposing the sexual and other personal secrets of famous figures.”<sup>2</sup>

Trotz dieser Neuerungen haben alle diese Arten bestimmte, leicht erkennbare Konventionen – sogar den Anspruch, das Leben des Subjekts wahrheitsgetreu darzustellen – und bieten Beweise und Quellen, um die Geschichte zu bestätigen. Ebenso ist die Grenze zwischen Biographie und anderen Erzählgattungen wie Geschichte oder Roman typischerweise klar. Wenn dies nicht der Fall ist, ist man sich gewöhnlich bewusst, absichtlichen Experimenten oder Überschreitungen zu folgen, die die standardmässigen generischen Marker hervorrufen, selbst wenn sie gestört werden.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Siehe: BALDICK 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Siehe z.B. WÄSTBERG 2010.

Der Fall mit dem alten βίοι ist ganz anders. Wie Christopher Pelling in dem Artikel zur griechischen Biographie in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* bemerkt: „Biography in antiquity was not a rigidly defined genre. Bios, ‘life,’ or bioi, ‘lives,’ could span a range of types of writing, from Plutarch’s *cradle-to-grave-accounts* of statesmen to Chamaeleon’s extravagant stories about literary figures... Consequently the boundaries with neighbouring genres – the encomium, the biographical novel on the model of Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*, the historical monograph on the deeds of a great man like Alexander the Great – are blurred and sometimes artificial.”<sup>4</sup>

Wie kann man zum Beispiel den offenbar phantastischen *Alexanderroman* klassifizieren, der ein historisches Thema hat, aber in vielerlei Hinsicht ein Fiktionswerk ist, wie die anonyme Geschichte des Apollonius-Königs von Tyrus, der gewöhnlich als Roman betrachtet wird? Oder was machen wir aus dem Leben von Homer, das Plutarch zugeschrieben wird, das einem Märchen stark ähnelt? Die synoptischen Evangelien mögen wie Biographien erscheinen, aber einige Gelehrte haben sie eher als Geschichte, als eine Form der apokalyptischen Erzählung oder oft als *sui generis-Literatur* in einem Genre für sich allein definiert.<sup>5</sup> Alle diese Werke sind in gewissem Sinne *Leben*, aber es kann schwierig sein zu spezifizieren, was sie sonst noch gemeinsam haben können, oder beispielsweise mit Plutarchs *Parallelbiographien* oder von Diogenes Laertius *Leben der Philosophen*.

Angesichts dieser Vielfalt von biografischen „Typen“ kann es fruchtlos erscheinen, nach Merkmalen zu suchen, die dazu führen könnten, dass alte βίοι (oder Vitae) kohärenter eingestuft werden könnten. Einige Elemente fallen jedoch auf. Einige βίοι zum Beispiel unterstreichen die Tugenden ihrer Protagonisten. Es handelt sich bei diesen Themen häufig um grosse Staatsmänner oder Militärhelden, die Gerechtigkeit und Mut beweisen. Ebenso gibt es Biographien von brillanten Denkern und Schriftstellern wie Philosophen und Dichtern, deren Leben als Modell dienen kann, manchmal sogar im negativen Sinne (wenn der Protagonist für Laster berüchtigt war). Andere verleihen ihren Protagonisten aussergewöhnliche Fähigkeiten anderer Art – sozusagen „Supermächte“ – die man als „magisch“ oder „wunderwirkend“ bezeichnen könnte. Dieser letztere Typ unterstreicht oft

---

<sup>4</sup> Vgl. PELLING 2003, 241; HÄGG 2012 wundert sich über das Gattungsetikett, das man für die *Cyropaedia* verwenden könnte, und stellt fest, dass das Hauptthema, ob wir es nun historische (oder biographische oder philosophische) Romane, romantisierte (oder fiktive) Biographie, Spiegel der Fürsten nennen, Führung ist und Regierung, nicht das Leben des historischen Königs Kyros des Grossen von Persien. (51).

<sup>5</sup> Eine vollständige Diskussion mit ausführlicher Bibliographie findet sich unter Collins: *Is Mark’s Gospel a Life of Jesus?*, besonders. 1–16; Collins selbst argumentiert, dass Markus eine apokalyptische historische Monographie ist” (27). Ähnlich, VORSTER / BOTHA 1999, 131 beschreiben die so genannte „Kerygma-Theorie“, wonach „das Evangelium etwas sehr Einzigartiges ist“ und „keine literarischen Parallelen vor seinem Ursprung und ausserhalb des Kanons“. Basierend auf dem historischen Rahmen von 1Kor 15, 3–7; 11, 23–25, Apg 10, 37–4; 13, 23–31 (unter anderen Passagen), argumentieren sie, dass „das Evangeliumsgenre nicht ein Produkt der literarischen Tätigkeit von Markus ist, sondern... der apostolischen Verkündigung Jesu woraus es entstand.“ Siehe auch: BUTLMANN 1994, 371–374; KOESTER 1990, 26–31; BURRIDGE 2004 und BURRIDGE 2006, besonders 31–49.

auch den Witz des Protagonisten, der durch kluge Schlichen und weise Sprüche, manchmal in Form von Gleichnissen, seine Gegner überrumpelt und die Tische darauf dreht. In einer solchen Art und Weise von Leben zeigt sich eher eine Figur, die in gewisser Masse ein Aussenseiter oder ein Randmitglied der Gesellschaft ist – oft einer niedrigen Klasse oder einer unterdrückten Minderheitengruppe – und daher ein sozialer Aussenseiter, der sich gegen die mächtigeren Menschen behaupten muss, denen er (gelegentlich sie) begegnet.<sup>6</sup>

Diese letzteren Elemente dienen in Kombination dazu, eine bestimmte erzählerische Form oder Strategie in der Biographie zu identifizieren, die wir als *subversiv* bezeichnen, im Gegensatz zu der bürgerlichen Tradition der Biographie, die sich eher auf mächtige und angesehene Individuen konzentriert, wie die von Plutarch, Cornelius Nepos und Suetonius verfassten. Mit anderen Worten, diese Form der *subversiven Biographie* weist charakteristische Merkmale auf, die sie in der alten biographischen Tradition von der vorherrschenden bürgerlichen Vielfalt unterscheiden. Während die bürgerliche Biographie ein Genre ist, das um die vorherrschenden sozialen Werte organisiert ist, die selbst bei deren Missachtung (z.B. bei unvollkommenen oder böswilligen Untertanen) vorausgesetzt werden, gibt eine subversive Biographie denjenigen eine Stimme, die sich am Rande der Macht befinden, und diese mehr oder weniger subtil untergraben oder die konventionelle Ideologie herausfordern.<sup>7</sup>

Um präziser zu sein: Eine solche Unterscheidung, wenn sie tatsächlich für das alte βίος gilt, entwickelt und verändert sich im Laufe der Zeit und unterscheidet sich an verschiedenen Orten. Wie Tzvetan Todorov im *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage* erklärt, gibt es keine Gattungen in Isolation: sie sind immer im Zusammenhang einer Konstellation verwandter Formen definiert und stehen in einer dynamischen Spannung zu diesen.<sup>8</sup> Darüber hinaus werden diese Formen nicht *a priori* gegeben, sondern erscheinen historisch; der russische formalistische Kritiker Boris Tomashevsky bestand darauf, dass eine eindeutige logische Klassifizierung der Genres nicht möglich ist. Ihre Abgrenzung ist immer historisch,

---

<sup>6</sup> Ein Beispiel ist das anonyme Leben von Äsop (siehe unten). Die Biographie der weiblichen Charaktere finden Sie in den sogenannten *Lives of the Harlots*, einer Sammlung christlicher Leben, die den Übergang von extremer Verkommenheit zu beispielhafter Frömmigkeit und Reue veranschaulichen.

<sup>7</sup> Es gibt natürlich auch andere Möglichkeiten, antike Biographien zu klassifizieren, deren Vielfalt in der Übersicht in Pelling, „Plutarch’s Adaptation of his Source-Material” 241, deutlich wird. Konstan und Walsh erklären: Man kann sie in Leben von Dichtern sortieren, Philosophen, politische Führer, Wundertäter oder Heilige; oder behandeln sie wieder als Quasi-Geschichten oder Romane oder Encomia. Wir stellen die Legitimität oder Nützlichkeit dieser alternativen Kategorien nicht in Frage. Dennoch neigen wir dazu, das spezifisch biographische Element im antiken Leben als zwei polare Formen anzunehmen, die von den beiden Traditionen inspiriert sind, die in Xenophons beiden bahnbrechenden Werken eingeführt oder zumindest kristallisiert wurden und vor allem durch ihre Beziehung zur Dominante gekennzeichnet sind kulturelle Werte, von denen der eine die traditionellen Tugenden bekräftigt, der andere sie sozusagen von der Seitenlinie aus fotografiert und besonders geeignet ist, das Leben und manchmal die Lehren von Menschen am Rande der Gesellschaft zu erzählen.

<sup>8</sup> DUCROT, TODOROV 1972, 193–197.



das heisst, sie ist nur für einen bestimmten Moment der Geschichte richtig.<sup>9</sup> Dennoch glauben wir, dass die Unterscheidung von der klassischen Epoche bis in die Spätantike stabil blieb oder zumindest relevant war. Im Folgenden werden wir die Konturen der bürgerlichen Tradition prüfen und dann die parallele Entwicklung der subversiven Form von βίοι, die wir vorschlagen, aufzeigen.<sup>10</sup>

### **Xenophon und die klassische Tradition**

Zwei Werke, die als Protobiographien bezeichnet werden können, stammen aus dem 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. und sind von Xenophon: ein Essay über den spartanischen König Agesilaus und *Memorabilia*. Zusammengenommen können sie als die Quellen der beiden Traditionen betrachtet werden, die wir oben skizziert haben. Der Agesilaus wird allgemein als *Encomium* bezeichnet und er beginnt mit folgenden Worten: „aber es muss trotzdem versucht werden; denn es wäre nicht richtig, wenn ein Mann nicht einmal unzureichend gelobt werden würde, nur weil er vollkommen gut war“ (1.1). Xenophon erwähnt Agesilaus' herausragende Herkunft und die Pracht der Stadt, über die er herrschte. In Bezug auf seine militärischen Fähigkeiten bekräftigt Xenophon: „Wie kann man besser zeigen, was für ein General er war, als zu beschreiben, was er getan hat?“ (1.9). Während seiner Einfälle in das Perserreich ist Agesilaus klug genug, um zu erkennen, dass er seine Armee nicht in einem verwüsteten Land aufrechterhalten kann, und so fördert er seine Ziele nicht allein durch Gewalt, sondern auch durch Sanftmut, Bevorzugung der lokalen Bevölkerung und sogar Bereitstellung von Vorkehrungen für verwaiste Kinder: „Er befahl seinen Soldaten häufig, die Eroberten nicht als Verbrecher zu bestrafen, sondern als Menschen zu schützen“ (1.21). Xenophon erzählt weitere Triumphe Agesilaus' (und beschönigt einige dessen dornigeren Verstrickungen), daraufhin wendet er sich von dessen Taten ab, die keinen weiteren Beweis erfordern, und „die Tugend in seiner Seele manifestieren, durch die er all diese Dinge erreicht hat“ (3.1). Er zeigt Agesilaus' Frömmigkeit, seine Gerechtigkeit in Geldangelegenheiten, seine ausserordentliche Zurückhaltung in Bezug auf die Freuden von Essen und Trinken, Hitze und Kälte, seinen Mut und seine Weisheit, seine Liebe zu seiner Stadt, seine Höflichkeit und seinen guten Ruf und seinen bescheidenen Lebensstil. Xenophon schliesst mit folgender Bemerkung: „Niemand darf sich vorstellen, dass dies eine Begräbnisrede ist, da er nach seinem Tod gelobt wird, denn es ist viel mehr ein *Encomium*“, sagt Xenophon das, was über ihn gesagt wurde, als

---

<sup>9</sup> TOMASHEVSKY 1978, 55; BORDWELL 1989, 147.

<sup>10</sup> Obwohl die beiden Arten von Biographien nicht den Status von formalen Genres erlangten, argumentiere ich, dass sie erkennbare Optionen innerhalb der biographischen Tradition darstellten. Ein modernes Beispiel ist die Unterscheidung innerhalb des Genres des Kriminalromanes zwischen der traditionellen Sleuth im Stil von Sherlock Holmes oder Agatha Christies Hercule Poirot und Miss. Marple und der hartgesottenen Version der amerikanischen Schriftsteller Dashiell Hammett und Raymond Chandler.

er noch lebte. *Encomium* bedeutet hier nicht eine einseitige Laudatio, sondern ein Lob, das verdient ist. Xenophon liefert seinen Lesern einen wahren Bericht über einen Mann, den er zutiefst respektiert, und sein Text kann plausibel als biographisch in seiner Absicht beschrieben werden.

Die Betonung des Charakters sollte die gesamte biographische Tradition prägen. Plutarch hatte zum Beispiel das Ziel, in seinen Leben vorbildliche Charaktermodelle zur Verfügung zu stellen.<sup>11</sup> Wie Xenophon vermutete Plutarch, dass der Charakter hauptsächlich in Handlungen offenbart wird, und er war sich der Notwendigkeit bewusst, historische Ereignisse als Hintergrund darzustellen. In dieser Hinsicht war Erzählung wichtig, und die Berichte von Plutarch mussten, wenn auch nicht eindeutig, dann zumindest plausibel sein. Plutarch war jedoch mehr darum bemüht, sich auf die kleinen Details zu konzentrieren, die die Persönlichkeit eines Charakters beleuchten könnten, anstatt grosse Kriege und öffentliche Ereignisse an sich zu erzählen: Genau dies unterschied Plutarch zufolge die Biographie von der Geschichtsschreibung. Plutarchs Verständnis von βίος kommt exemplarisch in folgender Aussage zum Ausdruck: „Wir schreiben Biographien, keine Geschichten ... Ein Kampf mit zehntausend Toten kann uns weniger vom Charakter eines Mannes erzählen als eine kurze Anekdote.“ Plutarch bemerkt in seinem *Leben von Galba*: „Jedes einzelne Ereignis genau zu beschreiben, ist Aufgabe der sachlichen (Pragmatik-) Geschichte, aber es ist auch nicht angebracht, dass ich all das erwähnte, was erwähnenswert ist, was die Caesaren taten und litten.“ (2.3) Christopher Pelling wirft die Frage auf: warum dieses Interesse am Charakter? Die Antwort ist, erklärt er (Perikles 1-2 zitierend), dass Plutarch „hofft, dass seine Leser von Beispielen der Tugend angeführt werden, um selbst besser zu werden“ und dementsprechend könnten sie durch die Fälle von Schlechtigkeit von Fehlverhalten abgehalten werden – so wie ihm dies dank seiner eigenen Studien selbst gelang (vgl. Aem. 1.1).<sup>12</sup> Ob Plutarch seinen eigenen einleitenden Absichtserklärungen in den Biographien als Ganzes immer gefolgt ist oder nicht, sein Projekt hat er klar in diesem Sinne verstanden.<sup>13</sup>

Auch Plutarch zeigt Agesilaus' moralische Qualitäten durch seine militärischen und politischen Erfolge. Als das zweite Jahr seines Krieges in Persien eine Runde machte, sagt

---

<sup>11</sup> Dazu ist anzumerken, dass ich vergleichbare Biographien von Juden wie Josephus und Philo der bürgerlichen Tradition zurechne. Philos Leben des Mose zum Beispiel zeigt Mose als göttlich sanktionierten König, Propheten, Philosophen, Gesetzgeber und Vorbild. Philo beschreibt seine Biographie über Abraham, Isaak und Jakob sogar als eine Studie über drei Figuren, die „nominell Männer, aber, wie ich bereits sagte, Tugenden sind“ *De Abrahamo* (= Abr.), 54–55. Für weitere Diskussionen über Philos biographische Behandlung bemerkenswerter Figuren. Siehe: NIEHOFF 1992, 54–83.

<sup>12</sup> Vgl. PELLING 1995, 143

<sup>13</sup> RUSSEL 1995 stellt fest: Bis ein Mann erwachsen ist, ist sein Verhaltensmuster normalerweise gut genug festgelegt, um Vorhersagen darüber zu treffen, wie er sich unter den meisten Umständen verhalten wird. Plutarchs normaler Ablauf beim Schreiben eines Lebens besteht darin, seine Schlussfolgerungen zu ziehen diesen Punkt ziemlich früh ... und rechtfertigen sie ihn dann mit der folgenden Erzählung (82).

Plutarch, dass die Nachricht seiner Fähigkeiten den persischen König erreichte und „eine wunderbare Meinung über seine Mässigkeit, Genügsamkeit und Mässigung herrschte“ (14.1); Plutarch würdigt auch sein Gerechtigkeitsgefühl und seine Bürgerpflicht, indem er die Interessen seiner Stadt über seinen persönlichen Ehrgeiz stellt (15,4–5).

Trotz seiner Konzentration auf den Charakter und der Bemühung, die Biographie gerade durch diese Betonung aus der Geschichte zu ziehen, fand es Plutarch, wie Nepos vor ihm, am besten oder effektivsten, die Ereignisse und Taten darzustellen, durch die die charakterliche Entwicklung seiner Protagonisten mehr oder weniger chronologisch dargestellt wird. Insofern ähnelt sein Leben historischen Erzählungen. Suetonius wurde vorgeworfen, den Abstand zwischen Geschichte und Biographie noch weiter vergrössert zu haben. So bestätigt auch Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, dass Suetonius, anstatt Biographie Geschichte werden zu lassen, Nicht-Geschichte geschrieben habe.<sup>14</sup> Für seine biographischen Darstellungen teilte Suetonius seine Erzählung in Unterabschnitte (Arten), unter denen Abschnitte über die Tugenden und Laster der verschiedenen Kaiser ohne Rücksicht auf die Chronologie enthalten waren.<sup>15</sup> Wenn Suetonius jedoch das Genre der Biographie, das typischerweise das Leben und die Karriere eines Subjekts von der Kindheit bis zur Reife nachzeichnete, in diesem Masse verwandelte, kehrte er in einem anderen Sinn zum Modell von Xenophons Agesilaus zurück, mit dessen Trennung zwischen der Beschreibung von militärischen Erfolgen des spartanischen Königs und seinen moralischen Qualitäten. Wenn der Hauptzweck einer solchen Lebensdarstellung darin besteht, den Charakter eines Menschen durch dessen Taten abzubilden, wird die Frage der chronologischen Ordnung eine Frage der Erzählstrategie. Das fundamentale Merkmal, das dieser biographischen Tradition zugrunde liegt, ist die Darstellung des Charakters durch Handlungen, und die Handlungen werden unter Berücksichtigung dieser Sichtweise ausgewählt. Sie können mehr oder weniger in zeitlicher Reihenfolge erzählt werden, aber dies ist nicht wesentlich, denn andere Arten, die Erzählung zu organisieren, beispielsweise um bestimmte Tugenden herum, können dies ebenfalls tun.

### **Xenophon und die subversive Tradition**

Der zweite Aspekt der biographischen Tradition hat möglicherweise seinen Ursprung auch in den Erinnerungsstücken von Xenophon – der Sammlung von Anekdoten oder Gesprächen mit Sokrates und verschiedenen Gesprächspartnern. Wie Agesilaus, ist Sokrates ein Vorbild der Tugend, aber obwohl einige seiner Tugenden einigen Agesilaus' analog sind – zum Beispiel Mässigung und Weisheit, deutet der Kontext, in dem sie sich manifestieren, und der komplexe Charakter, den sie zeigen, auf eine andere Art der Porträtierung hin. Während sich die Persönlichkeit des Agesilaus in Aktion zeigte, manifestiert sich Sokrates ausschliesslich

---

<sup>14</sup> WALLACE-HADRILL 1983, 9.

<sup>15</sup> Vgl. EDWARDS 2000, 52–71.

durch Worte. Seine Exzellenz ist weniger in ἔργα als in Logoi angesiedelt, obwohl in Platon Zeugnis über seinen Kampfmuth und seine körperliche Härte gegeben wird (z.B. Plato, *Symposium* 219E–221C).<sup>16</sup>

Eine Aufzeichnung von Gesprächen organisiert sich jedoch im Gegensatz zu heroischen Taten im Kampf oder Erfolgen in der Politik nicht so ohne weiteres chronologisch. Man kann natürlich von den Anzeichen frühreifer Brillanz in der Kindheit zu einer Darstellung der reiferen Weisheit des Subjekts gelangen, und der Kontext für Diskussionen kann sich entsprechend den Lebensstadien einer Person entwickeln. Daher schliesst nichts die Möglichkeit eines strengeren chronologischen Rahmens für eine solche Erzählung aus (einige Beispiele aus der Antike werden unten betrachtet). Trotzdem gibt es eine gewisse „Offenheit“, die solchen Texten innewohnt, in der eine bestimmte Episode durch eine geschickte Wiederholung (erneut) eingearbeitet oder weggelassen oder ihre Position in der Reihenfolge geändert werden kann, ohne dass dies einen spürbaren Einfluss auf die Kohärenz des Ganzen hat. Diese Variabilität ist charakteristisch für eine bestimmte Tradition der antiken Literatur, die David Konstan und Christine Thomas an anderer Stelle als *offene Texte* bezeichnet haben.<sup>17</sup> Die Form kann wiederum eine narrative Strategie im Dienste eines biographischen Ziels sein, eine Art, bestimmte Qualitäten des Subjekts in Verbindung zu bringen, die sich besonders, aber nicht ausschliesslich für diesen Stil eignen.

Der Unterschied zwischen den beiden biographischen Traditionen ist jedoch nicht nur eine Frage der Betonung der Einrichtung des Subjekts mit Worten gegenüber seiner Handlungsfähigkeit. Denn der aktive Held manifestiert seine Tugend in der Öffentlichkeit, in der Welt des Krieges und in der Staatskunst. Ob er gewinnt oder verliert, das Mass seines Charakters ist seine Übereinstimmung mit den dominanten Ideale von Gesellschaft und Kultur. Er ist ein zentraler Akteur, Teil des Systems: Er ist ein Modell für diejenigen, die regieren würden. Im Gegensatz dazu steht der sokratische Typus am Rande der Gesellschaft, gleichsam störend und nicht konformistisch. In Bezug auf die herrschenden Mächte, ist er trotz seines scharfen Verstandes der Aussenseiter. In der Tat, gerade weil er politisch schwach ist, muss er sich auf geschickte Gegenstösse und Argumente verlassen, um sich zu verteidigen. Dabei neigt er dazu, vererbte Überzeugungen zu verärgern und bedroht damit die Gründungsideologie. Dank der kritischen Spitze seiner Äusserungen wird er als subversiv angesehen, nicht, weil er (direkt) die politische Kontrolle seiner Gegner angreift, sondern die Werte zu untergraben scheint, von denen die Gesellschaft abhängt.

---

<sup>16</sup> Zur Darstellung von Sokrates in Xenophons Erinnerungsstücken bemerkt Thomas Hägg: „Es ist wichtig festzustellen, dass ein Grossteil der Charakterisierung von Sokrates durch die Art und Weise, wie er spricht, seine Untersuchungsmethode, seine Verwendung von Gleichnissen und Beispiele aus dem täglichen Leben erreicht wird, seine Ironie und sein Witz. Siehe: HÄGG 2012, 27. Dies sind nur die Eigenschaften, die Sokrates als Antithese zur Porträt Xenophon zeichnet von Agesilaus.“

<sup>17</sup> Vgl. KONSTAN 1998, 123–38; HÄGG 2012, 99–101; THOMAS 1998, 273–291.

Xenophon führt die *Memorabilia* als Verteidigung von Sokrates ein, um zu beweisen, dass die Anschuldigungen, aufgrund derer er zum Tode verurteilt wurde, falsch und weit davon entfernt waren, eine Bedrohung für die Gesellschaft zu sein, die die herkömmliche Frömmigkeit herausfordert, und daher die jungen Sünder zu korrumpieren „niemals schuldig“ war. In zivilgesellschaftlichen Angelegenheiten eines schlecht ausgetragenen Krieges oder einem zivilgesellschaftlichen Konflikt, des Verrats oder in privaten Angelegenheiten hat er niemandem etwas Gutes vorenthalten oder jemanden mit dem Bösen umhüllt (1.2.63). Xenophon will also zeigen, dass „er denjenigen, die mit ihm befreundet waren, von Nutzen war, indem er die Art von Persönlichkeit an den Tag legte, die er hatte.“ (3.1.1). Sicher tut Xenophon, was er kann, um Sokrates als aufrechten Bürger darzustellen, und ordentliches Verhalten im Einklang mit den sozialen Konventionen zu verteidigen. Trotzdem zeigt sich die korrosive Natur der Kritik von Sokrates gegenüber konventionellen Einstellungen ständig. Zum Beispiel argumentiert Sokrates am Ende des ersten Buches, dass niemand, der nicht für die Herrschaft zuständig ist, ein Amt im Staat suchen sollte. Sokrates stützt sich auf die vertraute Anziehungskraft auf die Künste, wie etwa das Flötenspiel oder das Steuern eines Schiffes, und erklärt, der grösste Betrug sei „die Person, die andere täuscht, indem sie sie davon überzeugt, dass er die Stadt beherrschen kann, obwohl er unfähig ist“ (1.7.5). Die eindeutige Folgerung ist, dass viele der derzeitigen Führer sowohl im politischen Handwerk als auch im Verborgenen nicht ausgebildet sind. Daher ist es nachvollziehbar, dass Sokrates sich hochrangige Feinde gemacht hat. An den Spitzen seiner Kritik schwebt jedoch der Gedanke, dass die Tugenden, wie sie allgemein verstanden werden, fehlerhaft sind und dass eine Revolution der Werte erforderlich ist. Dies verleiht seinen Ansichten eine unorthodoxe Konnotation, die durch sein exzentrisches äusserliches Verhalten bestätigt wird – wie schuhlos gehen, seinen Haushalt vernachlässigen und die Leute auf der Strasse mit abstrakten Nachfragen in die Knie zwingen.

Während Xenophon versuchte, die Konturen dieses gegenkulturellen Bildes von Sokrates abzuschwächen, nahmen die Kyniker eine viel aggressivere Haltung ein. Durch sie trat eine Art Lebensgeschichte in die Literatur ein, die spätere Biographien massgeblich beeinflussen sollte.<sup>18</sup> Die beiden bürgerlichen und subversiven Traditionen nahmen im Laufe der Zeit

---

<sup>18</sup> In einem nicht-biographischen Kontext kann man die Haltung der subversiven Figur in Epictetus' Diskursen sehen, z. am 1.18–19, wo sich eine Person vorstellt, gegen die Lehre von Epictetus zu protestieren, dass wir alles akzeptieren, was nicht unter unserer Kontrolle steht: „Soll ich mir nur die Kehle durchschneiden lassen?“ Auf diese Antwort antwortet Epictetus: „Wollen Sie, dass alle Menschen dies tun? Haben sie sich die Kehle durchgeschnitten?“ Die Zweideutigkeit hier ist das Wort *Monon*, aber der Witz erinnert an Sokrates' Erwiderung, wie in Xenophons Entschuldigung (28) berichtet: als Apollodorus bestätigt, dass es schrecklich ist, zu sehen, wie Sokrates zu Unrecht hingerichtet wird, antwortet Sokrates: „Würdest du lieber sehen, dass ich zu Recht hingerichtet werde?“ Dies sind die verbalen Taktiken des Spassvogels, die für einen modernen Leser leichtfertig erscheinen, aber Teil eines Ganzen waren der Diatribe Tradition in der Antike.

weitere Definitionen an, teilweise durch Interaktion miteinander; Tatsächlich könnte dieselbe Figur in beiden Modi dargestellt werden, wie wir weiter unten sehen werden.

Wenn Sammlungen von Gesprächen wie die Erinnerungsstücke von Xenophon und Dialoge wie die von Platon die Form eines Lebens oder einer Biographie annehmen, ist sie unsicher, und verschiedene Einflüsse haben sie möglicherweise mitgeprägt. Ein Werk wie *Epidemiai* von Ion von Chios, das offenbar eine Erzählung von Sophokles über seine eigene dramatische Entwicklung enthielt, hätte zu dieser Struktur beitragen können, ebenso wie Sokrates' eigene autobiographische Skizze, die in Platons *Phaidon* aufgenommen wurde. Es ist verlockend anzunehmen, dass die Entstehung von Leben im Stil von Xenophons Agesilaus konkurrierende Bemühungen im Konkurrenzgenre katalysierte. Ein grosser Einfluss kam jedoch aus dem Ausland in Form einer griechischen Version der *Ahikar-Romanze*.<sup>19</sup> Wir werden gleich zu Äsop zurückkehren. Zunächst wenden wir uns aber Plutarchs Leben des Alexander und dem sogenannten *Alexanderroman* zu. Die Gegenüberstellung dieser beiden Werke veranschaulicht die beiden Linien der Biografie.<sup>20</sup>

### Die zwei Gesichter von Alexander dem Grössen

Plutarchs Alexander hat, wie zu erwarten ist, die ikonischen Tugenden, die mit grossen Anführer typischerweise verbunden sind: Mut und strategische Brillanz (z. B. 6.1–5; 19.1–5; 20.1–8; 31.6–33.10), aber auch eine temperamentvolle Art und Weise zu leben, Barmherzigkeit gegenüber Feinden (22.4–5; 23.1–6) und königliche Grosszügigkeit (12.1–3; 30.1–3), obwohl er nicht ohne gewisse Mängel in seinem Charakter ist, insbesondere in seiner übermässig leidenschaftlichen Gesinnung (4.3–4) mit einer Schwäche für Alkohol (4.3; 23.1; 38.1; 50.1–51.10; 67.4; 75.2–4), einer Anfälligkeit für Schmeichelei (23.4) und in späteren Jahren einer Tendenz zum Aberglauben (75.1–2). Der *Alexanderroman* plünderte Alexanders Leben von seiner Kindheit bis zu seinem Tod und reiht eine Vielzahl von Szenen auf, einige aus dem täglichen Leben, andere aus dem Schlachtfeld, um Alexanders Charaktereigenschaften zu demonstrieren. So beobachtet der junge Alexander einen Austausch zwischen seinem Vater Philip und Philonicus über den Kauf des Pferdes Bucephalus „Wild und hartnäckig“ (6.1). Bucephalus lässt es nicht zu, dass Philipps Begleiter ihn besteigen. Ein frustrierter Philip lehnt das Tier ab, doch Alexander tritt ein und behauptet, dass jemand, der über die entsprechenden Fähigkeiten und den richtigen Mut verfügt, das Pferd kontrollieren kann.

---

<sup>19</sup> Vgl. HANSEN 1998, 106–110.

<sup>20</sup> Philosophen waren einer doppelten Behandlung besonders zugänglich, wobei sie sich einerseits durch ihren vorbildlichen Charakter auszeichnen und andererseits wie Sokrates als Prediger gegen das Korn der vorherrschenden Werte gesehen werden konnten. Für einen detaillierten Überblick über die Topoi, die das Leben in Diogenes Laertius charakterisieren, einschliesslich einer gewissen Menge an Scharlatanismus und Wundertaten. Siehe: GUIJARRO 2009, besonders 251–428.

Er wettet, dass er dieser Aufgabe gewachsen ist oder ansonsten seinem Vater den Preis seines Pferdes erstattet. Philip schaut erstaunt zu, wie Alexander erkennt, dass Bucephalus Angst vor seinem eigenen Schatten hat, das Pferd der Sonne zuwendet und es beherrscht. Die Szene endet damit, dass Alexander das Pferd abzäumt und sein weinender Vater seine Talente mit dem Ausruf rühmt: „Mein Sohn, suche ein Königreich, das dir gleich ist; Mazedonien hat keinen Raum für dich“ (6,5), womit er die zukünftige Grösse Alexanders vorwegnimmt.

Alexanders Wahrnehmungsgabe und Selbstbeherrschung sind Eigenschaften, die er auch später im Leben an den Tag legt. Eine bemerkenswerte Illustration seiner kriegsstrategischen Fähigkeiten folgt bei der Schlacht von Issus. Als er erfährt, dass die Mutter, Frau und Töchter seines Feindes, Darius, zu seinen Gefangenen gehören, lässt er sie wissen, dass Darius nicht getötet wurde, und sorgt dafür, dass sie unbehelligt leben, wobei die Begünstigungen ihrem früheren Status entsprechen. Er erlaubt den Frauen auch, ihre Kriegstoten nach gewohnten Brauch begraben. Hier sehen wir Alexanders Fähigkeiten, seine Leidenschaften sowie seine Milde und ein gewisses Mass an Mitleid zu kontrollieren. Wie Plutarch anmerkte, „war Alexander mehr von ihrem Leid betroffen als von seinem eigenen Erfolg“ (21.1). Eine solche Nachsicht wurde jedoch nicht allen Feinden Alexanders gewährt. In Persien zum Beispiel befiehlt er, die Bürger abzuschlachten (37.2) und greift nach der anschliessenden Plünderung eine umgestürzte Statue von Xerxes an, als ob sie lebendig wäre (37.3). In einer anderen Episode wird er durch die nationalistische Haltung der griechischen Thais angeregt, den Palast von Xerxes niederzubrennen – mit einer Girlande auf dem Kopf und einer Fackel in der Hand, führt er den Mob (38,3–4), wobei er es sich später anders überlegt und befiehlt, das Feuer zu löschen.

Plutarch macht auch deutlich, dass Alexanders Vorliebe für Alkohol seine Tendenz zu Wut und impulsivem Handeln verschärfte. Der bedauerlichste Vorfall betraf möglicherweise seinen Offizier und Freund Cleitus. Bei einer Trinkparty eskaliert ein Streit zwischen den beiden Männern, bis Alexander die Beherrschung verliert, Cleitus mit einem Apfel bewirft und von anderen daran gehindert werden muss, ihn mit seinem Schwert anzugreifen. Er ersticht seinen Freund schliesslich mit einem Speer und empfindet sofort Reue. Er muss noch einmal daran gehindert werden, sich den Hals aufzuschneiden (51.1–6). Den Rest der Nacht und dem ganzen folgenden Tag weint er und beklagt seine Handlungen (52.1–3). Nur mit Hilfe von Anaxarchus, einem hartgesottenen Philosophen, erholt er sich (52.3–7).

Obwohl Alexanders Plutarch hier und dort einen gewissen Witz zeigt (z. B. 14.3, 64.1–10), liegt der Schwerpunkt nicht auf seiner Fähigkeit, sich auf geschickten Austausch einzulassen, sondern vielmehr als Beispiel für seine Scharfsinnigkeit als Führer.<sup>21</sup> Die *Alexanderromance*

---

<sup>21</sup> HÄGG 2012 behandelt Plutarchs Leben unter der Überschrift „Ethische Biographie“ und stellt fest, dass in den Leben, wie auch anderswo in Plutarch, „moralischer Wert und Nützlichkeit Vorrang vor Ästhetik haben“ (277). Wir sollten uns darüber im Klaren sein, dass Zahlen wie Coriolanus zwar subversiv im Sinne einer Untergrabung des Staates sind (Ähnliches gilt für Catiline), seine Biographie jedoch ausschliesslich dem bürgerlichen Typus zuzuordnen

dagegen stellt sich nicht als Darstellung der Tugenden und Laster seines Helden dar, sondern als eine Ausstellung von Alexanders List, seiner Fähigkeit, die Ansprüche seiner Gegner mit einem geschickten Wort oder einer aufmerksamen Beobachtung gegen sie zu wenden.<sup>22</sup> Zum Beispiel war laut *Alexanderromance* der Sohn nicht von Philipp von Mazedonien, sondern vielmehr vom ehemaligen König von Ägypten, Nectanebo. Nectanebo wird als Zauberkünstler beschrieben, der nach Pella in Mazedonien geflohen ist, als er feststellte, dass die Götter die auf seinem Land marschierenden ausländischen Armeen unterstützten (1.3). In Mazedonien verführt er Olympias, die Frau von Philip. Als Alexander volljährig war, beschliesst er, an den Olympischen Spielen teilzunehmen, und Philip nutzt diese Gelegenheit, um sich von Olympias scheiden zu lassen und Cleopatra zu heiraten. Alexander erscheint beim Hochzeitsbankett und gibt seinem Vater den Kranz seines Siegers mit den Worten: „Wenn ich meine Mutter Olympias einem anderen König übergeben werde, werde ich sie zu Olympias Hochzeit einladen“ (1.20). Lysias, der Bruder von Philips neuer Braut Cleopatra erklärt wiederum, dass Philip jetzt legitime Kinder haben wird, die durch Ehebruch gezeugt wurden – „und sie werden wie sie aussehen“ (1.21). Alexander wirft Lysias einen Becher zu und tötet ihn, woraufhin Philip sein Schwert zieht, aber als er sich erhebt, stolpert er über den Fuss der Couch. Alexander proklamiert: „Hier ist der Mann, der ganz Asien übernehmen und Europa seinem eigentlichen Fundament unterwerfen will – und er est nicht in der Lage, einen einzigen Schritt zu tun“, greift das Schwert seines Vaters und bedroht die Gäste. Einige Tage später gelingt es Alexander, Vater und Mutter miteinander zu versöhnen, und sagt ihnen: „Umarmt euch jetzt: Es ist keine Schande, wenn ihr das vor mir macht – ich wurde schliesslich von dir geboren“ (1.22). Die Mazedonier sind beeindruckt von Alexanders Willkür, und Philip ist so zufrieden, dass er seinen Sohn mit einer grossen Armee schicken kann, um die rebellische Stadt Methone zu unterwerfen.

Als Alexander in seinem Feldzug gegen Persien die Stadt Tyrus erreicht, wird er zunächst von den Tyriern zurückgeworfen. Ein Traum warnt ihn davor, sich bei Tyre zu präsentieren, deshalb schickt er einen Brief, in dem er die Kapitulation fordert (1.35). Die Tyrer prügeln die Boten, um festzustellen, wer Alexander ist, und töteten sie. Ein zweiter Traum, der ein erfundenes Wortspiel auf Satyr (saturos), Käse (turos) und den Namen der Stadt, Tyrus, beinhaltet, sagt Alexanders Sieg voraus und er nimmt die Stadt ohne weitere Umstände oder Erklärungen ein. Die Romanze zeigt wenig Interesse an Szenen von Krieg und Mut. Vielmehr macht sie immer wieder auf die Rolle von Einsicht und Interpretation aufmerksam, auf die Fähigkeit, Wörter zu entziffern oder zu manipulieren – eine Technik, die für den entmachteten Emporkömmling charakteristischer ist als für einen mächtigen General der Offensive.

---

ist: Er hat Laster, die vermieden werden müssen (ein Beispiel für Negativum); er ist kein Modell für die Schwachen, die kraft ihres Verstandes den Spiess umdrehen.

<sup>22</sup> Wie HÄGG 2012 betont, Alexander ist kein konventioneller Kriegsheld, sondern eine kluge, witzige, impulsive, eher widersprüchliche Figur, deren Erfolg mehr auf List und Beharrlichkeit als auf Mut oder Frömmigkeit beruht (131).



Zu Beginn des Krieges schickt Darius Alexander einen Gurt, eine Kugel und eine Kiste voller Gold. Der Begleitbrief erklärt, dass der Riemen für Alexanders Züchtigung ist und der Ball ein kindliches Spielzeug ist, mit dem er spielen kann. Alexander liest den Brief seinen Truppen vor und beruhigt sie: „Warum ärgert euch, was Darius geschrieben hat, als hätte sein prahlerischer Brief wirkliche Macht? Es gibt auch einige Hunde, die durch lautes Bellen ein kleines bisschen wettmachen, als könnten sie durch das Bellen die Illusion erwecken, mächtig zu sein“ (1.37). Damit befiehlt er, dass die Darisu’ Boten gekreuzigt werden, was die Gelegenheit für eine weitere Neuausrichtung bietet: Alexander erklärt, seit Darius ihn als Banditen beschrieben hat, „töte ich sie, als ob sie zu einem rücksichtslosen Mann gekommen wären, nicht zu einem König“. Die Boten erwirken ihre Begnadigung, indem sie bestätigen, dass er wirklich ein grosser König ist. Alexander schreibt dann an Darius zurück und schlägt eine Gegeninterpretation seiner Gaben vor: Mit dem Riemen wird er die Barbaren schlagen, während der Ball die Welt bedeutet, die Alexander erobern wird (1.38). Der Schwerpunkt liegt wiederum auf verbalen und intellektuellen, nicht auf militärischen Fähigkeiten.

Als Alexander ausserhalb Persiens, dem Reich des Darius’, lagert, hat er einen Traum, der ihn anweist, keinen Boten zu schicken, sondern sich selbst als Gott Ammon verkleidet zu Darius zu begeben (2.13). In dieser Verkleidung wird Alexander von Darius zum Abendessen eingeladen und am Tisch packt er alle Tassen ein, die in seine die Tasche passen. Als Darius fragt, was er da tut, antwortet Alexander: „Grossartiger König, das tut Alexander, wenn er seinen Offizieren und Wachen Abendbrot gibt – er verschenkt die Becher – und ich dachte, du wärst wie er.“ Die Geschichte fährt fort: „Die Perser waren also erstaunt über das, was Alexander sagte: Von jeder Geschichte, wenn sie überzeugt ist das Publikum immer fasziniert.“ (2.15). Diese Episode soll Alexander nicht als gierig erscheinen lassen, sondern lediglich seine kluge Art und Weise mit der Sprache veranschaulichen, da der Autor oder Redakteur es nicht unterlassen kann.

Obwohl die *Alexanderromanze* einer mehr oder weniger chronologischen Anordnung folgt, sticht nicht die Eroberung des Helden als solche hervor, sondern sein unheimlicher Einfallsreichtum und die Beherrschung der Sprache. Die Persönlichkeit des Protagonisten setzt sich aus seinem Witz und nicht aus ethischen Eigenschaften zusammen, die den Kern der virtua-basierten biographischen Tradition bilden.<sup>23</sup> Wie bereits erwähnt, findet man ein ähnliches Beispiel in den noch vorhandenen Leben von Äsop, wobei Äsop in vielerlei Hinsicht das Vorbild des witzigen und subversiven biographischen Motivs ist. Interessanterweise haben einige neuere Studien jedoch versucht, die eher konterkulturellen Elemente von Äsop mit mündlichen Traditionen aus der griechischen Populärkultur in Einklang zu bringen.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Zum Genre der Alexander – Romanze siehe auch STONEMANN 1991, 17–23, der es, zumindest in seinen späteren Überarbeitungen, mit den apokryphen Apostelakten, dem Leben der Apostel, vergleicht Aesop und das Leben von Apollonius von Tyana.

<sup>24</sup> Vgl. KURKE 2011.

Diese Suche nach einer nichtelitistischen Schicht der Äsop-Tradition spiegelt ähnliche Ansätze wider wie sie in der Evangelienforschung begegnen, wo frühchristliche mündliche Überlieferungen über Jesus in den Evangelien gesucht wurden. Diese Herangehensweise an Äsop stiess jedoch bei den Klassikern aus ähnlichen Gründen auf Widerstand.<sup>25</sup> Bevor wir die Evangelien als subversive Biografie untersuchen, wird der Beitrag von Äsop zum subversiven Paradigma untersucht. Wie auch die Kritik, die den Versuchen folgt, nach Stämmen der populären archaischen Kultur zu suchen, ist dies eine nützliche Folgerung der Literatur über Jesus, gegen die Gelehrte eine ähnliche Richtung eingeschlagen haben.

### Äsop und mündliche Tradition

Das Leben von Äsop ist ein frühes Beispiel für eine subversive Biografie aus der griechischen Tradition, zusammen mit Xenophons Agesilaus. Die Geschichte von Äsop, die lose um die Stationen seines Lebens herum angeordnet ist, beginnt in Phrygien und scharfsinnig, aber bleibt unter einem Sprachhemmnis leiden.<sup>26</sup> Als Dankeschön für seine Grosszügigkeit gegenüber einem Priester der Isis, der sich auf der Strasse verirrt hatte, wird Äsop die Fähigkeit erteilt, „alle Sprachen der Menschen zu sprechen und die Sprache der Vogellieder zu verstehen sowie alle Zeichen aller Tiere“ und „der Erfinder und Schriftsteller vieler Logoi zu werden.“<sup>27</sup> Er ist auch in der Lage, Menschen offen mit seinem Schneidewitz zu beschäftigen. Er erkennt an, dass seine neu entdeckten Gaben auf seine Frömmigkeit, „Nächstenliebe und Liebe, die ich Fremden gegenüber gezeigt habe“ zurückzuführen sind. zwar Einmal mit diesen begabt, beginnt er sofort, seine Ansichten zu äussern und mit den Menschen in seiner Umgebung zu sprechen. Er beginnt mit der Aufforderung an einen Aufseher, der einen Sklaven ohne Grund schlägt.<sup>28</sup>

In dieser Hinsicht verkörpert Äsop einige der traditionellen Auffassungen hinsichtlich der Tugend, die in anderen Leben gefunden wurden. Äsop selbst handelt jedoch nicht immer ethisch. Ein Beispiel dafür ist, dass er im Austausch gegen ein neues Hemd zehnmal mit der Frau seines Eigentümers ins Bett geht.<sup>29</sup> Tatsächlich ist das Leben von Äsop und seinen Leuten

---

<sup>25</sup> PELLICCIA 2012, 36–40.

<sup>26</sup> Äsops Fabeln, 10.

<sup>27</sup> Äsops Fabeln, 11.

<sup>28</sup> Äsops Fabeln, 12–13.

<sup>29</sup> Eines Tages hob Äsop seine Kleidung hoch und nahm sein Glied in die Hand, um es zu stimulieren. Xanthus' Frau sah ihn und sagte: „Aesop! Was ist das?“ Aesop antwortete: „... mir war nachts kalt, und es hilft mir, wenn ich es in der Hand halte.“ Als die Frau sah, wie lang und dick es war, wurde ihre Lust geweckt, und sie sagte zu ihm: „Nun, Äsop, wenn du tust, was ich will, wirst du mehr Freude haben als dein Meister.“ Er antwortete: „Du weisst, wenn der Meister herausfindet, was ich bekomme, wird es sein schade für mich. Er wird zu Recht dafür sorgen, dass ich den Preis bezahle.“ Sie lächelte und sagte: „Wenn du es mir zehn Mal machst, gebe ich dir ein neues Hemd.“ Vitae 75.

mit zahlreichen Beispielen, von schlechtem Verhalten, sexuell expliziten Passagen und extrem gewalttätigen Bildern gefüllt – von dem schweren und öffentlichen Schlagen von Sklaven, über die den verliebten Aufmerksamkeiten, die Aesop von verschiedenen Frauen erhält, zu Aesop, der die Einheimischen beleidigt hatte und sich gezwungen sah, von einer Klippe bei Delphi zu springen. Äsop fungiert manchmal als Folie für ethisches Verhalten, aber er ist auch eine Quelle dessen, was man als *Comic Relief* bezeichnen könnte. Hayden Pelliccia erklärt: „... stories such as these would not have been welcomed onto the classical reading lists of Victorian-era Eton; that does not mean, however, that they reflect non-elite Greco-Roman taste. Vases depicting the maniacally erectpriapism of satyrs, for example, were unfailingly popular with the Greek upper classes. As for cruelty, slave-beating was a beloved staple of the comic stage. Even nonslaves could be turned to this purpose: for example, the unnamed protagonist of Aristophanes’ *Women at the Thesmophoria*, identified only as ‘Euripides’ kinsman,’ is literally crucified during the play’s last two hundred lines, and the shrieks he emits as he is stapled to the cross seem to have brought the audience no end of delight.”<sup>30</sup>

Zu der Zeit, als sein Leben geschrieben wurde, war Äsop bereits bekannt und wurde in Herodot und Aristophanes erwähnt.<sup>31</sup> Unsere erste Aufzeichnung seines Logos stammt aus dem späten vierten Jahrhundert vor Christus. Es ist nicht klar, wie seine Aussagen und Details seines Lebens in den vorangegangenen Jahrzehnten weitergegeben wurden.<sup>32</sup> Unabhängig von der Frage, inwiefern Aesop historisch überhaupt existierte bzw. sich noch greifen lässt, ist klar, dass die Figur in der literarischen Vorstellungswelt einen doppelten Aspekt angenommen hat: durch seine Beobachtungen, Lehren und Kommentare war er in gewissem Masse ein Vertreter ethischer Handlungen. Gleichzeitig tauchte er als subversives Symbol auf, das die Normen der herrschenden Kultur komödiantisch überschritt.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> PELLICCIA 2012, 37

<sup>31</sup> Aristophanes, *Wasps*, 1448; Herodot 2.134, der Aesop als Logopoios beschreibt. Siehe auch KURKE 2011, 371.

<sup>32</sup> Siehe: PELLICCIA 2012, 36 wo er behauptet, dass die Form dieser Zitate sagt nichts darüber aus, ob Äsop-Überlieferungen als schriftliche Texte oder nur mündlich verbreitet wurden. Die ersten eindeutigen Beweise für eine schriftliche Sammlung ‘Äsopischer’ Fabeln stammen aus dem Ende des 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr., Und von diesem Zeitpunkt an wird das Sammeln und Umschreiben dieser Fabeln zu einer geschäftigen Nebenbranche der klassischen Kultur...”

<sup>33</sup> Priapus ist ein nützlicher Vergleich für das Dual-Modell, das ich beschreibe. So beschreiben Ralph M. Rosen und Catherine C. Keane Priapus als „Durcheinander konservativer und subversiver Ideologien. Einerseits feiert Priapus die Durchsetzung sozialer Normen. Er verteidigt das Privateigentum, dringt in andere ein und gliedert seine Opfer unter Anwendung dreier zirkulärer Logik als sexuelle Abweichler ein. Er scheint daher die Art und Weise darzustellen, wie die traditionelle Machtstruktur Randfiguren färbt... zur einfachen Identifizierung. Auf der anderen Seite scheint Priapus die Übertretung gegen den Anstand zu feiern, wenn er behauptet, dass sein Reich obszöne Rede- und Handlungsweisen sanktioniert, sogar fordert. Diese beiden Eigenschaften sind in der sexualisierten Figur des römischen Satirikers komisch kombiniert.” ROSEN, KEANE 2014, 381–397.

Äsop findet sich schliesslich in Samos wieder, als Haussklaven eines Philosophen namens Xanthus, der ironischerweise keine Übereinstimmung mit Äsops scharfsinnigem Verstand beweist. Äsops Witz bringt ihm die Freiheit ein, und er erhebt sich wie Phaidon, Menippus und Epictetus von der Position eines Sklaven zu einem angesehenen Staatsmann, der mit Philosophen und dem Hof des lydischen Königs Krösus, der ihn auf eine Reihe diplomatischer Missionen schickt, einschlägig ist nach Delphi. Sein Tod dort wird durch die kollektive Angst der Stadt ausgelöst, dass Äsop, geschätzt und stets aufmerksam, der Aussenwelt offenbaren würde, wie moralisch verkommen die Stadt geworden war. Er wird wegen Diebstahls angeklagt, der Auflehnung angeklagt und als gewöhnlicher Verbrecher zum Tode verurteilt. Er wird vom sicheren Haus des Tempels bis zu Apollo durch die Strassen gezerzt.<sup>34</sup> Nach seinem Selbstmord erhielt Äsop viele posthume Ehrungen, zum Beispiel wird uns erzählt, dass Lysippos eine Statue von Äsop geschaffen hat, die vor den Sieben Weisen in Athen stand.<sup>35</sup> Und natürlich gibt es die lange Tradition seiner Behandlung in der Literatur.

Wie oft bemerkt wird, sind der ungerechte Tod und die posthume Bewunderung von Äsop biografische Elemente, die mit Sokrates und Jesus geteilt werden.<sup>36</sup> Es gibt ein weiteres Merkmal, das Sokrates und Äsop gemeinsam haben (Jesus sei hier für einen Moment ausgeklammert): ihr körperliches Erscheinungsbild. Beide werden als besonders unansehnlich beschrieben. Sokrates wird mit einem Satyr oder Plattfisch verglichen, mit einem „kahlen Kopf, gewölbten, krabben- oder froschartigen Augen, einem hervorstehenden Stirn, fleischige Lippen und, wie Äsop, ein dicker und breiter Mund. Noch heftiger wird Äsop als deformiert beschrieben: „Missgestalt des Kopfes, Stupsnase, dunkelhäutig, Zwergwurzel, gestreifte Beine...“<sup>37</sup> Darin verdichtet sich beider Fähigkeit, gleichzeitig bestimmte ethische Prinzipien als Repräsentant der dominanten Kultur anzuwenden, aber dies in einer ausgesprochen subversiven Tonart zu tun.

Diese geteilte, traurige Darstellung ist für ein heroisches Subjekt ungewöhnlich, da Helden normalerweise als gutaussehend und mit beeindruckenden Körpern dargestellt werden. Pseudo-Aristoteles zum Beispiel sagt: „Ein wohlproportionierter Körper deutet auf ein ehrliches, tapferes und intelligentes Individuum, während ein schlecht proportionierter Betrug offenbart.“<sup>38</sup> Ein Überblick über die griechische und lateinische Literatur bestätigt dies tatsächlich – unattraktive Figuren wie Homers Thersites verhalten sich im Grunde, während traditionelle Helden wie die tugendhaften Männer (und Frauen), die das Land bevölkern, ein antiker Roman wird als schön beschrieben.<sup>39</sup> Die Ausnahme scheint bei Philosophen wie

---

<sup>34</sup> Äsops Fabeln, 47–51.

<sup>35</sup> Phaedrus 2.9.1–4; LISSARRAGUE 2000 137. Einige Überlieferungen besagen, dass die Delphier Äsop auch einen Tempel geweiht und ihn als Helden verehrt haben. Vgl. KURKE 2011, 5.

<sup>36</sup> Für eine Diskussion und Bibliographie siehe: WILSON 2007, 141–169.

<sup>37</sup> Vgl. PELLICCIA 2012, 36.

<sup>38</sup> Papadēmētriu, Aesop as an Archetypal Hero, 16, n. 17.

<sup>39</sup> Iliad 2, 216–219.

den Kynikern oder bei Männern mit geringer Körpergrösse zu gelten; in Äsops Leben sagt zum Beispiel in Bezug auf Äsop: „Kleine Burschen, denen das Aussehen zu kurz ist, sind langwierig.“ In der *Alexanderromance* betäubt Alexander die Perser mit seiner „kleinen Statur“ (1.18.9) und wird herausgefordert zu einem Duell eines Königs, Poros, der aufgrund seiner Grösse für leicht zu schlagen ist (2.15.1). Und wieder sagt uns Xenophon, dass Agesilaus ähnlich proportioniert war. Solchen unwahrscheinlichen Helden und Anführern werden in dieser Literatur aufgrund ihres Aussehens also bestimmte Qualitäten zuerkannt: Kleine Männer geben mächtige Herrscher und scharfe Denker ab, während hässliche Charaktere entweder als unethisch gelten oder in einigen Fällen besonders beeindruckendes Wissen oder Witz besitzen. Mit anderen Worten, ihre physische Form vermittelt dem Publikum von Anfang an etwas über ihre den Grad ihrer Subversivität.<sup>40</sup>

Bezeichnend an dieser Beobachtung ist nicht notwendigerweise, dass diese Trope existiert, sondern dass neben dem subversiven biographischen Typ sich auch der körperlich unattraktive Held in der literarischen Tradition von Homer an weiter entwickelt. Es zeigt weiter, ähnlich wie Athenaeus' *Bericht über die Deipnosophen*, dass Schriftsteller mit bestimmten Kenntnissen ausgebildet wurden. Texte, die sich mit miteinander verbundenen Netzwerken der Alphabetisierung beschäftigen und von den Ideen der anderen dies ist ein besonders wichtiger Punkt im Fall von Äsop, da einige neuere Studien versucht haben, Aspekte des Lebens von Äsop – wie sein Aussehen und abscheulichere Handlungen – früheren, mündlichen Überlieferungen der Figur zuzuschreiben.

Leslie Kurkes argumentiert zum Beispiel, eine erste CE-Rezension des Lebens von Äsop, genannt „Vita G“, bewahre eine Weisheitstradition über Aesop, die um das sechzehnte Jahrhundert v. Chr. datiert wird.<sup>41</sup> Mit Weisheitstradition meint Kurke eine originär griechische Konzeptualisierung von Hesoid, Theognis, Pythagoras und der Sieben Weisen (unter anderem) als zusammenhängende Tradition, die als Sophia bezeichnet wird (was poetische Fertigkeit, politische Weisheit und religiöse Sachkenntnis mit einbezieht).<sup>42</sup> An anderer Stelle in ihrer Monografie erklärt Kurke, sie befasse sich hauptsächlich mit dem, was sie als „altgriechisch“ bezeichnet: Populärkultur – die volkstümlichen Traditionen und Interessen von Nichteliten, auf die bisher nur durch die Funde der Archäologie, nichtliterarische Texte wie Papyrusdokumente, Bleifluchtabletten und Begräbnisinnschriften.<sup>43</sup> Unter Berufung auf Peter Burkes Arbeit im frühneuzeitlichen Europa bezieht sie sich auch auf diesen Aspekt der Gesellschaft als die „kleine Tradition“, die

---

<sup>40</sup> An einem anderen Punkt im Leben bezeichnet sich Aesop als jemand, der „vernünftige“ Dinge sagt, „in einem billigen kleinen Körper“. Derselbe Begriff kommt auch in der Alexander-Romanze immer wieder vor PELLICCIA 2012, 37.

<sup>41</sup> Das Manuskript selbst stammt aus dem zehnten oder elften Jahrhundert. Der Inhalt wurde auf der Grundlage philologischer Beweise von Ben Edwin Perry im frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhundert in das erste Jahrhundert datiert. Siehe KURKE 2011, 4.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 3

notwendigerweise von der Elitenkultur ausgeschlossen war (die „grosse Tradition“).<sup>44</sup> Nach ihrer Einschätzung gibt es einen parallelen Pfad des nicht-elitären populären Denkens, der sich neben den Ideologien der Elite entwickelte, die durch die Überreste der hohen antiken Literaturkultur veranschaulicht werden. Sie stellt ausserdem fest, dass die Elitenkultur sich um die Beseitigung der Erinnerungen an diesen eher simplen Diskurses bemühte – wie in Vita G. Diese Art ist offensichtlich in der Figur von Äsop selbst zu sehen. Äsop, selbst arm, niedrig und marginal, vertritt den sozial vergleichsweise gering angesehenen Konsumenten dieser Literatur.<sup>45</sup> Da sein Leben in umgangssprachlicher κοινή und hoch zugänglich geschrieben wurde. Ähnlich der Erzählweise, die ich oben als offenen Text bezeichnet habe, ist sie grundsätzlich anders als der Kanon von Klassikern (z.B. Homer, Vergil), die mit grösster Sorgfalt und Respekt behandelt und in unverfälschter Form übertragen wurden. Deshalb, schlägt sie vor, dass eine Schrift wie Vita G am besten als Dokumentation einer bestimmten langlebigen mündlichen Traditionen der Bevölkerung verstanden wird.<sup>46</sup> Sie illustriert diesen Unterschied mit einem weiteren Vergleich mit Burke: So können wir uns Geschichten über Äsop vorstellen, die weiterhin mündlich als alte Ehefrauenmärchen oder Volksmärchen, die auf Festen erzählt werden, in Umlauf sind, während der geschriebene Text selbst in der Öffentlichkeit vorgelesen wird.<sup>47</sup> Sie vergleicht auch die Bauerngeschichten des vorrevolutionären Frankreichs, von denen sie sich vorstellt, dass sie von Dienern und Kindermädchen an die gebildete Elite weitergegeben wurden.<sup>48</sup> Als solche sieht sie in Aesop die Überreste der Märchen der kleinen Tradition der griechischen Kultur, die später von denen mit der Bildung und den Mitteln zur Erstellung von Schriften verbunden und übertragen wurden.

Kurkes analoge Erzählung ist gerade deshalb notwendig, weil sie aufgezeigt hat, dass die Herstellung von Literatur in der Antike einen elitären Kulturproduzenten und bestimmte soziale Bedingungen erforderte. Um ihre Worte zu gebrauchen: es ist unmöglich, einen Autor zu postulieren, der nicht Mitglied einer Wohlstands- und Bildungselite ist.<sup>49</sup> Hierin liegt die Schwierigkeit bei der mündlichen Überlieferungsthese. Wie bereits erwähnt, stützt sich Kurke als Beweis für eine Reihe von Interessen, die eher *low-brow* oder *little culture* sind, auf Aspekte Äsops wie sein schäbiges Äusseres, seine vulgäre Rede und seine expliziten Begegnungen. Dies ist die Weisheitstradition von Äsop, die auf ein weniger gelehrtes

---

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 7–8.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 6–7.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

Publikum ausgerichtet ist. Ihr Modell für die Rekonstruktion der mündlichen Tradition und der Populärkultur ist jedoch ebenso schwierig wie dasjenige der Wissenschaftler der frühchristlichen Literatur.

Neben dieser Kritik gibt es auch die böseren oder fantastischeren Elemente von Äsop, die Hayden Pelliccia nennt: bestimmte literarische Vorwürfe.<sup>50</sup> Pelliccia weist beispielsweise darauf hin, dass Aesop, nachdem er seine Stimme erlangt habe, trotz der rustikalen Isolation seines früheren Lebens in der Lage ist, Euripides zu nennen und seine Gedichte wortreich zu zitieren – umso beeindruckender, wenn wir bedenken, dass Euripides dies tun würde.<sup>51</sup> Pelliccia weist darauf hin, dass eine grundsätzliche Schwierigkeit bei Kurkes Rekultivierungsprojekt darin besteht, dass unser Wissen über die Kultur der Nichteliten so brüchig ist, dass wir Belege für die Kultur der unteren Klassen möglicherweise nicht als solche erkennen, selbst wenn sie uns in Schriften der Oberklasse vorliegen.<sup>52</sup> Ausserdem scheint Aesop mit seinen angeblich „kleinen Traditionen“, die auf literarischen Parallelen oder Präzedenzfällen der „grossen Tradition“ basieren, nicht so sehr auf mündliche Erzählungen über die Figur angewiesen zu sein. Die Plünderung der literarischen Tradition ist eher sein Geschäft.<sup>53</sup> Diese literarische Plünderung würde auch einen grossen Beitrag zur Erklärung der eher fließenden oder offenen Struktur oder Organisation des Textes selbst leisten.

Wie ich bereits erwähnt habe, ist die Kritik an Kurkes These ein zwingender Vergleichspunkt, da eine ähnliche Herangehensweise an die „mündlichen Traditionen“ der „primitiven Christen“ oft in der Literaturwissenschaft über Jesus verwendet wurde. Kurke behauptet, dass eine der Schwierigkeiten beim Studium des Lebens von Äsop darin besteht, dass es seit langem aus dem Vergleich mit dem traditionellen Kanon der klassischen Literatur entfernt wurde oder in Quarantäne gestellt wird. Dies ist ein Schicksal, das einige der synoptischen Evangelien<sup>54</sup> teilen. Im Gegensatz zu Äsop kann Jesus natürlich keine euripidischen Reden halten. Seine Lehren scheinen jedoch bestimmte Linien des antiken philosophischen Denkens einzubeziehen.<sup>55</sup> Berichte über sein Leben haben auch viele der subversiven Elemente, die ich bisher in dieser Studie skizziert habe. Daher kann die Jesus-Literatur des ersten Jahrhunderts nicht einfach als eine *sui generis*-Kategorie der Literatur verstanden werden, sondern vielmehr in kohärenter Weise in die Bahn der subversiven biographischen Tradition eingeordnet werden.

---

<sup>50</sup> PELLICCIA 2012, 37.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> KURKE 2011, 95.

<sup>55</sup> Mehr dazu: STOWERS 2010; MALHERBE 1970, 203–217; 1987; 1989; ENGBERG-PEDERSEN 2000; 2010.

## Fazit: die Evangelien als subversive Biographie

So seltsam es sein mag, die *Alexanderromance*, das Leben von Äsop und die Evangelien unter ein und demselben Genre zu subsumieren, können diese Erzählungen von Jesu Taten und Sprüchen zu derselben biographischen Tradition gehören. Wie Sokrates oder Äsop, steht Jesus am Rand der Gesellschaft und ist machtlos gegenüber dem Staat. Bei seinen Begegnungen mit Pharisäern oder anderen Gesprächspartnern gewinnt er seine Siege durch seinen scharfsinnigen Verstand und seine Fähigkeit, die Worte seiner Gegner gegen sie zu wenden – darin ähnelt er Alexander, als er sich allein und wehrlos im Palast von Darius befindet. Obwohl uns sein körperliches Erscheinungsbild nicht beschrieben wird, wird er dennoch als Aussenseiter aus einer unteren Klasse der Gesellschaft und mit wenigen Mitteln dargestellt. Es folgen ihm Fischer nach und er unterrichtet und interagiert mit anderen *Commoners*. Er wird von Johannes getauft, der wie ein Zyniker in der Wüste lebt und Kamelhaare mit einem Ledergürtel um die Taille trägt (Mt 3,4). Er isst nur Heuschrecken und Honig. Und wie bereits erwähnt, kommt Jesu Leben zu einem vorzeitigen Ende, er wird angeklagt und öffentlich hingerichtet.

Gelehrte haben es jedoch oft abgelehnt, die Evangelien und Q mit der Tradition der alten Biographie zu vergleichen. Adela Yarbro Collins beispielsweise fordert den Status des Markusevangeliums als Biographie heraus und zieht es vor, es als Version historischer Erzählung zu lesen. Wie Collins bemerkt, wurden Vergleiche zwischen Markus und Werken wie dem Leben von Äsop oder dem Leben von Homer aufgrund ihres literarischen Stils sowie ihrer Struktur und insbesondere ihrer chronologischen Organisation gezogen.<sup>56</sup> Sie zitiert auch Vernon Robbins' Hypothese, dass der Autor von Markus jüdische prophetische Traditionen über Lehrer, wie etwa Sokrates in der griechisch-römischen Kultur, miteinander verband.<sup>57</sup> Collins wendet jedoch ein, diese Ähnlichkeiten nicht zwingend bedeuteten, dass Markus und die Erinnerungsstücke von Xenophon derselben Gattung angehören. Dies mit der Begründung, dass Ähnlichkeiten in der Form die inhaltlichen Unterschiede nicht überwiegen. Insbesondere wird Jesus als Exorzist eingeführt, mit der Fähigkeit, Dämonen auszutreiben, was in der sokratischen Tradition nicht vorhanden ist. Collins meint in dieser Hinsicht, dass er eher Empedokles als Sokrates ähnelt.<sup>58</sup> Collins fragt auch, ob der Hauptzweck der Arbeit darin besteht, das Wesen oder den Charakter von Jesus Christus darzustellen und Jesus als Modell darzustellen, um anzugeben, wer die wahre Tradition besitzt – dies ist die Funktion

---

<sup>56</sup> COLLINS 1992, 20; AUNE 1987, 57. PERVO 1998, 81–82 schlägt vor, Äsop „als Evangelium“ zu lesen und es als einen Roman mit möglicherweise historischen Merkmalen zu klassifizieren, der den „Volkserzählungen“ über Alexander, Apollonius von Tyana, Jesus, die Apostel, Daniel, Mordechai und Tobit ähnelt.

<sup>57</sup> COLLINS 1992, 22, ROBBINS 1992, 53.

<sup>58</sup> COLLINS 1992, 22.



didaktischer Biographien.<sup>59</sup> Durch diesen Ausscheidungsprozess kommt Collins zu dem Schluss, dass Markus eher der Gattung der Historie [oder: Geschichtsschreibung] zuzurechnen sei.

Obwohl die Botschaft Jesu sich offensichtlich von der Sokrates' unterscheidet, widersprechen beide der vorherrschenden Ideologie und werden zumindest vorübergehend aus einer relativen Schwäche herausgebracht. Jesu Wundertätigkeit oder Wunder, wie seine Begabung für Gleichnisse und subtile Sprüche, sind in diesem Fall genau die Waffen der Wahl. In dieser Tradition wird die moralische Exzellenz des biographischen Subjekts vorausgesetzt, jedoch nicht durch eine Aufzählung der klassischen Tugenden wie im bürgerlichen Typus veranschaulicht. Der Fokus liegt vielmehr darauf, wie der Protagonist trotz seiner bescheidenen oder prekären Position seine Überlegenheit demonstriert (die *Alexanderromance* versucht, ihr Subjekt in der letzteren Situation zu platzieren). Was Xenophons *Memorabilia* und die Evangelien als biographische Erzählungen verbindet, ist darüber hinaus die Art und Weise, in der sowohl die konventionellen Werte als auch die Charaktereigenschaften hinterfragt werden, die ihnen zugrunde liegen. In dieser Hinsicht befinden sich die Evangelien in einem Dialog mit der literarischen Tradition der Biographie und zeigen, dass bestimmte Details des Lebens von Jesus das Ergebnis der Auseinandersetzung eines Autors mit einem etablierten Genre des Schreiblebens gewesen sein könnten und nicht notwendigerweise die Reflexion einer mündlichen Tradition.

Es bleibt jedoch die Frage, inwieweit diese βίοι die schöpferische Tätigkeit eines Autors sind und inwieweit diese Autoren ihre Informationen über diese Personen von anderswo her beziehen. Unglücklicherweise können wir über den Bezug auf literarische Entlehnungen aus anderen Literaturteilen hinaus keine absolut gesicherten Annahmen machen. Was wir jedoch wissen, ist, dass diese Biographien, ob vollständige und zusammenhängende Erzählungen oder eher repräsentativ für die Tradition des „offenen Textes“, die Produkte kreativer Produkte literarischer Tätigkeit sind. Dies gilt auch für andere Formen der Literatur, die vorgeben, eine bestimmte Figur oder Figuren, ihr Leben oder ihr Denken in irgendeiner Weise darzustellen – zum Beispiel Pseudepigrapha, *chreiai* usw.<sup>60</sup> Es ist denkbar, dass diese

---

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 25–27.

<sup>60</sup> Zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt möchte ich mich eingehender mit den verschiedenen Kategorien der Literatur befassen, die über oder in Anlehnung an verschiedene hochkarätige antike Figuren erstellt wurden. Ein Bereich, auf den ich besonders eingehen möchte, ist die Verbreitung pythagoreischer Materialien in der späteren Republik und im frühen Kaiserreich. In diesem Sinne wirft Cicero Italiens Sättigung mit epikureischen Schriften vor, die nur durch den regen Handel mit pythagoreischen Dokumenten in Rom konkurrierten. Tatsächlich war König Juba II. von Mauretanien, ein begeisterter Schüler der pythagoräischen Lehre, dafür bekannt, nach Rom zu reisen, um neue Schriften von 'Pythagoras' aus der dort im Umlauf befindlichen umfangreichen Literatur zu erhalten. Wendts Dissertation konzentriert sich auf die Aktivitäten dessen, was sie bezeichnet. Religiöse Fachleute oder religiöse Unternehmer, die sich nicht hauptsächlich mit der Tätigkeit von Schriftstellern befassen, obwohl in diesem Zitat auf sie verwiesen wird. Eine Erweiterung dieses Themas würde eine genauere Untersuchung des Wissens über literarische Netzwerke und die Produktion und den Austausch von Texten in Orten wie Rom und Alexandria beinhalten.

Literaturgattung einen roten Faden enthält. Wenn Pelliccia jedoch vor Aesop warnt, woher wissen wir dann, dass wir uns das anschauen?<sup>61</sup> Angesichts unserer Kenntnisse über die Ausbildung, die im Altertum mit der Herstellung eines Schriftsatzes verbunden ist, liegt es nahe, dass unsere erste Frage bei der Annäherung an einen ursprünglichen Text darin bestehen sollte, die Art und Weise zu berücksichtigen, in der er verschiedene literarische Konventionen, Präzedenzfälle und verbreitete Gesprächsformen einhält – darunter eine subversive Biographie.

Vor diesem Hintergrund wende ich mich nun den Logienquellen Q zu. Wie bisher diskutiert, steht Q in gewisser Hinsicht ausserhalb der anderen Literatur über Jesus im ersten Jahrhundert, weil man es sich als eine Sprichwortquelle vorstellt – eine literarische Form ähnlich wie *chreiai*, verwendet von Matthäus und Lukas, um ihnen beim Aufbau ihrer Erzählungen über Jesus zu helfen. Einige Gelehrte haben auch spekuliert, dass Q bestimmte mündliche Überlieferungen über die Lehren Jesu bewahrt, wobei seine nicht-darstellende Form einen einfacheren und weniger ausgefeilten Übertragungsweg bedeutet. Wie bei der Suche nach einer mündlichen Tradition hinter dem Leben von Äsop, urteile ich, dass diese Hypothese schwer aufrechtzuerhalten ist. Selbst wenn man die Prämisse akzeptieren würde, dass Q eine Sprichwortquelle war, wäre dies auch eine Form von Literatur, die Geschicklichkeit und Fachwissen bedurfte, um produziert zu werden. Darüber hinaus behält Q, obwohl rekonstruiert auf der Grundlage von abgekürzten Teilen von Matthäus und Lukas, durch ihre jeweiligen Lehren genügend Details über Jesus und Johannes den Täufer, so dass auch sie in das Modell der subversiven Biographie passen. Beide Figuren werden nämlich als jüdische Lehrertypen dargestellt, die Lehren oder „Sprüche“ anbieten, die unter anderem bestimmte Elemente der vorherrschenden Kultur- und Machtstruktur untergraben. Eines dieser Elemente ist die Kultur und Religion von Judäa, wie sie der Tempel symbolisiert. Interessanterweise wurden Verweise auf den Tempel in Q seit langem mit späteren Ergänzungen oder Redaktionen von Q in Verbindung gebracht. Wenn wir jedoch Q und die Werte, die er durch die Linse der subversiven Biographie gesehen darstellt, überprüfen, zeigt sich m.E., dass das Schreiben besser verstanden werden kann als Bericht von den Lehren und Leben zweier jüdischer Persönlichkeiten, für die der Tempel und sein verbundenes dominantes religiöses und kulturelles System nicht im Mittelpunkt standen.

---

<sup>61</sup> PELLICCIA 2012, 37.

## Bibliographie

- AUNE, D.E. 1987. *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*. Philadelphia.
- BALDICK, C. (ed.) 2008. Biography. In: *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 3. Oxford–New York.
- BORDWELL, D. 1989. *Making Meaning: Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema*. Cambridge.
- BURRIDGE, R.A. 2004. *What are the Gospels?: A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*. Grand Rapids.
- BURRIDGE, R.A. 2006. Reading the Gospels as Biography. In: B. McGing, J. Mossman (eds.), *The Limits of Ancient Biography*, 31–49. Oakville.
- BUTLMANN, R. 1994. *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*. Peabody.
- COLLINS, A.Y. 1990. *Is Mark's Gospel a life of Jesus?: The Question of Genre*. Milwaukee.
- DUCROT, O., TODOROV, T. 1972. *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage*. Paris.
- EDWARDS, M.J. 2000. Birth, Death, and Divinity in Porphyry's Life of Plotinus. In: T. Hägg, P. Rousseau (eds.), *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, 52–71. Berkeley.
- ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, T. 2000. *Paul and the Stoics*. Edinburgh.
- ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, T. 2010. *Cosmology of the Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit*. Oxford.
- GUIJARRO, S.G. 2009. *La Imatge del Filòsof i de L'activitat Filosòfica a la Grècia Antiga: Anàlisi Dels Tòpics Biogràfics Presents a les Vides i doctirnes del filòsofs més il·lustres de Diògenes Laerci*. Barcelona.
- HÄGG, T. 2012. *The Art of Biography in Antiquity*. New York.
- HANSEN, W. 1998. *Anthology of Ancient Greek Popular Literature*. Bloomington.
- KOESTER, H. 1990. *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development*. Harrisburg.
- KONSTAN, D. 1998. The Alexander Romance: The Cunning of the Open Text. *Lexis* 16, 123–138.
- KURKE, L. 2011. *Aesopic Conversations: Popular Tradition, Cultural Dialogue, and the Invention of Greek Prose*. Princeton.
- LISSARRAGUE, F. 2000. Aesop, Between Man and Beast: Ancient Portraits and Illustrations. In: B. Cohen (ed), *Not the Classical Ideal: Athens and the Construction of the Other in Greek Art*. Leiden.
- MALHERBE, A.J. 1970. 'Gentle as a Nurse': The Lyric Background to I Thessalonians ii. *Novum Testamentum* 12, 203–217.
- MALHERBE, A.J. 1987. *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care*. Mifflintown.
- MALHERBE, A.J. 1989. *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*. Minneapolis.
- NIEHOFF, M. 1992. *The Figure of Joseph in Post-Biblical Jewish Literature*. Leiden–New York.
- PELLICCIA, H.N. 2012. Where Does His Wit Come From? *The New York Review of Books* 59, 17 (November 8, 2012), 36–40.
- PELLING, C. 1995. Plutarch's Adaptation of his Source-Material. In: B. Scardigli (ed.), *Essays on Plutarch's Lives*, 125–154. Oxford.
- PELLING, C.B.R. 1979. Plutarch's Method of Work in the Roman Lives. *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 99, 74–96.
- PERVO, R. 1998. A Nihilist Fabula: Introducing the Life of Aesop. In: R.F. Hock, J.B. Chance, J. Perkins (eds.), *Ancient Fiction and Christian Narrative*, 77–120. Atlanta.
- ROBBINS, V.K. 1992. *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark*. Minneapolis.

- ROSEN, R.M., KEANE, C.C. 2014. Greco-Roman Satirical Poetry. In: T.K. Hubbard (ed), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Sexualities*, 381–397. Malden.
- RUSSEL, D.A. 1995. On Reading Plutarch's Lives. In: Barbara Scardigli (ed.), *Essays on Plutarch's Lives*, 75–94. Oxford.
- STONEMAN, R. 1991. *The Greek Alexander Romance*. London.
- STOWERS, S.K. 2010. Jesus the Teacher and Stoic Ethics in the Gospel of Matthew. In: T. Rasimus, T. Engberg-Pedersen, I. Duderberg. *Stoicism in Early Christianity*, 59–76. Grand Rapids.
- THOMAS, C.M. 1998. Stories without Texts and without Authors: The Problem of Fluidity in Ancient Novelistic Texts and Early Christian Literature. In: R.F. Hock, J.B. Chance, J. Perkins (eds.), *Ancient Fiction and Early Christian Narrative*, 273–291. Atlanta.
- TOMASHEWSKY, B. 1978. "Literary Genres". *Formalism, History, Comparison, Genre. Russian Poetics in Translation 5*. Oxford.
- VORSTER, W., BOTHA, J.E. (ed.) 1999. *Speaking of Jesus: Essays on Biblical Language, Gospel Narrative*. Leiden–Boston.
- WALLACE-HADRILL, A. 1983. *Suetonius: The Scholar and His Caesars*. New Haven.
- WÄSTBERG, P. 2010. *The Journey of Anders Sparrman: A Biographical Novel*. London.
- WILSON, E.R. 2007. *The Death of Socrates*. Cambridge.



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## Late Roman Tableware from Argamum – ‘Faleză Est’. African, Cypriot, Egeean and Pontic wares

Marian MOCANU<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** *The archaeological excavations of the ‘Faleză Est’ sector have extended over twenty years. Their result was the discovery of a large quantity of ceramic fragments from the Hellenistic and Roman eras. This article analyzes the tableware from the late Roman period, imported from North Africa, Cyprus, the Aegean basin and the Pontic region. Most of the imported tableware comes from North African workshops. The ceramic fragments discovered in the ‘Faleză Est’ sector are dated in the 5th–6th centuries.*

**Rezumat.** *Săpăturile arheologice din sectorul „Faleză Est”-s-au întins pe o perioadă de douăzeci de ani. În urma acestora a fost descoperită o cantitate mare de fragmente ceramice din epocile elenistică și romană. În acest articol este analizată ceramic de masa din perioada romană târzie, care a fost importată din Africa de Nord, Cipru, bazinul egeean și regiunea pontică. Majoritatea ceramicii de masă importată provine din atelierele nord-africane. Fragmentele ceramice descoperite în sectorul „Faleză Est” sunt datate în secolele V–VI.*

**Keywords:** Argamum, Scythia, western Black Sea, imports, tableware.

Argamum is one of the most important Greek-Roman archaeological sites near the Danube Delta (Figure 1/1). Modern archaeological excavations began in 1965, and have held every year ever since. However, the results of the research, especially those for the Roman era, are mostly unknown. In recent years different researchers have published a series of articles on Roman ceramics from Argamum, and I have presented a brief history of them in a recent paper dedicated to tableware discovered in the Central Sector of the city of Argamum.<sup>2</sup>

The archaeological researches of the “Faleză Est” Sector were carried out between 1981 and 2001, being conducted by Mihaela Mănușu-Adameșteanu and Lucrețiu Bîrliba. The excavations took place near the cliff of Lake Razelm, in the south-eastern part of the late Roman fort (Figure 1/2). Apart from the specific discoveries of the Archaic and Hellenistic epochs, were unearthed the ruins of some late Roman buildings dated between the 4th and the 7th centuries.

---

<sup>1</sup> Eco-Museal Research Institute, Tulcea; email: marian1054@yahoo.com.

<sup>2</sup> MOCANU 2018, 336.

Since the archaeological excavation spans 20 years, the amount of pottery discovered is substantial. For this reason, in this article, I will present only tableware imported from North African, Cypriot, Aegean and Pontic workshops. The Phocaean fine ware will be presented in a later publication.

The presence of North African wares in the West-Pontic area is not a novelty. In all late Roman sites from the region is found this type of pottery, whether we are talking about the ones on the Black Sea shoreline,<sup>3</sup> inland the province of Scythia<sup>4</sup> or the Danube limes.<sup>5</sup>

Tableware imported from North Africa at Argamum, was discovered in the ‘Central Sector’ and at ‘Basilica II’.<sup>6</sup> The earliest African form identified in the ‘Faleză Est’ sector is H 62B (Figure 2/1). The two fragments are extremely small in size and did not allow the completion of entire vessels profile. Currently, Form H 62 is almost unknown in the West-Pontic area. Eight pottery fragments from Halmyris were classified by F. Topoleanu in the form H 62, although these exemplars, according to A. Opaïț, are products of pontic workshops.<sup>7</sup>

The traditional spreading area of the H 62 form is the Mediterranean basin, and the specific chronological interval is between the middle of the 4th century and the first quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> The H 76 form represent a novelty in the repertoire of North African ceramic imports from Argamum (Figure 2/2). Its presence in the province of Scythia is sporadic, with a few specimens attested at Aegyssus.<sup>9</sup> These large dishes are dated back to the middle of the 5th century, mainly being common in the western Mediterranean area.<sup>10</sup> Some examples can be decorated by stamping or by making some incisions in the raw fabric, especially in the upper area of the rim. The shard from Argamum does not retain any decorative elements. From a typological point of view, form H 76 is followed by form H 87, this being present in the studied group by three pottery- shards.

One belongs to variant H 87A, and two are specific to variant H 87C (Figure 2/3–4). In the west-pontic area the bowls H 87 are found in settlements such as Halmyris, where it was discovered in specific archaeological contexts from the end of the 5th and 6th centuries,<sup>11</sup> Ibida<sup>12</sup> or Capidava.<sup>13</sup> The presence of the H 87 form is not an absolute novelty at Argamum;

---

<sup>3</sup> ILIESCU, BOTTEZ 2018; SUCEVEANU 1982.

<sup>4</sup> GĂMUREAC 2009, 251–252, 266–267; MOCANU 2011, 227–229.

<sup>5</sup> OPRIȘ 2003, 145–150; TOPOLEANU 2000, 69–79.

<sup>6</sup> MOCANU 2018, 337–338.

<sup>7</sup> TOPOLEANU 2000, 171–172, pl. 17/142–146, versus OPAIȚ 1991, 165, pl. 44.

<sup>8</sup> HAYES 1972, 107–109, fig. 18/14.

<sup>9</sup> MOCANU, NUȚU 2017, 125, fig. 6/1.

<sup>10</sup> HAYES 1972, 124.

<sup>11</sup> TOPOLEANU 2000, 73–74, pl. 18/151–152.

<sup>12</sup> MOCANU 2011, 228, pl. 2/1–3.

<sup>13</sup> OPRIȘ 2003, 145–146, pl. 50/339 și pl. 54/340.

similar ceramic fragments were discovered in the “Basilica II” area.<sup>14</sup> The same is true for the H 91 form, in addition to the specimen known in “Basilica II”, a ceramic fragment has also been identified in the “Faleză Est” sector. It belongs to variant H 91B (Figure 2/5). The only known analogies in the vicinity of the fort at Argamum are in Histria<sup>15</sup> and Ibida.<sup>16</sup> The dating of form H 91 is between the second half of the 5th century and the first half of the 6th century.

The most common North African form at Argamum is H 99. In the “Faleză Est” sector 14 ceramic fragments have been identified, eight belong to the H 99B variant, and six correspond to the H 99C variant (Figures 2/6–10; 3/11–12). Form H 99 represents the North African ceramic tableware that entered the West-Pontic area in the most extensive cellars during the 6th century. The closest known analogies are at Histria<sup>17</sup> or Halmyris.<sup>18</sup> From the ‘Faleză Est’ sector, there are also two floors of North African plates that have stamped decoration (Figure 3/13–14). Variations of the same decorative motif is present on both ceramic fragments, which is the dotted concentric circle. This motif is undoubtedly part of a more sophisticated setting. Chronologically, the two shades could be framed in the second half of the 5th century or the first part of the 6th century.

The Cypriot tableware constitute a significant element of novelty for the entire West-Pontic area (Figure 3/15). The only known specimen so far, apart from the one discovered at Argamum, is the one from Histria, dating to the middle of the 5th century.<sup>19</sup> Hayes did not classify the form found at Argamum in its typology. Still, similar vessels were discovered in the Athenian Agora in contexts dated to the end of the 3rd century and the beginning of the 4th century.<sup>20</sup> The rarity of Cypriot ceramics is an intriguing element. At the moment, the explanation may be that the stage of archaeological research and the publication of ceramic material in the West-Pontic area is not sufficiently advanced to bring to light more Cypriot imports. However, the regional diffusion of Cypriot workshops is a factor to be considered.

Another little known ceramic category in the West-Pontic area is the so-called Light-coloured. The presence of this type of dishes has been reported so far in Aegyssus,<sup>21</sup> Halmyris<sup>22</sup> and Topraichioi.<sup>23</sup> In the ‘Faleză Est’ sector, two typical fragments (Figure 3/16–17) have been discovered, belonging to bowls and five atypical shards from plate floors, some

---

<sup>14</sup> MOCANU 2018, 337, fig. 2/1.

<sup>15</sup> SUCEVEANU 2007, 208–209, pl. 75/29–31.

<sup>16</sup> MOCANU 2011, 228, pl. 2/4.

<sup>17</sup> ILIESCU, BOTTEZ 2018, 156–158, pl. 1/8–10, pl. 2, pl. 3/23–31.

<sup>18</sup> TOPOLEANU 2000, 75/157, pl. 18/157.

<sup>19</sup> BĂJENARU 2014, 240, pl. 1/1.

<sup>20</sup> HAYES 2008, 249, fig. 142/1420.

<sup>21</sup> MOCANU, NUȚU 2017, 130, fig. 7/1–2.

<sup>22</sup> OPAIȚ 1991, 166, fig. 45/312–313.

<sup>23</sup> OPAIȚ 1991A, 230, fig. 41/4–5.

of them decorated by incision with the toothed wheel. This type of pottery that seems to come from the Aegea area is specific to the 5th century.

The last category of table ceramics discussed in this article is Pontic Red Slip Ware (Figure 3/18). Although its presence south of the Danube is considered an exception, an increasing number of archaeological sites confirm the existence of this category in the province of Scythia, during the 5th century and in the first part of the 6th century. The only ceramic fragment found in the ‘Faleză Est’ sector comes from a bowl specific to form 7, plus four plate floors. Form 7 is attested in the ‘Central Sector’ of Argamum, but also in Ibida.<sup>24</sup>

In the ‘Faleză Est’ sector from Argamum, we have inventoried a total of 27 pottery-shards from the geographical areas discussed in this article. In the first place is the North African pottery with 23 exemplars, followed by the Aegean workshops with two light-coloured ceramic fragments and the Pontic and Cypriot workshops with one specimen. Chronologically, except for the ceramic shard from Cyprus, the group from the ‘Faleză Est’ sector is homogeneous, falling between the limits of the 5th and 6th centuries.

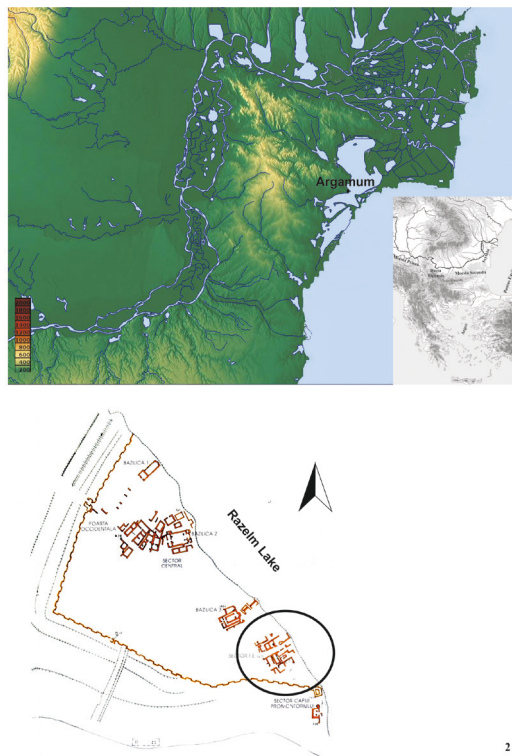


Figure 1. Location of Argamum (1) and ‘Faleză Est’, the area of excavation in the south-eastern part of the late Roman fort (2)

<sup>24</sup> MOCANU 2011, 230, pl. 2/9; 2018, 338, fig. 2/12–16.



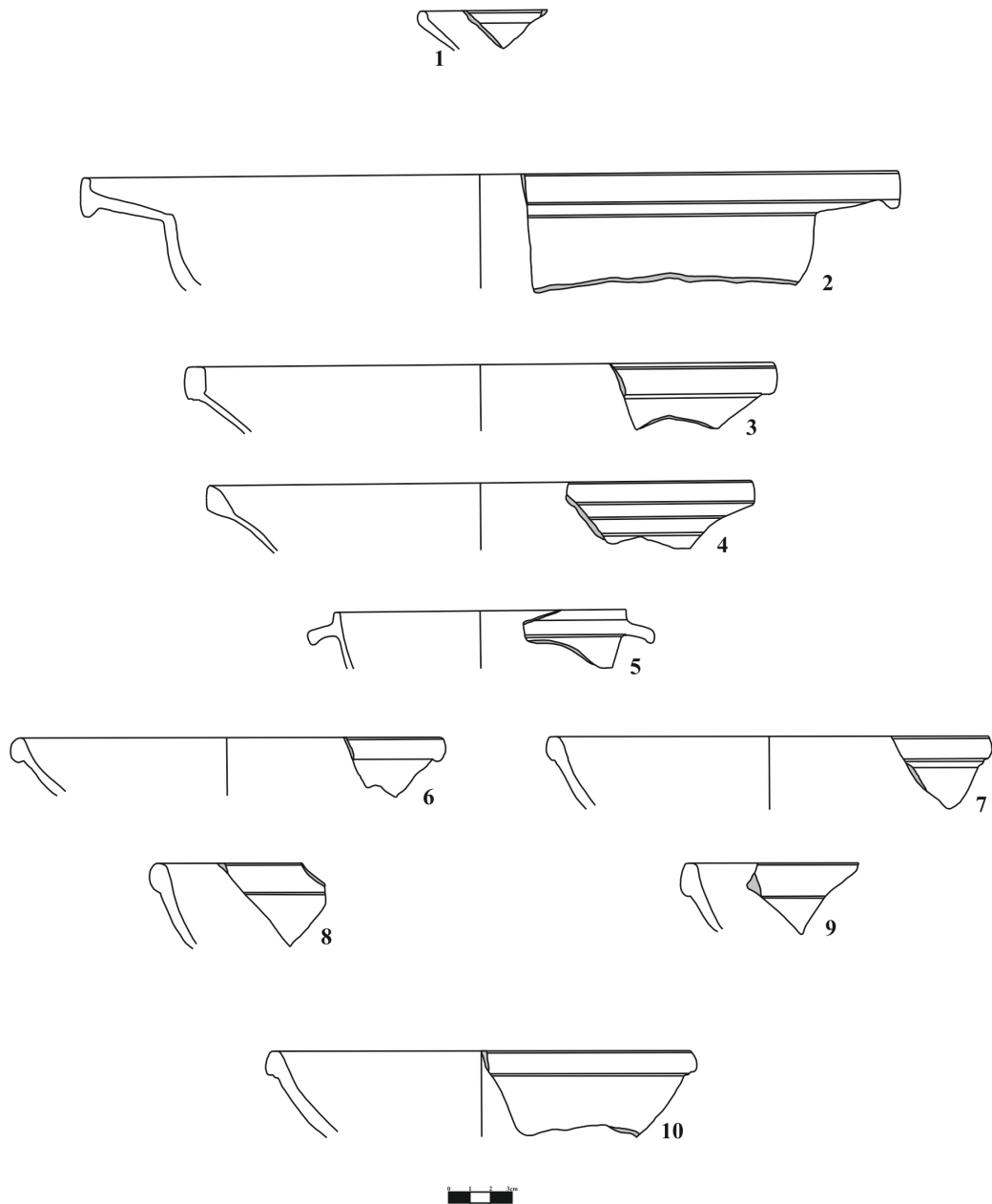


Figure 2. H 62B (1), H 76 (2), H 87C (3-4), H 91B (5) and H 99C (6-10) from Argamum - 'Faleză Est'

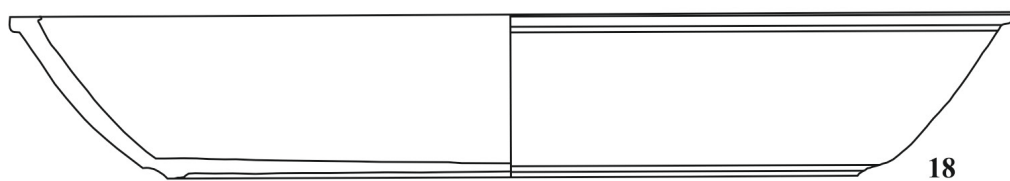
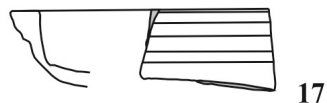
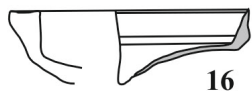
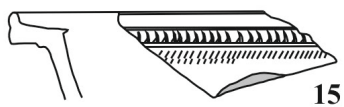
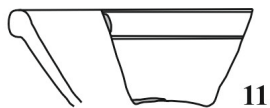


Figure 3. H 99C (11-12), floors with plates with stamped decoration (13-14), Cypriot tableware (15), light-coloured dishes (16-17) and Pontic Red Slip Ware (18) from Argamum – ‘Faleză Est’

## Selective catalogue

### African Red Slip Ware

#### Form H 62B

1. Dish. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 2001, FE, C8, -0.70 m. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 0.9.  
Bright-brown fabric (2.5 YR 5/6), reddish-brown slip (2.5 YR 4/8).

#### Form H 76

2. Dish. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 1990, FE, Dm: 39, Hp: 5.5.  
Orange fabric (2.5 YR 6/8) with limestone, orange slip (5 YR 6/8).

#### Form H 87A

3. Dish. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 1986, FE, -1.50 m. Dm: 28; Hp: 3.2.  
Dark-reddish-brown fabric (5 YR 3/2) with impurities, very dark-reddish-brown slip (2.5 YR 2/2).

#### Form H 87B

4. Dish. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 2001, FE, C8-10, -0.90 m. Dm: 26; Hp: 3.2.  
Orange fabric (2.5 YR 6/8) with some impurities, bright orange slip (5 YR 7/8).

#### Form H 91B

5. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 1990, FE, -0,70 m. Dm: 14; Hp: 2.8.  
Orange fabric (2.5 YR 6/8), bright brown slip (2.5 YR 5/8).

#### Form H 99B

6. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 2001, FE, C6, -0.30 m. Dm: 10; Hp: 2.8.  
Bright brown fabric (2.5 YR 5/8), bright orange slip (5 YR 6/8).
7. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 1996, FF, C 15. Dm: 21; Hp: 3.5.  
Dark reddish-brown fabric (2.5 YR 3/6), bright brown slip (2.5 YR 5/8) dark shades.
8. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 2001, FE, C6-10, -0.60 m. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 4.1.  
Bright brown fabric (2.5 YR 5/8), orange slip (5 YR 6/8).
9. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 1993, FE, C4, -0.40 m. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 3.4.  
Very dark reddish-brown fabric (2.5 YR 2/3), reddish-blak slip (2.5 YR 2/1).

#### Form H 99C

10. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 2001, FE, C6, -0.40 m. Dm: 20; Hp: 4.1.  
Orange fabric (5 YR 6/8) with some impurities, orange slip (5 YR 7/8).
11. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 1990, FE, C4, -1.05 m. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 3.7 m.  
Bright brown fabric (2.5 YR 5/8), orange slip (5 YR 7/8).
12. Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.  
Argamum 2001, FE, C1, -0.70 m. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 2.8.  
Bright reddish-brown fabric (5 YR 5/8) with limestone particles, orange slip (5 YR 7/8).

Shards with stamped decoration

**13.** Plate. Small flor fragment.

Argamum, FE, passim. Dimension: 4.6 x 5.4.

Dark reddish-brown fabric (5 YR 3/6), reddish-brown slip (5 YR 4/8)

Concentric circles, part of more intricate decorative style.

**14.** Plate. Small flor fragment.

Argamum 1991, FE, C3. Dimension: 4.5 x 4.1.

Bright brown fabric (2.5 YR 5/8) with some impurities, orange slip (5 YR 6/8).

Concentric circles combined with crescents, part of more complex decorative style.

Cypriot Red Slip Ware

Form not classified

**15.** Bowl. Rim fragment and upper part.

Argamum 1991, FE, C15, -0.45 m. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 3.3 cm.

Reddish-brown fabric (2.5 YR 4/8), dark reddish-brown slip (2.5 YR 3/6). The exterior surface of the rim and wall are decorated with toothed wheel.

Light Colored Ware

Form not classified

**16.** Dish. Rim fragment and upper part.

Argamum 1981, Trench E. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 2.9 cm.

Light grey fabric (7.5 YR 8/2), dark reddish-brown slip (5 YR 3/6).

**17.** Dish. Rim fragment and upper part.

Argamum 1981, Trench E. Dm: undeterminable; Hp: 2.7 cm.

Light yellow-orange fabric (7.5 YR 8/4), bright brown slip (2.5 YR 5/6).

Pontic Red Slip Ware

Form 7

**18.** Dish. Rim, entire wall and part of the floor.

Argamum 1995, FE, C9, -1.30 m. Dm: 38; Hp: 6.2.

Bright brown fabric (2.5 YR 5/8), dark reddish-brown slip (2.5 YR 3/6), partially applied on the exterior surface.

## References

- BĂJENARU, C. 2014. Some Rare Late Roman Fine Wares Discovered in the Central Sector of the Late Roman City at Histria. *Pontica* 47, Supplementum III, 239–244.
- GĂMUREAC, E. 2009. Edificiul B1 din sectorul B al cetății Tropaeum Traiani. Considerații preliminare privind cercetările din 2005–2008. *Pontica* 42, 243–299.
- HAYES, J.W. 1972. *Late Roman Pottery*, British School at Rome. London.
- HAYES, J.W. 2008. *The Athenian Agora XXXII. Roman Pottery. Fine-Wares Imports*. Princeton, New Jersey.
- ILIESCU, I. BOTTEZ, V. 2018. Late Roman African Red Slip Ware from the Acropolis Centre-South Sector (Histria), *Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice. Serie Nouă* 14, 155–167.
- MOCANU, M. 2011. Considerații privind ceramica de masă de la (L)Ibida. Studiu de caz. Sectorul Extramuros Vest III. *Peuce* SN 9, 225–252.
- MOCANU, M. 2018. Late Roman Tableware from Argamum. *Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica* 24/2, 335–356.

- MOCANU, M., NUȚU, G. 2017. Late Roman Red Slip Ware from Aegyssus. *Novensia* 28, 121–140.
- OPAIȚ, A. 1991. Ceramica din așezarea și cetatea de la Independența (Murighiol), secolele V î.e.n.–VII e.n. *Peuce* 10, 133–182 (vol. I), 165–216 (vol. II).
- OPAIȚ, A. 1991a. Ceramica. In: A. Opaîț, *et alii*, Fortificația și așezarea romană de la Babadag-Topraichioi, *Peuce* 10, 211–260 (vol. I), 227–268 (vol. II).
- OPRIȘ, I.C. 2003. *Ceramica romană târzie și paleobizantină de la Capidava în contextul descoperirilor de la Dunărea de Jos (sec. IV–VI p. Chr.)*. București.
- SUCEVEANU, A. 1982. Contribuții la studiul ceramicii romano-bizantine de la Histria. *Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche și Arheologie* 33/1, 79–107.
- SUCEVEANU, A. 1987. *Histria XIII. La basilique épiscopale*. Bucarest.
- TOPOLEANU, F. 2000. *Ceramica romană și romano-bizantină de la Halmyris (sec. I–VII d.Ch.)*. Tulcea.



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



## REVIEWS





M.<sup>a</sup> PILAR GONZÁLEZ-CONDE PUENTE, *Las provincias de Hispania en los años de Adriano*,  
Libros Pórtico, Zaragoza, 2019, 416 p., ISBN 978-84-7956-185-7

Hispania is a privileged province of the Roman Empire with respect to the abundance of epigraphic, archaeological, artistic, and numismatic material, as well as the consistent literary information, which allow elaborating excellent monograph works, such as the one authored by M.<sup>a</sup> Pilar González-Conde Puente, reviewed in these pages. It is a dense work, based on the exquisite knowledge of the sources (among which the juridical and epigraphic ones occupy a special position), on the dextrous handling of the instruments and on the critical dialogue with the extensive secondary bibliography. The volume is structured in sections that follow logically one another, allowing a heedful observation of the historical evolution of the Hispanic provinces, viz. Hispania Citerior, Lusitania and Baetica, during the Principate of Hadrian (117-138), but with natural reverberations towards the Flavian and Antonine eras, in general: the place of the provinces within the wider Roman world, the provincial and local society, the imperial performers of Hispanic origin (Trajan, Hadrian), senators and knights of peninsular ancestry (the *Aelii* and the *Ulpii* from Italica, the *Annii* from Ucubi, the *Roscii* from Merida, the *Messii Rustici*, L. Licinius Sura et alii, respectively the *Rufinii* from Saguntum, the *Numisii* from Tarraco, the *Aemilii* from Aeso and others), local elites (the *Acilii* from Singilia Barba and so forth), provincial administrative organism and authorities (*concilia provinciarum*; *legati Augusti pro praetores*; *legati Augusti iuridici*; *procuratores*; provincial *flamines*), the so-called “itinerant administration” inaugurated by Hadrian, local communities, among which the *Colonia Aelia Augusta Italica*, and their institutions, civic engineering works, economic life (production and trade in Baetic oil, mining exploitations), lines of communication, army (*legio VII Gemina*, *auxilia*, *milites* raised in the Hispaniae, etc.) elements of juridical law (*hospitium*, *ius Latii*, etc.), religious phenomena (Roman divinities, *Hercules Gaditanus*, cults of mysteries, the imperial cult, etc.). Seen from this perspective, the history of Iberia under Trajan’s successor seems almost unsettlingly clear, apparently striving to confirm an overstatement by a late orator, Latinus Pacatus Drepanius, who said in 389 said about Hispania that it was *terris omnibus terra felicior* (*Pan.* XII [2], 4, 2). If a specialist, even the most exigent one, is left with this conviction, this is certainly due to the author, who in this meticulous analytical enterprise, taken from a diachronic perspective, does not overlook any aspect, whether of a general or local concern, does not omit any piece of useful information, does not avoid any subject, be it controversial, liable to divergent interpretations or previously tackled by reputed scholars (G. Alföldy, A. Birley *et alii*), it champions the multidisciplinary, paleographical and contextualised study of the sources, is attentive to all nuances, including

to denominations (she duly rejects the presentist terminology—“Spain”, “Spaniards”—, preferring the ancient names — Hispania, Hispaniards). Anyone who steadily and attentively goes through the sections of the monograph will confirm what has been said above: *Introducción* (p. 11–14); *La península ibérica en los planes imperiales* (p. 15–50); *La vida provincial* (p. 51–94); *La vida local* (p. 95–152); *Sociedad y promoción social de los hispanos* (p. 153–225); *La vida de las comunidades hispanas: legislación y transformaciones económicas* (p. 227–278); *El ejército de Hispania: la legio VII Gemina* (p. 279–320); *Los testimonios religiosos* (p. 323–328); *Conclusiones* (p. 329–333). The abbreviations (p. 335–336), an ample list of the cited literature (p. 337–394), a valuable and exhaustive onomastic index (p. 395–400), a toponymic index (p. 401–407), an index of literary sources (p. 408–409) and, respectively, of epigraphic sources (p. 410–415), complete this splendid volume — a genuine contribution to the study of the Roman history of the Iberian peninsula.

Nelu ZUGRAVU,  
Centrul de Studii Clasice și Creștine, Facultatea de Istorie,  
Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași  
nelu@uaic.ro; z\_nelu@hotmail.com

BRUNO LUISELLI, *Romanobarbarica. Scritti scelti*,  
a cura di ANTONELLA BRUZZONE e MARIA LUISA FELE, SISMEL –  
Edizione del Galluzzo, Firenze, 2017, 666 p. (*mediEVI*), ISBN 978-88-8450-730-3

The two students of Bruno Luiselli, one of the great Italian professors and specialists of late antiquity and early middle ages of the last half of a century, have collected in this massive volume 27 of the numerous contributions “su tematiche romanobarbariche” (p. XVIII–XIX) published by their magister between 1978 and 2014 in various specialised journals and collected editions (*Contributi raccolti nel volume e loro originaria sede editoriale*, p. XV–XVII). Compared to their initial form, they underwent “alcuni ritocchi operati dall’Autore”, both in terms of content and interpretation, as well as bibliographically and editorially (*Nota delle curatrici*, p. XIII). The title under which the papers are gathered is the same as that of the well-known journal edited by Luiselli since 1976 until recently — *Romanobarbarica*; between the covers, they are grouped into four large sections: I. *I rapporti di culture* (p. 3–195); II. *Mondo romanoceltico* (p. 199–353); III. *Mondo romanogermanico* (p. 357–469); IV. *Autori* (p. 473–599). Alongside Luiselli’s high professional standing—foremost his perfect knowledge of the authors and writings of late antiquity and the early middle ages—they testify to his

innovative direction put forward in the investigation of the relations between the Roman world and the so-called “barbarian” one, namely the *cultural relations* (also see Bruno Luiselli, *Prefazione*, p. IX) between the Romans on the one hand, and the Gauls, Franks, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Anglo-Saxons, Lombards, etc. on the other, which manifested on multiple levels – linguistic, literary, religious, theological, scientific, artistic, historiographical, paedetic, juridical. Deciphering their articulations, the historical context they favoured, the concrete forms of manifestation, the personalities involved in promoting them allow, as demonstrated by the texts gathered by this volume, a more nuanced understanding of certain extremely important historical processes and phenomena that were the basis of the development of Western European culture – *romanisation, Latinisation, alphabetisation, Christianisation, “inculturazione”, acculturation, assimilation, Roman-Germanic coexistence, economic continuity and transformation, social, institutional and politico-religious, bilingualism, confessional and historiographical “nationalism”*. Accordingly, a collection of erudite studies, thoroughly researched, rich in ideas, fertile for further scrutiny; one who owns it can be called privileged.

Special mention should be made of the *Indice dei nomi e delle cose notevoli* produced by the two curators of the volume. Extremely analytical (65 pages with entries!) (p. 601–666) (I do not share the view that Romanisation is an “acculturazione in senso romano” /p. 601, 653/, the latter being an asymmetrical process less complex than the former), it represents an instrument of work by itself, providing, in particular to the specialist, a profligate access to the matter at hand; it again demonstrate the meticulousness and thoughtfulness with which we have been accustomed by Antonella Bruzzone and Maria Luisa Fele from their own contributions.

Nelu ZUGRAVU,  
Centrul de Studii Clasice și Creștine, Facultatea de Istorie,  
Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași,  
nelu@uaic.ro; z\_nelu@hotmail.com

PAUL N. PEARSON, *Maximinus Thrax: From Common Soldier to Emperor of Rome*,  
Pen & Sword Military, South Yorkshire, 2017, 296 p., ISBN 978-1-5107-0863-1

Since its founding, namely in 1990, and until present day, the British Publishing House Pen & Sword has focused on publishing and distribution of certain titles from the field of military history, but not exclusively, as a series of works pertaining to other fields of humanities were issued: naval and maritime history, local history, genealogy, history of aviation, social history, records of discoveries, archaeology etc. In the last few years, even studies dedicated to Roman

emperors came to be, such as: *The Roman Emperor Aurelian. Restorer of the World* (South Yorkshire, 2015) elaborated by John F. White; *Emperor Alexander Severus. Rome's Age of Insurrection, AD 222-235* (South Yorkshire, 2017) conceived by John S. McHugh; *Augustus at War. The Struggle for the Pax Augusta* (South Yorkshire, 2018) signed by Lindsay Powell; *Lucius Verus and the Roman Defence of the East* (Yorkshire, 2018) compiled by M. C. Bishop; *The Reign of Emperor Gallienus. The Apogee of Roman Cavalry* (South Yorkshire, 2019) written by Ikka Syvanne. In the same field of interest lies the work of Paul N. Pearson, *Maximinus Thrax. From Common Soldier to Emperor of Rome*, upon which we will focus in the following.

This biography of the first soldier-emperor, similar to those of Severus Alexander, Gallienus and Aurelian, brings forth that half a century of crisis, that profoundly shocked the Roman society, which, for certain historians, overlaps with what, in historiography, is considered to be the beginning of Late Antiquity.

Paul N. Pearson is a *Honorary Professor* at the University of Cardiff in Wales, U.K. He is a representative of the scientific guild of geologists and a member of the *School of Earth and Ocean Studies*. Among his fields of interest we count: stratigraphy, paleobiology, micropaleontology, paleoclimatology. In this regard, stand witness several articles (almost 100) published between 1992 and 2018.

The work of Paul N. Pearson has the following structure, comprised of fifteen chapters: Chapter I: *Nurs'd in Blood and War* (p. 1-16); Chapter II: *Cursus Maximini* (p. 17-34); Chapter III: *Regime Change* (p. 35-47); Chapter IV: *Duke of Riverbank* (p. 48-68); Chapter V: *Empire's Edge* (p. 69-84); Chapter VI: *Soldier-Emperor* (p. 85-99); Chapter VII: *Echoes in Eternity* (p. 100-108); Chapter VIII: *Maximinus Augustus* (p. 109-119); Chapter IX: *Provok'd Rebellion* (p. 120-129); Chapter X: *The Noble and the Brave* (p. 130-144); Chapter XI: *Bellum Civile* (p. 145-169); Chapter XII: *A New Start* (p. 170-180); Chapter XIII: *Empire of Fortune* (p. 181-189); Chapter XIV: *The Giant's Legacy* (p. 190-206); Chapter XV: *Postscript: The Ogre in the Met* (p. 207-221). The chapters are preceded by *Acknowledgements* (p. VII), *List of Illustration* (p. IX-XI), *Introduction* (p. XIII-XV), *Prologue* (p. XVII-XXIV) and are followed by *Appendix I. Sources* (p. 221-227), *Appendix II. Chronology of 238* (p. 228-229), the endnotes (p. 230-267), a bibliography (p. 268-285) and the *Index* (p. 286-296).

In the introduction, the author points out that his objective is not to accomplish a research with the target audience as the academic world, but instead, to offer a wide and entertaining perspective upon the first half of the third century (p. XIV). Thus, this title, which has Maximinus Thrax as a protagonist, is a book of popularization.

Regarding the sources used, still in the introductory section we discover that Herodian's work is the main fountain of knowledge from which pieces of information have been extracted. Beside the Greek historian, as shown in the section of *Appendix I*, where a list of all used sources was compiled (p. 221-227), we gather the understanding that Paul N. Pearson

also consulted the writings of Cassius Dio, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Ammianus Marcellinus, Zosimos, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, etc. We acknowledge the fact that the author truly possesses the necessary skills to captivate his readers. The gift of writing, with which Fortuna blessed him, makes the writing experience to be light and captivating. The reader empathizes with the actions of the characters of the book, no matter their social origin, which are presented in various contexts: from the most difficult, tension-filled, death involving ones, until those in which the highest peaks of glory are reached.

Furthermore, Paul N. Pearson possesses a rich cinematography knowledge, which he doesn't hesitate in using in order to support the reader, in his process of visualizing the information presented to him/her. In order to further support our considerations, we offer the following examples: in his attempt to outline the imposing stature of the emperor Maximinus Thrax, the author reminds, in the *Prologue*, names of personalities who had achieved success in the world of sports or film, given their unusual height (p. XIX-XX); in the context of describing Severus Alexander's campaign in the Orient, the author mentions a passage through Armenia, which he considers to be a "Tolkienisue passage", thus accomplishing a connection towards the universe created by the Anglo-Saxon writer J.R.R. Tolkien, in order to stimulate the imagination of the reader (p. 59); in a subchapter dedicated to the march of Maximinus's troops towards the city of Aquileia, the Celtic deity Belenus is invoked in close connection to one whom venerated her, Asterix the Gaul, who was implanted in the contemporary collective frame of mind through comic books and movies of last decades (p. 163).

Although, we are compelled to point out certain aspects which, we consider, are bringing a degree of disservice to this paper, but not as much as to consider it worthy of the process of *damnatio*. Firstly, we will focus on the protagonist of the book. As we have previously mentioned, this book has the following name: *Maximinus Thrax. From Common Soldier to Emperor of Rome*. Thus, it is an imperial biography, or it should be one. If we don't take into consideration the introductory and final pages of this work, the fifteen chapters cover a number of 220 pages. After analysing the first four chapters, and the first half of the fifth one, we realised that Maximinus Thrax, presumably the main figure, occupies only a secondary position in the narration, sometimes even as an episodic character. The attention is rather focused on the representatives of the Severan Dynasty and their adventures, which marked the history of the Roman Empire specific to the chronological interlude of 193-235: Septimius Severus (193-211), Caracalla (211-217), Elagabalus (218-222), Severus Alexander (222-235); to the aforementioned we add Macrinus and his son Diadumenianus (217-218). Only after 80 pages, of the total 220, the "Thracian" emperor finally attains the role of protagonist in his own biography. Thus, in chapters V-VII, given the narrative style of Pearson, the reader is living with the impression of direct participation, along with Maximinus himself, to the his quest for obtaining imperial power. A new overshadow of the emperor can be discovered

between pages 122–152, which correspond with chapters IX–XI, where the foreground is awarded to the two Gordians (238), and to the emperors nominated by the Roman Senate, Pupienus and Balbinus (238). Also, between pages 170–189, corresponding to chapters XII–XIII, we face the same obscurity of Maximinus in favour to Gordian III (238–244). In Chapters XIV–XV, the author’s attention is focused upon the legacy of the Thracian emperor and the manner in which he was seen in posterity: in the Roman world (p. 190–195), in Theodoric’s the Great Italy (p. 196–197), in Niccolò Machiavelli’s *The Prince* (p. 197–198), in Gibbon’s work regarding the fall of the Roman Empire (p. 198–199), by the Nazi regime (p. 199–201) and by the Scottish society (201–203).

In attempting to give a verdict regarding Maximinus’s impact on Roman society, the author is placing on balance his personality traits, according to the model of Ancient writers of distinguishing between the *boni* and the *mali* emperors. These were animated by his violent impulses, by the tough and military world in which he’s upbringing took place, or they were placed around a certain morality untouched by madness, decay or depravity (p. 204–205). Placing him in contrast with the emperors that followed Septimius Severus, the writer of the book considers Maximinus to be a competent and visionary leader (p. 205). Simultaneously, the scenario of the emperor not being assassinated is outlined as a possibility, in which case, given his pragmatism, he could have extended the imperial borders beyond the Rhine and the Danube. This scenario may have prevented the later fall of the Western Roman Empire (p. 205–206). Truly, Paul N. Pearson mentions, in his introduction, the fact that ambition is one of exploring the history of the first half of the third century (p. XIII), but his undertaking proved to be a disproportionate one in comparison to his proposed objective.

Pertaining to his method of citation, Paul N. Pearson resorts to the extraction of whole paragraphs from his sources, on multiple occasions. We have identified a number of 34 such extractions, of different ranges, namely at the following pages: 1, 20, 33, 47, 50, 56, 59, 64–65, 67, 81, 83, 84, 116, 119, 119, 126, 143–144, 162–163, 172–173, 174, 190–191, 194–195, 198, 203, 208, 209–210, 212, 214, 219. We consider this to be an exaggeration, given the following reasoning. A page of this book is compiled of a number of 40 rows. Out of the allocated space for the research subject, these paragraphs are comprised of a number of 381 rows or 9,5 pages. If further add the 1–3 rows left before and after the inserted paragraphs in the paper, also including even the cited source, we reach a full number of 461 rows or 11,5 pages. Thus, we consider that the usage of this manner of citation is exaggerated. We are of the opinion that the placement of these paragraph at the end of the book, as extra proof of his research, would have been a more desirable one. Also at the end we consider that the illustrations should have been placed, instead of the middle of the book, fact that makes the reading experience cumbersome. Furthermore, our appreciation is that the explanatory notes should

all be placed in the footer of the page, or by the end of each chapter, and not at the end of the paper, because this complicates the reading process even more. We accept the fact that this format may not have been the author's choice, but instead to have been an editorial policy.

Pearson is using a series of words and phrases, which we consider to be inadequate. For example, *revolution* and *revolutioners* are terms mainly used in the description of attempted actions of the two Gordians against Maximinus Thrax (p. 131, 134, 148, 150). Instead, the more appropriate terms for this historical period would be *rebellion* and *usurpation*, which are coming way closer to their original Latin counterparts — *rebellatio* and *tyrannis, res novae*. In the same sequence we can also frame some comparisons between ancient and contemporary events, which in our humble opinion are also inappropriate. For example, Capelianus's march to Carthage and his conflicts with the armed forces of the two Gordians are made to look as an equivalent of the Anglo-American troops' landing in Algeria and their march to Tunisia in 1942 (p. 136–137). Another example of this sort is the association between the names of Napoleon and Wellington with that of Maximinus Thrax when the actions of the Roman emperor in Northern part of the Italian Peninsula are analysed, taking as a starting point the works of Herodian (p. 159). Similarly, the situation of the slaves from African provinces and their relationship with the local aristocracy is seen as a precursor of the historical realities of the black slaves of North America (p. 121). In comparison with the American slavery, which was mainly based on racial criteria, the one from the Roman Empire was fundamentally different; any individual, from any conquered territory, no matter ethnicity, race, age and gender, could end up as a slave.

Finally, we remind the fact that, at times, the author seems to have a limited understanding of the sources, for he is judging the characters out the context in which they lived. Pearson is outlining their personality and actions according to contemporary era standards. For example, in the passage regarding Elagabalus's personality, the writer brings forth to the spotlight the decayed nature of the emperor, but he does so in a manner way to anchored in the reality of our times. Taking into consideration the present day criteria, Elagabalus is portrayed as a genuine transsexual. The author makes the mentions that in Cassius Dio's works one may find information regarding Elagabalus's desire to pay outstanding sums of money to any surgeon willing or capable to change his genitals (p. 33–34). On further research, there is no explanatory note that makes any reference to the opera of the Bithynian historian, but rather to a contemporary encyclopaedia — Godbout, L., *GLBTQ, An Encyclopedia of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Culture*, Chicago University Press, 2004. To our knowledge, such statement cannot be found either in the works of Cassius Dio, or in other sources (Eutropius, Aurelius Victor, Pseudo-Aurelius Victor, Herodian, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*). Nevertheless, all sources indicate the depravity filled behaviour, the lack of the morality and respect, specific to Elagabalus.

Our intention was not to discredit the efforts made on behalf of the author, but to focus the attention on the fact that one must always carefully formulate certain ideas, even in the case of a book targeted to a wider audience. If not careful, he who embarks on this scientific approach may influence negatively the reader (for lack of consistency and very sound documentation), and even easily fall in the traps of subjectivism and anachronistic thought. The very fact that a member of another scientific guild, other than history, has established a pact with Cronos and, despite all obstacles he may have faced, he managed to put on paper the fruits of his intellectual labour is worthy of much praise. To put it in a nutshell, we are taking into consideration the book *Maximinus Thrax. From Common Soldier to Emperor of Rome* written by Paul N. Pearson as a way to understanding the personality and reign of the “Thracian” emperor and his times.

*PhD student Pavel-Flavian CHILCOȘ,  
Centrul de Studii Clasice și Creștine, Facultatea de Istorie,  
Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași,  
flavian\_1859@yahoo.com; flavian.chilcos@outlook.com*



© 2020 by the authors; licensee Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons by Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).