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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BRIAN CROKE

Adventures With Mommsen 1–42

ALFREDO SANSONE

La storia antica come strumento diplomatico: Napoleone Bonaparte
“socio mancato” della Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatridi 43–67

ULRIKE EHMIG, JANINE MEISEL, HANNAH CHRISTINE ORTH,
JONA WINZEK, BEATE ZIELKE

Epigraphische Zeitreisen. Heinrich Dressels Notizbücher der
Italienreisen 1874–1876 und 1878 69–101

ROY GIBSON

Professors of Latin at the University of Liverpool 1884–1988:
Philology, Hellenism and the Professionalisation of Latin at
England’s Civic Universities in the Twentieth Century 103–124

IVAN MATIJAŠIĆ

Die hellenische Geschichtsschreibung ist Zeitgeschichte: Eduard Schwartz
on Greek Historiography in a 1939 Letter to J. Enoch Powell 125–150

ALESSANDRA COPPOLA

Sulla superiorità dei Greci o degli Ebrei: una polemica di fine Settecento 151–170

MARZIA D’ANGELO

Unpublished Studies on Philodemus’ *On Gods*, Book 1 171–188

OLIVIA MONTEPAONE

Prolegomena per un’edizione del *Sublime* di Leone Allacci 189–209

ADVENTURES WITH MOMMSEN

— BRIAN CROKE —

ABSTRACT

Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903) has long been considered the greatest Roman historian of the nineteenth century. Above all he was an accomplished philologist, editor and scholarly organiser. This paper provides one historian’s reflections on decades of engaging with Mommsen in various contexts and in various places. It traces a personal encounter with Mommsen and his work, especially his activities in later Roman history, from undergraduate through postgraduate education, a four-decades long career outside academia, then a return to Mommsen in recent years. These various adventures with Mommsen demonstrate how much the business of doing research and writing about any individual or topic has changed especially in the last thirty years. Essentially autobiographical in approach, this paper also highlights both the role and the limits of autobiography in understanding one’s own education and scholarly development.

KEYWORDS

Mommsen, Momigliano, Judge, Syme, Wickert, Matthews, Markus, Mango, Harries, Rebenich, Demandt, Sydney, Oxford, Berlin

The first time I consciously encountered the name of ‘Theodor Mommsen’ was high over the Tasman Sea. It was late January 1971, or was it 1970? I was flying back to Sydney from Christchurch, or was it Wellington? Past reality duels constantly with the surety of memory. Even for historians, including those who reflect on their craft, autobiography is a tricky business. That is why historians so rarely take it on and, when they do, they tend to gloss over their professional research and teaching lives. They fear being caught out.¹ Reviews of memoirs, including historians’ memoirs, supply constant proof. One thing is certain, however: on my last day in New Zealand, I was killing time in a second-hand bookshop when my eyes lighted on a red covered volume. I remembered seeing it once before, in the hands of a tutor and research student at my university. He assured me it was ‘great bedtime reading’.

¹ Popkin (2005), 61–8, 160–83, with examples in Banner and Gillis (2009) and Munslow (2013). One exception, because it is actually focussed on the professional life, is Averil Cameron (2021).

Tom Hillard (Macquarie University) confirms the book and the advice, although we have differing recollections of both the year and the place of this interaction, the autobiographical problem again. I knew it was somehow relevant to my emerging enthusiasm for Greek and Roman history. In those days, I owned so few books I carefully covered each of them in durable plastic. As a result, over half a century later the book is still in good condition, even though it's been transported around the world, dog-eared and bent, has been read and re-read, marked and re-marked, loaned and re-loaned to others with enthusiastic recommendation, and eventually returned, not necessarily with reciprocal enthusiasm. That particular book always comes to mind when I hear celebrities and writers being asked that impossible question: 'What is the one book that has most influenced the course of your interests and intellectual life?', or 'What's the one book you'd take with you to a desert island?' If I'm ever asked that question myself, I know what the answer will be.

As a teenager travelling light, I could easily retrieve the book in flight. What I had not expected to find so engrossing, however, was a small, red-covered volume of essays with the off-putting title of 'Studies in Historiography' by an author named 'A. D. Momigliano'.² I recall being immediately awestruck by the opening 'study in historiography'. Published in 1950 and entitled 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian' it is modestly called a 'provisional map'. Yet, it was a breathtaking survey from classical to modern times about the organisation of information and the writing of history, and about how antiquarians and historians set themselves on different tracks from antiquity to the present day, only rarely converging. Its formidable annotation was also my first real encounter with serious erudition. Yet it all made sense. Only much later, did I realize that this was a truly famous and influential piece by one of the world's great intellectuals in his prime. Already, it has taken several scholars several generations to unpack and critique this single revolutionary essay on antiquarians.³ In an era now giving shape to the history of knowledge as a new discipline, Momigliano's essay on antiquarianism and history is as

² Momigliano (1966). For a similar, but better informed, reaction: Grafton (2009), 234–5.

³ Notably Miller (2007) and (2012), Philips (1996) and Janssen (2016), plus a range of perspectives on different elements of Momigliano's contribution in Crawford and Ligota (1995), especially T. J. Cornell, 'Ancient history and the antiquarian revisited' (1–14), picking up on further elaboration in Momigliano (1990), 54–79 ('The Rise of Antiquarian Research').

relevant as ever.⁴ Next came ‘Gibbon’s Contribution to Historical Method’. At that stage, I had not read any of Edward Gibbon’s monumental *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–89) but it meant that when the time came I would not treat it as just another obsolete classic of English literature, but as one of those rare antiquarian and scholarly histories still important two centuries later. What a difference it makes. Moving along, there came Momigliano’s lively portraits of George Grote (British historian of Ancient Greece), Friedrich Creuzer (German student of Greek and Roman historians and mythology) and Michael Rostovtzeff (Russian historian of Greece and Rome), each essay with an arresting opening. They were followed by the friendly and timely warnings about method and bias in ‘One Hundred Years after Ranke’. Here was food for thought for any apprentice historian or mere student of history. By now I was hooked.

What I hadn’t appreciated at first reading of *Studies in Historiography*, however, was the fact that I kept on turning the pages because Momigliano (now the more personal ‘Arnaldo’ from the title page) was such an engaging and elegant author. I knew nothing about him, let alone that English might be his fourth or fifth modern language. On our first meeting, high in the sky, I was won over, simply flabbergasted in fact, by Momigliano’s combination of effortless prose and effortless resort to the widest range of ancient and modern authorities covering the widest range of questions. Over half a century later, having read, at least once, almost every word he ever published in a long and productive life, I remain in awe.⁵

Discovering Mommsen

Momigliano was a big enough discovery for one day, but there was more. ‘As for Roman History’, explained Momigliano in his lecture on Grote, ‘it was put solidly on its feet a hundred years ago by Theodor Mommsen and nobody has yet succeeded in turning it upside down’.⁶ That assertion was striking enough, but half-way through ‘Cassiodorus and Italian Culture of His Time’ came the real lightning bolt: ‘it is my considered opinion that Mommsen has already said all the right things about Roman history. I always feel uneasy when I discover that he has not yet said what I am

⁴ Two examples: Gould (2014) and di Cosmo (2018). See also P. Burke, ‘From Antiquarianism to Anthropology’, in Miller (2007), 229–47 and Burke (2016).

⁵ Most recently, but more narrowly, is the approach adopted in Croke (2023b), 154–82.

⁶ Momigliano (1966), 57.

going to say'.⁷ Thus I discovered Theodor Mommsen, but who was he? What had he 'not yet said' in the course of putting Roman History so 'solidly on its feet'? If he hasn't 'yet said what I am going to say' he must still be alive for Momigliano. In reality, however, the German scholar was nearly five years in his grave when Momigliano himself was born (September 1908). In the 1980s, when lecturing annually at the University of Chicago, he would write on the blackboard in capitals the names of the past scholars he would be mentioning in his following presentation. On reaching a name like Mommsen, he would gesture nonchalantly but reverently to the blackboard behind him. One distinguished auditor, sociologist Edward Shils (1910–95), imagined that all those scholars were actually intimate friends of Momigliano. Perched just over his shoulder, they were waiting to come to life and greet their individual acknowledgment as he spoke.⁸ He might have had in mind the Roman ritual of parading one's noble ancestors at a funeral (*pompa funebris*). In any case, as Shils put it some years later: 'Arnaldo Momigliano was not to be exceeded in his respect for his great elders, living and recently or long-since dead, but he lived with them in the deferential and critical intimacy of equality; deference did not preclude disagreement'.⁹

Mommsen was certainly one of those for whom 'deference did not preclude disagreement'. Momigliano reluctantly differed with Mommsen by arguing that Cassiodorus updated his *Gothic History* in c.550 in order to win over the Goths and their regime in Italy. Moreover, it was this revised and updated version rather than the original, written in the very different political atmosphere of the 520s, which Jordanes used for his *Getica* in 551. This was Mommsen's date, never challenged by Momigliano.¹⁰ As it turns out, Mommsen knew Cassiodorus far better than Momigliano ever did, not least because he had mastered what he called the 'God-forsaken Latin' of Cassiodorus by editing his *Variae* (1894) even though he originally avoided taking it on.¹¹ My own appreciation of the richness of the *Variae*, and the insight that Cassiodorus' language derived

⁷ Momigliano (1966), 194.

⁸ Shils (1987), 15.

⁹ Shils (1997), 232 where he speaks of Momigliano's relationship with Mommsen and other great scholars.

¹⁰ The case for 551 was made afresh in Croke (2005).

¹¹ Letter, Mommsen to Wilamowitz, 25 April 1889 (letter 286), in Calder III and Kirstein (2003), 484: 'Cassiodor wäre schon zu ertragen, wenn er nicht ein solches gotterverfluchtes Latein schriebe'. He had also mastered the content and context of the *Variae*, as demonstrated by his epochal studies on the Gothic organisation and administration of Italy: Mommsen (1889a) and (1890b).

from his familiarity with the Roman rhetorical tradition in administration, came from a fellow student at Corpus Christi College Oxford, an extremely accomplished Latinist named Robin Macpherson. We soon discovered that our respective research projects (my chronicles and his Cassiodorus) had one significant common factor — Mommsen, who edited and worked on both simultaneously. Although there was a recent edition of the *Variae* (Fridh 1973), Robin concluded early that any serious study of the *Variae* would be impossible without the guidance of Mommsen's edition.¹² The edition was in the *Auctores Antiquissimi* section of the patriotic collection of sources for German history, the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (*MGH*), and was assigned to Wilhelm Meyer (1846–1917). When Meyer kept missing deadlines, Mommsen had him sacked by the management committee of the *MGH* in 1886 and reluctantly took over the edition himself, with help from the precocious young Ludwig Traube (1861–1907).¹³ As a scholarly and collaborative organiser, Mommsen was peerless but, when it came to business, he could be a ruthless autocrat.

Like Momigliano, Mommsen had lived and worked with Cassiodorus for a long time. As early as 1861 he had published a large and detailed study of Cassiodorus' chronicle.¹⁴ Later (1894) he actually published the *Chronicle* as part of his collection of late antique chronicles, but his major contribution was the research and publication of Cassiodorus' extensive *Variae* (1894). It was in this edition that he briefly discussed the 'Gothic History' written between 526 and 533 in Ravenna, as previously elaborated in his edition of Jordanes (1882).¹⁵ Momigliano should have been relieved to discover that Mommsen was right after all, that is to say, Cassiodorus never updated his history as an Italian refugee in Constantinople c.550, nor did it reflect the nostalgic hopes for a politically reunified Italy where Goth and Roman would live together happily ever after.¹⁶ Attractive as this idea was, it was simply Momigliano's striking

¹² Macpherson (1989), 8: 'But above all the present work is indebted to Theodor Mommsen who has edited the *Variae* according to his usual impeccable standards'.

¹³ Mommsen had little patience with Meyer because he had experienced his dilatoriness before. In the 1870s Mommsen arranged for Meyer to be funded to work on Procopius but he failed to deliver (details in Croke [2019], 136–7). Now it was his edition of Cassiodorus, as evident in the Mommsen and Wilamowitz correspondence, 1886 (letters 223–6), in Calder III and Kirstein (2003), 373–7.

¹⁴ Mommsen (1861).

¹⁵ Mommsen (1882), XLI–XLIV, reiterated in Mommsen (1894b), XI.

¹⁶ The dismantling of Momigliano's thesis was undertaken principally by O'Donnell (1979), Appendix 4 'Momigliano's Hypothesis' and Croke (1987) and (2003), 361–3.

speculation. Despite the failure of its overall thesis, Momigliano's 'Cassiodorus' remains a rich and brilliant essay. In particular, the second half of its title ('Italian Culture of his Time') still retains its value.

Less clear-cut was his approach to another enigmatic text, the *Historia Augusta* (HA) or *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* (SHA), which covers the lives of Roman emperors from Hadrian to Numerian and purports to be by six different authors writing in the late third/early fourth century. For Momigliano the HA/SHA represented 'An Unsolved Problem of Historical Forgery', to take the title of the essay in *Studies in Historiography*.¹⁷ What he was saying is that, typifying his approach to all historical problems, he has twice surveyed the whole of the extensive scholarly literature on the HA (previously in 1937), already daunting enough by the 1950s but next to impossible now, and concluded that there is no certain proof that the HA was written later than the early fourth century, the time of Diocletian and Constantine. However frustrating he found it, his summation is at least frank: 'A negative conclusion is bound to leave the writer dissatisfied and the readers enraged'. What was a 'forgery' for Momigliano had been a 'riddle' for Mommsen. Just as a riddle has no obvious or easy solution, so Mommsen said, the HA permits a complex explanation. The Berlin professor believed his student Hermann Dessau (1856–1931) had successfully shown that there were elements in the HA that only made sense in the late fourth century, not earlier. However, Mommsen argued that these elements were the work of a late fourth-century editor of an earlier original work.¹⁸ Thus, he saw his solution to the riddle as supporting, not contradicting, Dessau. In the end, Momigliano's position, almost heretical to the so-called modern consensus, cannot be dismissed. In the face of the explosion of research and writing on the HA since Momigliano, readers of the HA, and of Momigliano's essay on it, maintain their rage. Yet, his 'unsolved' verdict still has strong appeal.¹⁹ At the same time, it can be said that although Mommsen's position has been consistently misrepresented in modern times it was closer to the modern consensus on the HA than Momigliano ever came.²⁰ The approaches of Mommsen and Momigliano to the HA

Momigliano's hypothesis of a revised Cassiodoran *History of the Goths* written in Constantinople in c.550 still has its advocates.

¹⁷ Momigliano (1954), 143–80.

¹⁸ Dessau (1889), Mommsen (1890a), 228.

¹⁹ Repeated most recently by Alan Cameron (2014). Cameron's approach is singled out and contextualised in Kulikowski (2021).

²⁰ Mommsen's position, and its subsequent misrepresentation, is explained more fully in Croke (forthcoming a).

have been regularly linked to their personalities and biography, only to be dismissed or at least devalued.

Ancient History at Macquarie: Judge and Syme

The autobiographies of historians invariably trace their ardour for history to a childhood predilection, and a bookish household like that of Edward Gibbon (1737–94), or to travel, or to an influential teacher at school.²¹ Not me. When I came to Macquarie University from the local high school in my rural hometown of Dubbo, 400km north-west of Sydney, I had not studied ancient history, although it was an option at school. Because my most inspiring teacher, and my highest grades, were for English language and literature, I saw myself as being a teacher of English. Fortunately, I also enjoyed Latin and was well taught to the most advanced level possible at school. So, choosing a small one semester course on *Augustan Rome* to fill out my first-year undergraduate university schedule seemed an easy option. After all I had studied whole books of Livy's history and Vergil's *Aeneid* in Latin at school. How wrong I was. Macquarie's Professor Edwin Judge and his *Augustan Rome* turned out to be absolutely captivating. He left his students craving for more. As a result, I progressively switched my major academic interest from English to History, both modern and ancient, always complemented by education which became my career. I would now be a school-teacher of ancient history.

While Momigliano's *Studies in Historiography* was never far away, it was really only in 1973 that my small Christchurch (or was it Wellington?) investment came into its own. For Macquarie University's history honours class that year, there were two weekly seminars: 'Ideas and Institutions in the 16th Century' and 'History and Historians in the 19th Century', along with associated courses in philosophy and methodology of history. For all of them, Momigliano had something to offer. He became a trusty guide. Familiar with his *Studies in Historiography* paper on the *Historia Augusta*, and conscious of the recent dispute over the HA with the challenging views on when and why it was written being advanced by Sir Ronald Syme (1903–89),²² I decided to use the HA as

²¹ Popkin (2005), 120–50, noting that 'Australian historian-autobiographers comment more than those from other countries on the impact of the history lessons they learned in school ...' (134). For a contrast, see Averil Cameron (2021), 1–2.

²² Most famously: Syme (1968), (1971a), (1971b) and (1983). Momigliano wrote critical reviews of Syme (1968) in Momigliano (1969), and Syme (1971b) in Momigliano (1973).

my methodology essay. Unlike the names Mommsen and Momigliano whose works we never read, Syme was real to us. From our various undergraduate courses (entitled *Augustan Rome*, *The Roman Nobility*, *The Roman Empire*) we were all familiar with Syme's *The Roman Revolution* (1939). Some of us had even dipped in and out of his *Tacitus* (1958), as well as his *Sallust* (1964). Oligarchy à la Syme was the explanation everywhere sought, prosopography the essential tool for any future Roman historian. Mommsen was out of sight and out of favour, suspect even. After all, he was dismissive of Cicero and Vergil but was a champion of Julius Caesar. How could he still be taken seriously? Of course, at that time we weren't aware that Syme's productive lifetime and ensuing fame depended on his ability to exploit two of the major projects initiated and supervised by Mommsen, namely, the corpus of Latin inscriptions (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*) and the prosopographical dictionary of the officials of the Roman Empire (*Prosopographia Imperii Romani*). Indeed, Mommsen would hardly be surprised to discover not only that both projects continued to be exploited after his death but that they were still being expanded and refined in the twenty-first century.

Syme was not merely someone we had read. We had actually seen him, and heard him. He was an old friend of our Roman history professor, fellow-New Zealander Edwin Judge, and paid several visits to Macquarie in those years. An inveterate traveller, he was considered the foremost Roman historian of the twentieth century and was now retired from his Oxford chair. We first listened to him in August 1971 on the Augustan poets and other topics.²³ While we did not know it at the time, and Syme never let on, not even to our teachers in private evidently, he was rehearsing material to appear later in his *History in Ovid* (Oxford 1978).²⁴ At Sydney University, I remember hearing him lecture on Julius Caesar, a lecture he kept on giving around the world until it was eventually published in the *New York Review of Books* as the 'transcript of a talk that was delivered at the Annual Faculty Convocation at New York University on November 14, 1984'.²⁵ At the time of his death in 1989, Syme was writing a book on Julius Caesar for Duckworth (London).²⁶ That may explain why he told me when I was driving him across Sydney in 1973 that he was carefully reading Caesar's *Gallic War*. He leaned

²³ A report on Syme's Macquarie lecture (Croke 1971) became my first publication.

²⁴ This challenging book is elucidated in Pitcher (2011).

²⁵ Syme (1985).

²⁶ Cf. Syme (1999), xix.

across to tell me confidentially: ‘People think it’s easy Latin you know. Not so.’

Then, as the Macquarie History honours year progressed, under the influence of Momigliano’s Grote essay, I wrote my required historiographical research essay on ‘Thomas Arnold and the Study of Roman History’. Suddenly, Mommsen returned. This time it was in the form of his 1850s *History of Rome* that swiftly supplanted the 1830s history of Arnold, even among English readers. In 1902 Mommsen won the Nobel Prize for Literature on the basis of his *History of Rome*, beating the highly favoured Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy. After three volumes Mommsen’s *History* terminated unexpectedly at 46 BCE but remains a literary classic still available in every German bookstore. The seed was sown in my mind for a lifetime of curiosity about how in Germany Roman history advanced and expanded in subsequent decades, while in England it effectively stagnated until Mommsen himself inspired a new generation of scholars in the 1880s.²⁷

Finally, while researching for my major thesis on the late fourth century (‘The Usurpation of Eugenius and the Reaction of Theodosius, AD 392–4’), supervised and encouraged by Ammianus-expert Alanna Emmett (Nobbs), I found myself having to deal with a range of Latin texts barely touched since Mommsen had spent so much time editing them: the ‘carmen contra paganos’ which he was the first to edit critically from its Paris manuscript (in 1870), the Roman and Gothic histories of Jordanes (1882), the ecclesiastical history of Rufinus (1903), the law code of Theodosius II (1905), the various chronicles in the three volumes of the *Chronica Minora* (1892–8) that he produced for the *Auctores Antiquissimi* section of the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (MGH. AA), and various inscriptions scattered throughout the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL, 1863+). All of these essential documents had been made available thanks to one man — Theodor Mommsen. I relied on the assurance of Momigliano’s unforgettable judgment, so I knew they were documents and editions I could trust, even though there was virtually no scholarly guidance on any of them at that point and I knew almost nothing about Mommsen either. I suspected, however, that some familiarity with these labours of Mommsen would provide an advanced perspective when we all came to Judge’s two seminars on Mommsen himself and his work. They were scheduled towards the end of the nineteenth-century historiography course.

²⁷ A broad theme, opened up in Croke (1991) and expounded at length in Croke (forthcoming c).

Edwin Judge brought Mommsen to life for us all. Our introduction to Mommsen took place not in the usual seminar venue, however, but in the Macquarie University library. Edwin had arranged for the library staff to gather and lay out on a single table all the works of Mommsen and those to which he contributed in some way. Our jaws dropped, even those of us who had some acquaintance with Mommsen already. Here before us lay not only the first three volumes of the *History of Rome* (1854–6), plus volume 5 on the *Roman Provinces* (1885), as well as their English translation, but also the whole *CIL* (16 volumes, 7 Mommsen's own work), the *MGH. AA* (13 volumes, 6 by his own hand) and the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* (*PIR*, 3 volumes). All three of these projects were conceived and managed by him. In fact, they all bore his imprint. Many of them he produced himself, and most others were sprinkled with his comments, corrections and suggestions. Together, they constituted thousands of pages and all in Latin. On top of that, came the eight volumes of his 'Collected Works' (*Gesammelte Schriften*, chosen and ordered by Mommsen, but mainly published after his death), the *Roman Civil Law* (*Staatsrecht*, 3 volumes in 5 parts, 1871–88, over 3,000 pages) often considered his greatest and most enduring work, and the *Roman Criminal Law* (*Strafrecht*, 1899), a single volume of over 1,100 dense and heavily annotated pages. He said that to do justice to the topic it really should have been twice as long and much more sophisticated, but already in his 80s he feared his days were numbered so he took every available short-cut.²⁸

Next, there were Mommsen's remarkable edition of the *Digest* (1870), followed by his octogenarian projects, namely the editions of the *Liber Pontificalis* (1898) and the *Theodosian Code* (1905) plus the two volumes of Rufinus' Latin translation and continuation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* (1903–8), undertaken as part of the project of his former pupil Eduard Schwartz (1858–1940). Also on display were his early volumes on *Italian Dialects* (1850), *Roman Chronology* (1858), and *Roman Coinage* (900 pages, 1860), the exemplary collections of inscriptions of Naples (1852) and Switzerland (1854), proving grounds for the *CIL*, his edition of what he called the 'queen of inscriptions', the version still displayed at Ankara of the *Res Gestae* of Augustus (1883),²⁹ as well as several miscellaneous tomes such as the two-volume *Roman Researches* (*Römische Forschungen*, 1879). That was just the books on the shelves of a university that only commenced teaching ancient history in 1969, a full 66 years after Mommsen's death. Occupying one corner were a few books

²⁸ Mommsen (1899), VIII.

²⁹ On which, see Dessau (1929) and Dräger (2008).

about Mommsen too, most conspicuously the three forbidding volumes of his biography by Lothar Wickert (1900–89). Having worked with Wickert in Germany, Judge knew and appreciated him not only as an epigraphical student of Mommsen's protégé Dessau and historian of Caesar Augustus, but also as the biographer of Mommsen. We were told that Wickert was then working on his much-anticipated Volume 4, covering the 'Meisterjahre', the period of Mommsen's productive and scholarly dominance. Most of the books before us came from these years of his life. In three volumes, his biographer had not yet reached that far.

In my mind's eye, I've never forgotten this striking display of productivity and scholarly leadership, and the thought that a single person could have produced, inspired or managed so much in a single lifetime. We were no less surprised to find that Mommsen fathered 16 children (between 1855 and 1873, with 12 surviving him), as well as making time to be a parliamentarian, a publicist, and a poet. Nor could he ever get enough of his favourite Italian wine. We learnt all this from Judge who, although he has never published anything about Mommsen, was very familiar with his life and work, not only from his acquaintance with Wickert, but from his own classical education and research.³⁰ Just the previous year (1972), Judge had summed Mommsen up in a reflection on the state of education and history, including ancient history, in what was then West Germany:

The greatest ancient historian of all time, Theodor Mommsen, has also passed into popular tradition as the prototype of all professors. He was a man of immense capacity, as the 1500 odd titles (many of them massive volumes that would individually make a man famous) of his bibliography testify. But his life was far fuller even than that. He raised a large family (the third and fourth generations are now eminent in scholarship), edited a newspaper in the 1848 revolution, sat in parliament, fought Bismarck, and defended a score of progressive causes. The effort of digesting his work, not to speak of writing his biography, exhausts the capacity of ancient historians to our own day.³¹

³⁰ As exemplar, there is Judge's masterly treatment of Mommsen's role in creating from Verrius Flaccus' *Fasti Praenestini* the modern notion that Augustus consciously saw himself as instituting a 'restored republic' in 27 BC (Judge 1974). Another manifestation is Mommsen's approach to *collegia* which permeates Judge's study of Roman guilds and professional groups in early Christian societies (e.g. Judge 2008a). Yet another, is the emphasis of both Mommsen and Judge on the family as the basis of all social/political organisation.

³¹ Judge (1972), 37.

Judge himself has always displayed a streak of the Mommsen organisational zeal and aptitude. He was the pioneer leader and creator of a large and flourishing department of ancient history at Macquarie, but also the founder and editor of journals (*Antichthon*, *Journal of Religious History*, *Ancient Society: Resources for Teachers*), and book series such as *Sources in Ancient History* (Sydney University Press). He was also the conceptualiser, and then leader of projects such as the *Corpus Papyrorum Christianarum*. The *Ancient History Documentary Research Centre* at Macquarie was his creation, as well as the ten volumes of *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*. Judge also has an affinity with Momigliano, not least because of his preference for the lecture and learned essay focussed on deconstructing a text, or set of texts, to illustrate a problem and reveal a completely different and innovative interpretation. Momigliano's collected essays and lectures, the ten volumes of the *Contributi*, which link the ancient and modern worlds, find their counterpart in the various volumes of essays containing Judge's detailed output.³² Like Momigliano, Judge has always sought to uncover the ancient origins of modern ideas and attitudes; like Momigliano, he has always been appreciative of the singular importance of religion in any ancient society, especially of Christianity to the Roman empire, although 'religion' is a term he has continually problematized and deconstructed. 'Religion', as we know it, is a relatively modern invention. Judge is famous for the question he put to A. H. M. Jones (1904–70) at Cambridge in the 1950s: 'What difference did Christianity make to the Roman empire?' and for Jones' immediate answer — 'None'.³³ Lying behind all Judge's research is a lifetime quest to explain that difference, as well as to explain Paul of Tarsus and his letters, their ideas and ideals in their contemporary literary and social context. It began with his *Social Pattern of Christian Groups in the First Century* (1960), which is now considered the little acorn that grew into the mighty oak of Early Christian sociology. The early Christian communities sprang from the intellectual cross-currents of Hellenistic cities, not the discontented lower-class masses.³⁴

A student at Canterbury College in Christchurch in the 1940s, Edwin has been alert ever since to the niceties of Roman politics and self-representation, learned from L. G. Pocock (1890–1975), Professor of

³² Principally, the collections of articles in Judge (2007), (2008b), (2010), (2014), (2019a), (2019b), (2020).

³³ On publication, Judge's volume earned a fulsome review from one of the foremost students of early Christianity, Henri-Irénée Marrou (Marrou 1961), and decades later his research question became the starting point for Ramsay Macmullen's article 'What Difference did Christianity make?' (Macmullen 1986).

³⁴ Judge (1960) with Dvorak (2016).

Classics and father of the political and intellectual historian John (J. G. A.) Pocock (1924–2023), as well as to the strict methodology of historical thinking and research, learned from Karl Popper (1902–94), a lecturer in Philosophy then working on his famous books *The Poverty of Historicism* (1944) and *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945).³⁵ The philological methods of Pocock and the forensic methods of Popper, always looking to test a proposition through its disproof, have been applied by Judge to the teaching of ancient history, to the rigorous and precise use of texts and other documentary evidence; an inscription here, a papyrus there.³⁶ The social and ethical dimensions of people's behaviour emphasised by Judge complement Mommsen's emphasis on legal constructs. So, we were encouraged by Judge to think about Mommsen as an activist historian of the Roman world, to appreciate his command of sources especially contemporary texts (inscriptions, coins, laws), but above all to see his work in terms of where it leads and how it has been built on, or superseded. In every generation, history is made by individual human beings and the relationships between them. That was the lesson. Mommsen's hostility to Cicero and Vergil mattered little, after all.

Yet, my first real encounter with Mommsen in these seminars left me wondering not only about an old chestnut, the missing volume 4 of Mommsen's *Roman History*, but also about two quite different questions in particular: (1) if he spent so much time on the sources for later Roman history between the 1840s and 1903, why had scholars devoted so little attention to them since? The answer was expected to be found in the forthcoming volume 4 of Wickert's biography, and (2) if Mommsen was such a major figure for Momigliano, as I had already learnt from his *Studies in Historiography*, then why was Mommsen not yet the subject of one of his marvellous scholarly portraits? Why was there nothing similar to his evocative depictions of Grote or Rostovtzeff, for example? Perhaps he was saving it up. It never came, so the puzzle remains. Dealing with the first question, however, became a long and winding road.

Getting up close and personal, Oxford

Another town, another bookshop. In 1974 Oxford had several incomparable bookshops when I arrived there as a graduate student at Corpus

³⁵ Other historians have acknowledged the formative influence of Popper's Christchurch teaching on their methodology: Munz (2013), 143 and Badian, whose correspondence with Popper on Aristotle is included in Shearmur and Norris (2014), 214–18.

³⁶ Typical of his method is Judge (1977).

Christi College, the place where Thomas Arnold was once a student reading and rereading his Livy. My Mommsen questions were always in the back of my mind. One day, in the latter part of 1974 (but it could have been 1975), I spied the three fat blue volumes of Wickert's biography of Mommsen in Thornton's Bookshop.³⁷ I figured I might find them valuable one day. These volumes would at least help satiate my curiosity about Mommsen and prepare me for Wickert's crucial fourth volume when it came. I was immediately intrigued to see that the previous owner had inscribed his name and date of purchase inside — 'Eduard Fraenkel 1969' for the third volume, the two previous being inscribed '1959' and '1964' respectively, the years of their publication. To my untrained eye, the latest volume looked unread. It probably was. Only weeks, at most months, after his purchase, Fraenkel ended his life (5 February 1970). Assuming he purchased it in Germany in the summer of 1969, or ordered it immediately on publication that year, perhaps he never got the chance to read it.

Fraenkel was someone I certainly knew about. As the Corpus Christi Professor of Latin, he had been from my own college. We would gather for seminars in the room he made his own, now officially dubbed the 'Fraenkel Room' (since renamed the 'Refugee Scholars Room'). I had some idea, therefore, of his status and legacy as a Latin scholar but not much. At that stage, I was not aware that Fraenkel's major work was a three-volume commentary on a Greek play (Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*), nor that for Fraenkel, unlike for Momigliano, Mommsen was always very much alive. Indeed, they both lived in the same place at the same time. When Fraenkel was born (1888) the great Berlin Professor was still commanding the field. Fraenkel was in a Berlin high school when Mommsen died fifteen years later. If Fraenkel had never met Mommsen, it's very possible the boy once recognised the maestro on the street, as did most Berliners. In any event, Fraenkel's father's cousin, the renowned palaeographer Ludwig Traube (1861–1907) at Munich, was a highly regarded ally of Mommsen. Further, Fraenkel later studied at Berlin under Mommsen's formidable son-in-law Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1848–1931), normally just Wilamowitz, then proceeded to Göttingen with another of Mommsen's protégées, Friedrich Leo (1851–1914), whose own papers Wilamowitz later edited. Mommsen the man, not to mention his scholarly legacy, was unavoidable for Fraenkel, year after year. Why he would want to own Wickert's biography of Mommsen is perfectly understandable. Now that the volumes were mine, I felt a sort of vicarious debt to Fraenkel and doubly obliged to make the most of

³⁷ Wickert (1959), (1964) and (1969).

them. What I failed to appreciate at the time was that Fraenkel was a Jewish refugee from Germany in 1934, just as Momigliano was to be from Italy in 1939. Oxford had welcomed them both and became their new home, English their new language. Momigliano even participated in Fraenkel's Oxford seminar,³⁸ as did Averil Cameron who recalls it vividly at a later period.³⁹

As a novice postgraduate research student, I suspected that Mommsen would keep intruding in my life. Originally, I found myself attracted by the idea of exploring historiography in the period from Eusebius in the fourth century to Bede in the eighth century. I soon purchased two of the three uncut *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* volumes of the *Chronica Minora* (1892–8) edited, and helpfully indexed, by Mommsen. Blackwell's bookshop in Oxford was one of the few places in the world where you could buy such items off the shelf, as it was for another of Fraenkel's pupils, Alan Cameron (1938–2017), whose lifetime of scholarly productivity began in the late summer of 1961 with his purchase of the Mommsen-supervised *MGH* volumes of Claudian and Symmachus. As he said, 'I left [Blackwell's] staggering under the weight of Theodor Birt's great edition of Claudian (1892) and Otto Seeck's irreplaceable Symmachus (1883), two books that were to change the direction of my life [...]. By the time I had worked my way through the 200-page small print Latin prefaces of Birt and Seeck, I knew that I wanted to write on Claudian'.⁴⁰ Cameron was led to seek out Claudian and Symmachus by a reading of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* on a summer holiday in the Black Forest. Now, all these volumes are instantly accessible online.

While my genial supervisor, John Matthews, a pupil and good friend of Syme,⁴¹ was sympathetic to my ambition, we agreed that, for doctoral purposes, it would be best to confine attention to just one of the chronicles. That scenario was anticipated, and I had already decided that Marcellinus seemed to fit the bill. I felt safe because Marcellinus was the one chronicler I knew from reading Momigliano. He was part of the largely unexplored Latin speaking communities in sixth-century Constantinople first elucidated by Momigliano.⁴² It mattered too that Mommsen had already studied and edited the chronicle in his *MGH*

³⁸ Momigliano (1994), 56.

³⁹ Averil Cameron (2021), 3.

⁴⁰ Alan Cameron (2015), 134.

⁴¹ Matthews later had the opportunity of reflecting on Syme in the first (1992) of the biennial lectures held in Wellington in memory of Syme, published as Matthews (1993).

⁴² Particularly in Momigliano (1956).

volumes. A translation with commentary was an orthodox and proven Oxford model for a thesis, and his chronicle had never been translated into any modern language. There would not be enough in any chronicle to make an authorial study possible. After all, Marcellinus was no Tacitus or Tertullian or Fronto, the model Oxford products of, respectively, Syme, Timothy Barnes and Edward Champlin. Marcellinus came from the Latin-speaking region of the Balkans, wrote several lost works as well as his chronicle, once worked for the Roman emperor Justinian (reigned 527–65) at Constantinople. What more was there to say?

As anyone who embarks on the thesis journey discovers, the daily routine of research takes on a life of its own. You never know where it will lead you, but resistance is unwise. A rough translation was completed in the first few weeks. However, the translation and commentary model was soon abandoned when it became clear that there were, in fact, several cultural, historical and historiographical issues to explore in Marcellinus' chronicle after all.⁴³ One urgent issue to resolve concerned the manuscript of the chronicle held in the local Bodleian library. It involved a story of its own, even though that story remained hidden to me at that time. The Bodleian had acquired the manuscript (known as *Auct. T. 2. 26* and now permanently available to the whole world online⁴⁴) as part of a collection bought by the librarian Thomas Gaisford (1779–1855) at a sale in The Hague in 1824. While all the manuscripts were subsequently added to the library collection, by the 1880s there was still no published catalogue for the whole library. Not surprisingly, at least one manuscript slipped through the net. Its significance was only revealed when it was brought by mistake to a German scholar in 1888. He had requested a neighbouring manuscript. Although it was not the manuscript he was expecting, he immediately recognised its content and importance, suggesting that the best person to evaluate it was Theodor Mommsen in Berlin.

What the library had, unknowingly, was nothing less than the oldest manuscript (fifth century) of Jerome's chronicle (fourth century) and a copy of Marcellinus' sixth-century continuation of Jerome's chronicle, written within a generation or two of its autograph original. It turned out to be the oldest non-biblical Latin manuscript in England. The librarian, E. W. B. Nicholson (1849–1912), kept the discovery to himself. Mommsen

⁴³ Croke (2001). A translation and brief commentary was published as Croke, (1995).

⁴⁴ At the Bodleian: https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/catalog/manuscript_777, in Galway's 'Earlier Latin Manuscripts' collection: <https://elmss.nuigalway.ie/catalogue/551> and detailed in Steffens' *Paléographie latine* (1910): https://www.icar.beniculturali.it/biblio/pdf/Steffens/028_tavo17.pdf.

had been at the Bodleian examining manuscripts of the late Roman chronicles in 1885 before the Jerome/Marcellinus manuscript was discovered, but he returned in March 1889 with the aim of collating manuscripts of Cassiodorus' *Variae* which he was then editing. On 18 March 1889 Nicholson divulged his secret to Mommsen, a meeting so important it was reported in the London *Times* shortly after.⁴⁵ Mommsen himself soon reported its discovery to the academic world⁴⁶ and a full collation of the manuscript was then made for him by E. G. Hardy (1852–1925).⁴⁷ Although Mommsen was not involved in editing Jerome's chronicle, he was involved with that of Marcellinus for which the Oxford manuscript was fundamental.

When I first viewed the manuscript myself in the Bodleian Library I had to sign the covering slip. The slip post-dated Mommsen, but there were two signatories ahead of me: Momigliano in the 1950s and Robert Markus (1924–2010) only quite recently in the 1970s. The thought that I was handling a manuscript once handled by both Mommsen and Momigliano impressed its importance upon me instantly. I knew what they were looking for. Markus, however, was a complete surprise. Knowing him only as an expert on Augustine of Hippo, I was puzzled why he should have been examining the manuscript, and so recently. Before too long, we met in Oxford and he supplied me with my answer. He had just written a major piece on the literary and intellectual context of Marcellinus' chronicle and the question of its relation to the lost *Roman History* of Symmachus.⁴⁸ Alas, Markus' piece was never actually published but it helped shape the future direction of my own research. Born a Hungarian Jew, trained and worked as a chemist, a Lutheran and then a Catholic, later a Dominican seminarian, ultimately a distinguished philosopher, professor of Medieval History, Catholic intellectual and outspoken opponent of nuclear arms, Markus turned out to be a valuable sounding board on chronicles and historiography in general. He was also a kindred spirit in many ways.⁴⁹ A firm friendship resulted. I still treasure his inscribed gift of the edition of John Malalas (1831) by Ludwig Dindorf (1805–71) when he learned of my growing involvement with Malalas' chronicle in the early 1980s. We were having afternoon tea in the British

⁴⁵ *Times*, Saturday 30 March 1889, 6.

⁴⁶ Mommsen (1889b).

⁴⁷ Cf. Hardy (1890), 277–87. For full details of the manuscript: Fotheringham (1905).

⁴⁸ Markus (unpublished).

⁴⁹ Knowing my friendship with Markus and our common interests, I was grateful to Wolf Liebeschuetz (1927–2022) for kindly sending me a copy of his memoir: Liebeschuetz (2012).

Museum when he pulled the book out of his bag. This was a time when such volumes were virtually unobtainable and expensive to copy. I was very grateful to accept it.

Dindorf's *Malalas* was part of what is known, misleadingly, as the 'Bonn Corpus' of Byzantine historians, founded and co-ordinated by Barthold Niebuhr (1776–1831) in the late 1820s but mainly published at Berlin. My seat in the Corpus Christi College library which I occupied day and night, in my case late into the night, was located right next to the library's complete set of the Bonn Corpus so I could consult all the Byzantine chronicles directly whenever I needed. Now, of course, anyone can do that anywhere, since all the volumes are available online.⁵⁰ As my research progressed, and with counsel from Cyril Mango (1928–2021), whose seminar on the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes I attended, but always on a steep learning curve, it became clearer that my Marcellinus was really a Byzantine chronicle. At least to understand him properly the Byzantine background required teasing out. The best place to do that, so I was advised, was Harvard University's Dumbarton Oaks (DO) 'Center for Byzantine Studies' in Washington DC. Mango had spent the formative part of his career at DO, one of the few places where he could easily combine his superior linguistic, topographical, archaeological and artistic knowledge. As a Junior Fellow at DO (1976–8), I got to know better the texts and background of sixth-century Constantinople, including *Malalas* and Theophanes, as well as the vast expanse of Byzantine history and culture more generally.⁵¹ Still, Mommsen kept raising his head. As the editor of Marcellinus and the other Latin chronicles, I was living with him daily. The more familiar I became with all the other chronicles, the more I came to appreciate Mommsen's daunting insight that each manuscript more or less represents a unique chronicle and deserves close attention. In the 1880s and 1890s he had himself inspected, and had conscripted others to inspect and report back, literally thousands of manuscripts. It was a sort of addiction, or a 'chronicle illness', as he once confessed to his son-in-law.⁵²

In August 1978, Robert Markus and Cyril Mango were the examiners of my thesis. An oral examination in Oxford in summer is a sparse affair. There were just the three of us dressed up for the occasion in our academic regalia in a fairly deserted High Street, then led in procession

⁵⁰ At http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/25_90_1828-1897-_Corpus_Scriptorum_Historiae_Byzantinae.html

⁵¹ Experience drawn upon in Croke (1979), (2006), (2010), and (2022).

⁵² Letter, Mommsen to Wilamowitz, 16 July 1893 (Calder III and Kirstein, 2003), 617: 'die chronische Krankheit'.

by one of the university officials to a capacious room in the Examination Schools, an imposing building completed in 1882, not long before Mommsen first visited Oxford. Mango had taken his copy on a summer expedition to southern Turkey. It was still covered with local dust. As he opened it up and methodically spread out his topographical maps of Turkey and Mesopotamia, I thought we were in for a long, hard afternoon. The examiners turned out to be merciful and mercifully brief. With the thesis approved and the formalities completed, we all adjourned to the pub, the examiners to their pipes. They made me promise to waste no time having it published.

Embarking on new adventures

Returning to Australia in September 1978, then adopting a career outside the academy for the next forty years, meant that dealing with Mommsen quickly descended the list of priorities. Higher up was seeing through to publication the volume of translated documents that Jill Harries and I had constructed from the Oxford seminar on ‘Christians and Pagans’ in 1976, under the aegis of our common mentor, John Matthews.⁵³ Over several weeks, this seminar brought into focus the careers of key Roman aristocrats. It also gave rise to English translations of a diverse range of documents we had prepared for the seminar: career inscriptions from the city of Rome contained in *CIL* VI, relevant but little studied documents such as the *carmen contra paganos* (edited by Mommsen), key laws from the Theodosian Code (edited by Mommsen), as well as some letters and reports (*relationes*) of Symmachus (edited at Mommsen’s behest by his pupil Otto Seeck). Mommsen’s shadow hung over this little book not least because it was Edwin Judge, the ‘Sources in Ancient History’ series founder and editor for Sydney University Press, who quickly saw the possibility of a novel volume then helped shape it.⁵⁴ Crucially, around the same time, Judge also encouraged me to pursue my own adventures in Mommsen, beginning with a Sydney conference where he arranged for me to work up an old paper on ‘Mommsen’s Pompey’.⁵⁵

⁵³ Note the legacy of Matthews, as, well as his influence on both Croke and Harries, in McGill, Sogno and Watts (2010), 1–10 (on Matthews); 73–92: J. Harries, ‘Constantine the Lawgiver’ (explaining why Constantine’s legislation is traditional and Roman rather than novel and Christian), and 241–64: B. Croke, ‘Reinventing Constantinople: Theodosius I’s imprint on the city’ (Theodosius I as the real founder of Constantinople by occupying and embellishing it), *rp.* in Croke (2021), 6–28.

⁵⁴ Croke and Harries (1982).

⁵⁵ Later published as Croke (1985a).

In 1980 arose the chance to be involved in what became the ‘Australian Malalas Project’, although it never started out that way at all. As Elizabeth Jeffreys (1941–2023) used to tell the story, we came together to read Malalas (on a weekday evening in Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys’ house) as a way of helping me keep up my Greek.⁵⁶ It may have achieved that, but it soon became clear to all of us that Malalas’ chronicle was actually an important but totally neglected text. Perhaps we should do something more substantial with it. Yet, it could only be tackled, or best tackled, collectively. So, the project was conceptualised (mainly by Elizabeth and Michael), others were hastily identified and enlisted, purpose stiffened, roles allotted or negotiated, and work began. Meanwhile, as we had been gradually translating Book 18 (on Justinian), Elizabeth discovered that Roger Scott in Melbourne had already done something similar. She and Roger knew each other from their student days at Cambridge. So, the Sydney-Melbourne Malalas project was born.⁵⁷

Before long, Mommsen reared his head once more. He’d already been there too. As early as 1857 he was urging that someone ought to comb through the Byzantine chronicles such as that of John Malalas, seeking out the genuine information on earlier Roman history preserved in them from unknown sources. This was one reason, opined Mommsen, that the Bonn Byzantine Corpus volumes were not so user-friendly as the contemporary Latin *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* volumes which identified sources.⁵⁸ He was showing the way himself with an item from Kedrenos. Until now, so it appeared, nobody had taken up his challenge. Later, he demonstrated his intimate knowledge of the text of Malalas while drawing attention to the Byzantine Greek translations of Eutropius and how they reinforced the fact that Eutropius originally proclaimed his work as originating in a summary of Livy,⁵⁹ but of particular importance was his demonstration that an Escorial Library (Spain) manuscript of Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ tenth-century collection of historical

⁵⁶ On the record, Elizabeth had this to say: ‘And he was lamenting — was Brian — that his hard-won knowledge of Greek was getting rusty. So, what could we do about it? So, I said, “Right, let’s have a sort of fun series of evenings reading Greek.” And he came ’round, and we found a few more friends and we wondered what to read and for some reason I thought Book 18 of Malalas might be quite interesting because Brian is a sixth century person and it’s an interesting linguistic thing’, quoted from an interview at <https://www.doaks.org/research/library-archives/dumbarton-oaks-archives/historical-records/oral-history-project/elizabeth-and-michael-jeffreys>.

⁵⁷ The resulting volumes were Jeffreys, Jeffreys and Scott (1986) and Jeffreys (1990).

⁵⁸ Mommsen (1857), 626.

⁵⁹ Mommsen (1866), 468.

extracts contained hitherto unknown portions of Malalas and John of Antioch. Mommsen was the first to publish them, promising a great service for any 'young historian' who could provide a new edition of Malalas, based not only on the Oxford manuscript (*Cod. Barocc.* 182) but also using the Constantinian excerpts and the traces of Malalas in later Byzantine chronicles. Such a scholar would have to be a keen philologist and prepared to deal with the curious 'semi-Greek' of the Syrian Malalas.⁶⁰ It was Mommsen's advice that the Australian team followed up in preparing its translation.⁶¹ At the same time, it was becoming clear that somehow or other the text of Malalas was related to that of another John, also from Antioch, but known simply as 'John of Antioch'. Often, the Australian Malalas team thought that, once Malalas was behind us, we would take up John of Antioch. It was not to be. However, more recently, two substantial but different editions of John of Antioch appeared within a few years. Together they demonstrated that the question of identifying the real John of Antioch, and establishing when he wrote, remains a controversial question.⁶² Pondering these and other issues led eventually to the publication of 'Mommsen and Byzantium' (1985).⁶³ Some years later, in 1996, with Malalas completed, Elizabeth succeeded Cyril Mango as Bywater and Sotheby Professor of Medieval and Modern Greek at Oxford, while Michael moved there too after retiring as Professor of Modern Greek at Sydney.

It was also around this time that another lightning bolt jolted me: I discovered that Mommsen himself had explicitly confessed that, if he could have his time over again, he would devote it entirely to the period from the fourth century onwards.⁶⁴ As I already knew well, in the single busy life he had lived Mommsen had arguably contributed more than any other scholar to this period, but it was never his central scholarly concern as far as anyone could tell. Even so, he clearly felt that in all he had

⁶⁰ Mommsen (1872*b*), 383. Just recently, he had shown that Byzantine material attributed to Dio Cassius was derived from a Greek translation of Eutropius and from John of Antioch (Mommsen 1872*a*). Incidentally, the transcript of the Escorial manuscript was made for Mommsen by Franz Geppert, then donated by Mommsen to the Imperial library at Berlin (Rose [1893], 222). Mommsen's contribution to Malalas is discussed more fully in Croke (1990*c*) and (1990*d*).

⁶¹ Jeffreys, Jeffreys and Scott (1986) which became the structural basis for the subsequent edition by Thurn (2000).

⁶² Roberto (2005) and Mariev (2008), with the guidance of Van Nuffelen (2012).

⁶³ Croke (1985*b*).

⁶⁴ Croke (1990*a*), with Ramsay (1906), 393: 'Twelve years ago, the greatest of living historians, Professor Theodor Mommsen, said to the present writer that, if he were now beginning a new life of scholarship, he would take up the period between Diocletian and Justinian'.

accomplished he had only scratched the surface. There was more than enough to keep him occupied for another lifetime. What, then, would be his agenda for this second life, I wondered?

In 1980, the much anticipated fourth volume of Wickert's biography of Mommsen also appeared.⁶⁵ It would tell the story of the years when he was professor at Berlin (1863–85) and the years that followed. This was the best documented, and most productive, period of Mommsen's life and work. For decades Wickert had privileged access to the voluminous Mommsen archive and his first three volumes included copious documentary extracts. High expectations were held for Volume 4, therefore. On several fronts, however, it proved an anticlimax. It was not entitled 'Meisterjahre' as long expected, but 'Grösse und Grenzen', 'Size and Limits', a somewhat puzzling title explained by the author in his foreword as a response to Mommsen's own warning not to turn biography into panegyric. Even so, for those anticipating the answer to why Mommsen never wrote volume 4 of his *History of Rome*, there was nothing new on offer. For someone like me, anticipating the first full discussion of Mommsen's extensive labours on the history and documents from the fourth to the seventh centuries, combined with insight into his overall approach to the period, Wickert's volume was disappointing. He basically ignored this vast tract of Mommsen's work. Why had Wickert simply avoided this integral part of his subject? I could also tell by then that his few pages on Mommsen and England were superficial and rushed as well.

What to do? Another conversation with Edwin Judge; encouragement and purpose were stiffened once more. In the absence of anything better the only answer was — 'start filling the gap yourself'. Meanwhile, the recently published articles on Mommsen brought me to the attention of one of the few active scholars with deep knowledge of Mommsen and Mommsen's own contemporaries — William M. Calder III (then Boulder, later Urbana). He proved to be a very reassuring correspondent with a passionate and masterful knowledge of Mommsen's place (Berlin), era (nineteenth century) and predilection (philology). My paper on 'Mommsen's Pompey' (1985) led to an invitation to participate in the international symposium Calder was organising for November 1987 on Eduard Meyer in Bad Homburg (Germany) with a designated contribution on Caesar and Pompey, based on Meyer's great work (*Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius*, 1918). Inevitably, it involved comparison with Mommsen's *History of Rome*, as well as taking me back to Syme's *Roman Revolution* (1939). In the end, my work commitments

⁶⁵ Wickert (1980).

prevented me from attending the symposium, but the already prepared paper was later published.⁶⁶

Journeys with Mommsen's letters

When it came to filling the lacuna in Wickert's biography, Calder's example and advice was to 'start with the letters'. The letters to Mommsen from his multifarious correspondents were then very difficult to obtain. They were held in what was East Berlin, behind the famous wall, in the Staatsbibliothek of the German Democratic Republic, as well as in the archives of the Prussian Academy. From Australia at least, securing access was a major undertaking, especially compared to now. Official letters from East Berlin came on fragile and poor-quality paper and the post was extremely slow. The Staatsbibliothek could not make photocopies but would create a microfilm which would be sent to a nearby university library (Macquarie) for use in the library only, strictly not to be copied, and then to be returned to Berlin after a specified period. Compared to modern technology and access this was difficult enough, made more so by my virtual inability to get to the library during opening hours on a weekday. These were the letters to Mommsen, held in Berlin.

Mommsen's own letters to correspondents outside Berlin were scattered throughout Europe and elsewhere. Even acquiring copies of them turned out to be quite an adventure. Catalogues were not online of course and, even where published, often omitted archives and private papers in their possession. The first Mommsen letters I sought and received were those to his pupil and later co-editor on the edition of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, Eduard Schwartz. They were scrappy and very difficult to decipher. Mommsen's cryptic handwriting defeated even local German speakers on occasion. They remain unpublished. Next came the letters to Louis Duchesne (1843–1922), sent on a microform roll from the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris early in 1985. They were all in French and much easier to decipher. Unlike the Berlin letters, they could be copied and kept. Duchesne had produced a remarkable edition of the *Liber Pontificalis* in two volumes (1886, 1892), while Mommsen edited the first part of the same work in his customary thorough style in 1898. They disagreed on much, even dating the *Liber* a full century apart (sixth century: Duchesne; seventh: Mommsen). Yet, as Mommsen's letters showed, they remained good friends.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Croke (1992a).

⁶⁷ For the warm and respectful relationship between the French cleric and the Berlin professor, despite their editorial differences: Franklin, (2017) and (2018).

Around the same time, meeting with John Matthews at Oxford while on a family vacation in the mid-1980s, Mommsen cropped up again. John had not forgotten my curiosity about Mommsen a decade earlier. There were apparently some letters from Mommsen that were kept in a box in the office of the director of the Ashmolean Museum, so John had been told. We should go together and ask the director if we could look at them. We did. They turned out to be Mommsen's letters to Francis Haverfield (1860–1919), historian of Roman Britain and its inscriptions, and one-time Camden Professor of Ancient History at Oxford. The letters were clearly written, by Mommsen's standards at least, and in excellent English. Now they are properly inventoried and accessible in the Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library.⁶⁸ That led back to Berlin, and the letters to Mommsen from Haverfield. These, however, were in the Oxford don's very flowery German. They were mainly about inscriptions but a few at one stage covered the assistance provided by Haverfield in Oxford to Mommsen's editing of the Theodosian Code. Having both sides of the correspondence I started to set them in order.⁶⁹ Then I discovered that Mommsen's letters to Ingram Bywater (1840–1914) were in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Before long, I also had acquired from Berlin Bywater's letters to Mommsen. Both sides of the correspondence for Haverfield and Bywater was illuminating by itself. Here was the core of Mommsen's bridge to England.⁷⁰ More extensive, however, were the letters to Mommsen from William Ramsay (1851–1939), written from Oxford and Aberdeen, over a number of years.⁷¹ Unfortunately, I've never managed to locate the letters from Mommsen to Ramsay.

From her home in St Andrews, my Oxford friend and co-author, Jill Harries, rang me one night in Sydney in 1990. She explained she was planning a conference on the fifth-century *Theodosian Code* (*Codex Theodosianus*) the following summer and wondered if I could offer something on how Mommsen went about his edition of the *Code*. When we were students together in the mid-1970s she had often heard me expounding on Mommsen and his editorial activity on late Roman texts, including the *Theodosian Code*. It was time to deliver. Another family holiday happily coincided with the planned St Andrews conference (July 1991) and the presentation was developed accordingly, drawing heavily

⁶⁸ <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/9ddao175-744d-323c-ae40-bao c2220017e>

⁶⁹ My draft edition of the correspondence was provided, and well utilized, in Freeman (2007).

⁷⁰ I plan to finally publish the correspondence between Mommsen and both Bywater and Haverfield in Croke (forthcoming *b*).

⁷¹ Croke (1993a).

on the Mommsen-Haverfield correspondence.⁷² It was also at St Andrews that I met Stefan Rebenich. At last, here was another young scholar interested in Mommsen. Moreover, we had a common ambition to redress the missing link, namely, Mommsen's considerable contribution to the period from the fourth century onwards. Stefan was someone who not only knew the later Roman empire, but he too had spent time in Oxford under the tutelage of John Matthews and was already mastering what the Germans call 'Wissenschaftsgeschichte', the history of scholars and scholarship. My own papers on Mommsen were just appearing,⁷³ but the conditions for studying Mommsen's archive and related documentation were already rapidly changing. While I had merely skated over the surface of Mommsen's later Roman projects from published sources, Stefan was able to bring depth and detail by utilising the increasingly accessible archives in Berlin and elsewhere. His incomparable edition of the extensive Mommsen-Harnack correspondence, followed by that (with G. Franke) on Mommsen's correspondence with Friedrich Althoff set both a standard and a model for such work.⁷⁴ Illuminating too have been his many supplementary studies on Mommsen, his pupils and his contemporaries.⁷⁵ Then came his authoritative and balanced biography.⁷⁶ There is still nothing comparable in English, or any other language for that matter.

Meanwhile, another door had blown open in the study of Mommsen, and another adventure beckoned. In November 1980, Alexander Demandt had some time on his hands between trains in Nürnberg, on his way home to West Berlin where he was a professor at the *Freie Universität*. In the nearby E. and R. Kistner's *Antiquariat* (second-hand bookstore) he noticed in their catalogue an entry entitled 'Mommsen. History of Rome under the Emperors' and another 'Mommsen. From Diocletian to Honorius'. On helpfully pointing out to the proprietor that there must be a mistake because Mommsen never wrote his much-anticipated history of the empire, let alone as far as the fourth century AD, Demandt received the reply that it was certainly no mistake. The volumes would be fetched for him. What Demandt soon held in his hands were a student's full transcription of Mommsen's Berlin lectures in 1882/3 and 1885/6 on the Roman Empire, covering the period from Augustus

⁷² Croke (1993b).

⁷³ In particular, Croke (1990a) and (1990b).

⁷⁴ Rebenich (1997); Rebenich and Franke (2012).

⁷⁵ Rebenich (1993), (1995), (1996), (1997), (1998), (1999), (2004), (2005), (2009), (2015).

⁷⁶ Rebenich (2002).

(reigned 31 BC to AD 14) to Honorius (reigned AD 395–423). Instantly, he recognised its importance and the need to make its contents widely known. Fortunately for him, his wife Barbara was equally enthusiastic.

In the scholarly world, this was a major chance discovery. The news spread fast. I first heard about it from Calder, then upon sharing the news with Edwin Judge he sensed an opportunity immediately. He suggested to me that I organise, or manage, an English translation. A query to Demandt established its feasibility and his own blessing for such a translation. Then, a proposal was drawn up and we arranged for a potential translator (Lena Cansdale, Macquarie ancient history graduate and Danzig refugee) to meet with Demandt in what was still West Berlin. In the end, however, work and family commitments intruded before it became clear that Thomas Wiedemann (1950–2001) had the same thought and, as Professor of Latin at Nottingham and a native German/English speaker, was already in a better position to make the translation a reality. Demandt's volume was eventually published by C. H. Beck (Munich) in 1992, creating headline news across Germany. In 1996, the English translation was published by Routledge (London and New York). It went largely unnoticed.

Mommsen and Papyri

By the early 1990s, with the combined demands of a young family and a career where both responsibility and time were increasing, it was getting more difficult to find space for any kind of serious historical work, let alone research on Mommsen. In any event, my Oxford thesis remained unpublished and would have to become the absolute priority at some stage. The urgency of the task was being pressed by mentors and friends. Also on the horizon by now was Judge's retirement from his position at Macquarie University. There was to be a conference in his honour in the middle of 1993 and I immediately accepted an invitation to participate. It was Edwin who had really opened my mind to Mommsen twenty years earlier and had encouraged me to persevere along my various tracks of interest. He was no longer Professor of History, but was now Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Macquarie and busy enough with university administration. Otherwise, he was mainly preoccupied with managing a project for collecting and editing papyri related to early Christianity, at that point called the *Corpus Papyrorum Christianorum*. There was a *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* (3 vols. 1957–64), but not yet a Christian

counterpart.⁷⁷ Hence, a presentation on Mommsen's contribution to papyrology seemed appropriate. The modern study of papyrology emerged late in Mommsen's career but he immediately grasped its significance and its applicability to Roman History. Like Mommsen's daily diet of inscriptions, coins and laws, the papyri were simply another form of contemporary documentation, and Mommsen himself predicted that the twentieth century would become the 'Papyrology century'. First, the papyri needed to be gathered together by a knowledgeable team — a *Corpus Papyrorum* was immediately proposed. As so often, the concept may have been Mommsen's, but he inspired others to do the work involved. On this occasion it was his pupil Ulrich Wilcken (1862–1944), so my tribute to Judge was focussed on the significance for papyrology of the relationship between Mommsen and Wilcken.⁷⁸

The conference turned out to be an enormous affair and an enormous success. Scholars came from all over the world to participate in honouring Judge.⁷⁹ His published oeuvre may have been limited at that point, but his reputation was worldwide. Among the participants were John Matthews from Oxford and Robert Markus from Nottingham. They were not pleased that my Marcellinus thesis (1978) was still lying untouched. Once more I promised, but it still took a few years to make the required time for it. Be that as it may, it was at the large Judge retirement dinner in July 1993 which I had the honour of compering, that I had a chance to chat with Harvard's distinguished ancient historian, Ernst Badian (1925–2011). Although not exact contemporaries, he and Judge had been at school and university together in New Zealand, hence his presence in Sydney at the Judge farewell. They had teachers in common at Canterbury, including Pocock and Popper. In the early 1950s Badian went to Oxford to learn from his fellow-New Zealander, Syme, while Judge went to Cambridge to learn from A. H. M. Jones and F. E. Adcock (1886–1968). Also at Cambridge was another fellow-New Zealander, Alex (A. H.) McDonald (1908–79). By now he was a world authority on the Roman historian Livy. Earlier he had been at Sydney University (1939–51) where he had been responsible for both ancient history at the university and promoting its study in schools. Judge later took on a similar role, influencing generations of ancient history teachers and students, both at university and school, with his wide vista of the ancient world combined

⁷⁷ The project has since been reformulated, renamed as *Papyri from the Rise of Christianity in Egypt* and remains unpublished.

⁷⁸ Croke (1998).

⁷⁹ The conference papers were published in Hillard, Kearsley, Nixon and Nobbs (1998).

with his capacity to make meaning of the smallest surviving fragment from that world.

At the same function, I also met Colleen McCullough (1937–2015). We knew about each other, but we'd not actually met before. She was of course a famous novelist whose *Thorn Birds* was set in Australia, so I discovered in Washington DC in 1977 from some enclosed nuns at nearby Georgetown Visitation School where my spouse was teaching. Now, she was working on her set of Roman novels, but she prided herself on their historical accuracy. As a forensic physiologist by trade, she had an eye for exact detail. At the same time, she was also funding a research project on republican Rome at Macquarie University. At her home on Norfolk Island, Colleen had assembled every book on Roman history she could buy anywhere. Besides Gore Vidal (1925–2012), for instance, she is the only person I know to have bought a full collection of the Loeb Classical Library of Greek and Latin texts and translations for home use. Curiously enough, so she confessed to a mutual friend, Macquarie historian Alanna Nobbs, the one item she had not been able to obtain in any bookshop was Mommsen's *History of Rome*, that is to say, in Dickson's 1860s English translation. Alanna explained that she knew I had my own copy, which she felt sure I'd be happy to offer Colleen on an extended loan for as long as she required it. I'd bought the volumes in Oxford in the mid-1970s for the princely sum of 5 pounds, but they were well worn and some of the covers were hanging off. Naturally, I agreed. So, when we met at last, for Colleen I was the 'Mommsen person'. Some years later, and it was years, Alanna returned the Mommsen volumes I'd lent to Colleen. Extracting them from their wrapping I was bowled over by the stunning aroma. Colleen had taken them to New York with her, had her personal bookbinder (Weitz and Coleman, Lexington Avenue) rebind my tatty old books in Moroccan calfskin with marbled endpapers, and fully embossed in gold-leaf. I was very impressed. They are now priceless, standing out on my shelf like misfits. I am almost afraid to open them. Whether Mommsen made any difference to Colleen's version of Roman politicians I have no way of telling, never having read the novels, although I'm told her Cicero was no hero. Still, Colleen's gesture was certainly a generous one.

Opening the World to Mommsen

For all concerned, 1993 was still the pre-email and pre-internet era, but now Mommsen's *History of Rome* is easily accessible online.⁸⁰ If Colleen

⁸⁰ <https://gutenberg.org/ebooks/10701>.

were starting now, she would not need to buy the Loeb library, nor would I need to lend her my copy of Mommsen's *History*. She could just download her own copy at home. Apart from the internet making nearly all of Mommsen's works accessible, much has changed in the half century since I first encountered Momigliano and Mommsen, especially since the conference of 1993. Not only do we know much more about both of them, thanks to a flood of research on their lives and their scholarly output. Momigliano's productivity kept going after his death, as unpublished works were discovered and given an audience, most notably his 1962 Sather lectures at Berkeley (*The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography*, 1990) and the 1940 lectures on *Peace and Liberty*, written in the immediate aftermath of his exile from Italy.⁸¹ The field he pioneered in the English-speaking world of history of historiography has developed and its vision enlarged. Mommsen too has been the beneficiary of a new generation of scholarship focussed on parts of his massive correspondence and the publication of lost material. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany have had a major impact on Mommsen studies. That full Macquarie University library table of Mommsen's works in 1973 could now be expanded by the volume of the Roman empire lectures discovered by Demandt in 1980, the massive volumes of correspondence produced by Stefan Rebenich and Mauro Buonocore (1954–2022) in particular.⁸² Then there is the revised edition of the Wilamowitz-Mommsen correspondence and various smaller caches of letters. More is to come, including the correspondence with Haverfield and Bywater and other English scholars.

Over the years, linking my career (education) and my hobby (history) has been a special interest, only made possible by an occasional involvement in the teaching of History in schools. Having played a role in getting formal study of historiography introduced into the local advanced history syllabus for teenage students in the senior school years in 2001, I was soon under pressure to contribute to its development, to help make it easier for teachers and students. Part of the course enables students to study a particular historian or historians in depth. Students may be studying separately, but simultaneously, Modern History or Ancient History, or both. Choosing a modern scholar of modern history like A. J. P. Taylor (1906–90), Eric Hobsbawm (1917–2012) or Manning Clark (1915–91) was never difficult. Modern scholars of ancient history were

⁸¹ First published in Italian in Momigliano (1996) and in the original English in Momigliano (2013). They elaborate on themes Momigliano had advanced in his inaugural lecture at Turin, aged 27, in 1936. For background: Murray (2017).

⁸² Rebenich (1997), Rebenich and Franke (2012); Buonocore (2003); Buonocore (2017).

more problematic. In response to requests from teachers mainly, I gave occasional conference and seminar presentations with the aim of making more accessible an otherwise (to them) inaccessible historian. I started with Gibbon, then responded to a demand for Mommsen. The published versions of these presentations to teachers and students were designed to propose and facilitate a pathway into the person and the historical work of Gibbon and Mommsen, as well as Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886) as an ancient historian.⁸³ J. B. Bury (1861–1927), spanning the ancient and modern world as he does, not to mention all points in between, was to be next, as I am occasionally reminded. At least I had something to say about him years ago in a lecture honouring the retirement of my teacher of Greek History at Macquarie, Bruce Harris (1921–2022), another New Zealander and Oxford graduate, who lived to eclipse his century.⁸⁴ An expert in Dio of Prusa, Bruce shared with Bury a wide vision of the ancient world and succeeding civilisations.⁸⁵

Mommsen's Berlin

Despite many abortive plans over the years, I finally reached Berlin for the first time in 2012. Modern Berlin guidebooks fail to mention Mommsen but, just as Momigliano formed his own mental map of George Grote's 1840s London, I had developed my own mental map of Mommsen's Berlin. In Mommsen's heyday he was a local celebrity, a prominent and recognisable figure on the streets of the city and commuting on its tramcars. The 1890 Baedeker guide to Northern Germany, for example, tells you that in Berlin, on the first floor of the National Gallery in Room I, you could find the famous 1881 portrait of Mommsen by Ludwig Knaus (1829–1910).⁸⁶ While the Doric Greek-style building was severely bombed in 1944 and its contents removed for safe keeping, it has been reborn as the 'Old National Gallery' and Knaus' portrait of Mommsen hangs there once more. The scholar with piercing black eyes and flowing grey hair is depicted with quill in hand as he looks up from his work, surrounded by books and papers on his desk and on the floor. He was probably writing his 'Roman Public Law' (*Staatsrecht*) at the time. A bust of Julius Caesar watches over him. Then, on the left-

⁸³ Croke (2012), (2016a), (2016b).

⁸⁴ Croke (1986).

⁸⁵ As exemplified in Harris (1980).

⁸⁶ Baedeker (1890), 47. The same portrait was still there in 1897 (Baedeker [1897], 52) but by 1903 it had evidently been replaced by another, later and striking portrait, by Franz Lenbach (Baedeker [1903], 101).

hand side in the forecourt as you enter the Humboldt University, just the 'University of Berlin' in Mommsen's day, there is the statue of Mommsen himself declaiming with book in hand from his professorial chair. Originally executed in 1909 by renowned sculptor Adolf Brütt (1855–1939), the monument was secreted away for safe-keeping while the bombs rained down on Berlin in 1944. Only later was it reinstalled. In the mezzanine gallery inside the main university building, just up the central staircase, is a row of portraits of the University's Nobel Prize winners, beginning with Mommsen (Literature 1902).

Other sites of Mommsen's Berlin deserve a visit too, but the determined traveller finds little trace of him in the city he made his own. Certainly, his mortal remains are there, buried in the Dreifaltigkeitsfriedhof II cemetery near the former Templehof airport. His body was conveyed there in November 1903 through the streets of Berlin from the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church on Kurfürstendamm, not far from Mommsenstrasse, which begins near the Charlottenburg station and still sports many of the elegant old buildings from Mommsen's era. It runs parallel to the much shorter Niebuhrstrasse. The Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church was built in the 1890s in a Byzantine-style, complete with mosaics. It was targeted by allied bombers during the Second World War, so only a shell of the original church remains, a deliberate reminder of the horrors of war.

On first moving to Berlin in 1858, the Mommsen family lived at 10 Schöneberger Strasse before it became a busy thoroughfare of imperial days. By then, with a steadily growing family, the Mommsens moved in 1874 to a much larger house, in fact an imposing three-storey villa, at 8 Marchstrasse in Charlottenburg, west of the Tiergarten but with a direct tramline, first horse-drawn then electric, to the university at the bottom end of Unter den Linden. There is a photograph of the whole family outside the house, another of them taking tea on the upstairs balcony, yet others of Mommsen by himself in his home office or 'workroom' and sitting in the garden reading with a slumbering dog at his feet.⁸⁷ In the summer of 1880, while Mommsen was working away in his office at 2 a.m. a gas explosion caused it to be burnt out. He soon escaped to safety, covered in ash with his flowing hair singed and his hands badly burned from trying to salvage documents from his desk. All of the great scholar's papers, notes and books were destroyed in an instant, among them, so it was feared and rumoured, was the long-awaited Volume 4 of the *History of Rome*. Some manuscripts of Jordanes on loan from English and

⁸⁷ The one place all these photos can be found is in Köpf (2004).

European libraries, were also lost. While the manuscripts were irreplaceable, the books were replaced by the donations and subscriptions of friends and supporters, including those in England. Despite the loss of his notes, drafts and other papers, Mommsen pressed on with new vigour in the 1880s and 1890s, like a ‘phoenix arising from the ashes’,⁸⁸ although libraries stopped lending him manuscripts altogether, or insisted they be placed in a fireproof container. It was in the Charlottenburg house that Mommsen died in his sleep on 1 November 1903. His personal library was subsequently dispersed and the tracing of some of his books from owner to owner provides a riveting detective story.⁸⁹ Eventually the house too disappeared, a victim of wartime destruction. Now its site is taken up by the forecourt of the Architecture Faculty of the Technical University of Berlin, near a major traffic roundabout, at Ernst Reuter Platz.⁹⁰ In December 2017 a memorial plaque was unveiled proclaiming that on this site once stood the house of Theodor Mommsen, ‘Ancient Historian and Liberal Politician’.⁹¹ That is how Berlin remembers him.

Learnings

One learning from this essentially personal story is how much easier this sort of historical research, if not all historical research, has become in the twenty-first century. That is to say, without leaving home, any individual now has access to Mommsen’s *Roman History* and most of his other works including his three-volume edition of the *Chronica Minora*,⁹² to the manuscript of Jerome’s chronicle he had to travel to Oxford to consult, to the full collection of Byzantine historians, the ‘Bonn Corpus’, only available in a specialist library, and other essential tools. Further, anyone embarking on research into the late Roman/early Byzantine chronicles, or an individual chronicle, has a host of instructive material to draw on. Anyone researching Malalas, for example, in the 2020s as opposed to the 1980s, has the Oxford manuscript online, plus a modern critical edition (Thurn 2000), the bibliographical riches of the internet and the digital world, plus other Mommsen-inspired tools such as the

⁸⁸ The explanation for the apt title of the exhibition of Mommsen’s letters, notes and drafts mounted by the office of the MGH in 2005 (Mentzel-Reuters et al [2005]).

⁸⁹ Diliberto (2003).

⁹⁰ Photographs of both the Mommsen house and the building which replaced it, side by side, can be found in Mentzel-Reuters et al (2005), 10.

⁹¹ Photograph at <https://www.gedenktafeln-in-berlin.de/nc/gedenktafeln/gedenktafel-anzeige/tid/theodor-mommsen-1>.

⁹² Mommsen (1892), (1894a), 1898.

Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire. An on-line commentary is being developed at Tübingen.⁹³ While the digital revolution has made the scholar's life much easier in several fundamental respects, certain perennial challenges can never be diminished: resolving on a topic to investigate; conceptualising how to approach, then tell, the story; how to operate within the defined boundaries of the discipline and its preferred norms and traditions.⁹⁴

Another learning from this series of adventures with Mommsen is that he saw the totality of Roman history from the very start. He did not work in compartments, or on different periods successively, but holistically and simultaneously. In other words, he operated all his working life with a detailed knowledge and understanding of Roman history as beginning with the earliest documented inhabitants of Italy and progressing into what we call the 'Byzantine' era. What held together this breadth of vision was his grasp of Roman law and institutions as they changed over time. Mommsen's unified view of Roman History meant that he worked on all periods and problems simultaneously. His substantial involvement with the sources for the later Roman Empire, for instance, was not a later career discovery and preoccupation. One can only imagine what Mommsen would have managed with the tools he actually created but failed to live long enough to take full advantage of himself, let alone what someone of his calibre might have achieved, or might still achieve, with the sort of digital tools now available to anyone, anywhere.

Like any other segment of past times, the study of the history and culture of the Roman world progresses from generation to generation, from one historian like Mommsen to another like Momigliano, or Syme, or Judge. Understanding Rome is inevitably based on knowing the distinguished modern students of Rome, along with their preferences and limitations. Most scholarly careers depend on the ability to grasp changing opportunities, fashions and funding. They can also depend on the individual's flexibility, adaptability, tenacity and willingness to learn new things and be led in unexpected directions. Only in retrospect does the historian's path, or the development of a field of knowledge such as Roman history, look logical, straight and inevitable. That is why, albeit rare, self-reflection is such an important and valuable prompt to others.

⁹³ Details at <https://www.hadw-bw.de/forschung/forschungsstelle/malalas-kommentar>. It is generously funded by the Heidelberg Academy.

⁹⁴ As illustrated for sociology by the autobiography of a distinguished social theorist: Turner (2022).

It was an acolyte of Momigliano, historian of historians Peter Burke, who summed it up best: ‘Even one’s own past is a foreign country’.⁹⁵

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⁹⁵ Burke (2013), 172.

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LA STORIA ANTICA COME STRUMENTO DIPLOMATICO: NAPOLEONE BONAPARTE “SOCIO MANCATO” DELLA RUBICONIA ACCADEMIA DEI FILOPATRIDÌ

— ALFREDO SANSONE —

ABSTRACT

This paper aims at reconstructing the stages of the negotiations set up by the Italian scholars Bartolomeo Borghesi and Luigi Nardi with the French intellectuals Lazare Carnot and Jean-Louis Brad for the nomination of Napoleon Bonaparte as official member of the Rubiconia Accademy of Filopatridi in Savignano sul Rubicone. In the epistolary exchange between the protagonists of this affair, a central role is played by the discussion about themes of Roman history, especially Julius Caesar's passage over the Rubicon in 49 BCE and the site where the so-called Second Triumvirate was formed in 43 BCE. These episodes are exploited as elements of cultural attraction and persuasion, with the attempt to increase the Academy's prestige in Napoleon's eyes and convince him to become its member and patron.

L'articolo si propone di ricostruire le fasi della trattativa avviata dagli eruditi italiani Bartolomeo Borghesi e Luigi Nardi con gli intellettuali francesi Lazare Carnot e Jean-Louis Brad per la nomina di Napoleone Bonaparte a membro ufficiale della Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatridi di Savignano sul Rubicone. Nello scambio epistolare intercorso fra i protagonisti della vicenda, un ruolo centrale è rivestito dalla discussione su temi di storia romana, in particolare sul passaggio del Rubicone da parte di Giulio Cesare nel 49 a.C. e sul luogo in cui si concretizzò il secondo triumvirato nel 43 a.C. Gli episodi furono sfruttati come elementi di attrazione culturale e di persuasione, nel tentativo di aumentare il prestigio dell'Accademia agli occhi di Napoleone e di convincerlo a diventarne socio e mecenate.

KEYWORDS

*Napoleon Bonaparte, Bartolomeo Borghesi, diplomacy,
Roman history, mecenatism, academies*

1. Il contesto storico

Il 12 marzo 1801 Bartolomeo Borghesi (1781–1860), Girolamo Amati (1768–1834) e Giulio Perticari (1779–1822) fondavano a Savignano sul Rubicone (FC), insieme ad altri eruditi romagnoli, la Simpemenia Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatridi, un'istituzione culturale che avrebbe

contribuito a forgiare e diffondere nel tempo il mito di Savignano come “Atene di Romagna”¹. Il nuovo istituto, sorto con il preciso compito di raccogliere, studiare e valorizzare le memorie patrie, sentiva però il bisogno di circondarsi di personalità prestigiose, da un punto di vista sia culturale, sia politico, capaci di fornire quel sostegno necessario affinché un'accademia da poco costituita proseguisse il proprio operato sotto i migliori auspici, premunendosi contro eventuali insidie e attacchi esterni.

Nell'agosto del 1802 cominciò così a circolare, fra le lettere di Bartolomeo Borghesi e l'accademico savignanese Luigi Nardi (1777–1837)², il nome di un personaggio, al tempo sicuramente tra i più celebri e influenti e arbitro delle sorti dell'Italia settentrionale, quale possibile e auspicabile protettore dell'Accademia: Napoleone Bonaparte (1769–1821). Nel periodo in questione Napoleone era riuscito in Italia a piegare la resistenza austriaca nella battaglia di Marengo di due anni prima e, il 26 gennaio 1802, veniva proclamato Presidente della Repubblica Italiana, erede di quella Cisalpina, apprestandosi ad avviare un nuovo corso politico e culturale nella Penisola. Fu così che anche Savignano entrò a far parte della nuova suddivisione amministrativa francese, costituendo uno dei distretti di riferimento nel cosiddetto Dipartimento del Rubicone³.

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¹ Sulla Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatridi (RAF) vd. D. Mazzotti, *Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatridi. Note storiche e biografiche*, Santarcangelo di Romagna 1975; I. Fellini, *Savignano e la sua Accademia*, Savignano sul Rubicone 2001; S. Foschi (a cura di), *La Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatridi*, Savignano sul Rubicone 2007. La data precisa di istituzione ufficiale dell'Accademia, preceduta dai necessari momenti preparatori (cfr. A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori del Rubicone per Napoleone I re d'Italia*, Firenze 1994, p. 11), si può oggi ritenere certa grazie a un'affermazione di Luigi Nardi (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.1, Protopemenia I, 13 novembre 1801), che si riferisce al 12 marzo 1802 come «compleanno della fondazione della Simpemenia». Si consideri, inoltre, che il primo verbale accademico registrato nell'archivio porta proprio la data del 12 marzo 1801 (RAF, ASP, Verbalì, Atti e sedute dei collegi de' Dodecandri e de' Trisandri, 2.1, 1).

² A. Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione. Il carteggio scientifico tra Bartolomeo Borghesi e Luigi Nardi. Lettere scelte (1802–1837)*, San Marino 2024, p. 42, nt. 36 con bibliografia precedente.

³ Sulle vicende di Savignano durante il periodo napoleonico cfr. A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., pp. 7–23; G. Garattoni, *Savignano Ottocento. Un borgo sul Rubicone nel suo secolo più lungo*, Verucchio 2020, pp. 21–46. Su Napoleone e l'Italia esiste ampia bibliografia. Ci si limita dunque ad alcuni dei contributi più recenti: A. Di Biaso (a cura di), *Carlo Zaghi, Napoleone e l'Italia*, Napoli

I rivolgimenti politici, che sembravano ormai indirizzare verso una presenza stabile e duratura dei francesi in Romagna, dovettero esercitare un certo entusiasmo o comunque un'influenza non marginale nei giovani spiriti degli accademici romagnoli, come risulta del resto dalla stessa giovanile adesione di Borghesi agli ideali rivoluzionari⁴. Inoltre, il fatto che Napoleone avesse accettato, il 15 ottobre 1800⁵, di entrare a far parte come socio dell'Istituto della Repubblica Cisalpina da poco istituito con sede nella non lontana Bologna, dovette corroborare la convinzione nei Filopatridi della fattibilità del loro proponimento⁶.

2. Una delicata trattativa diplomatica

Attraverso l'analisi degli scambi epistolari di Luigi Nardi e Bartolomeo Borghesi, in particolare nell'intervallo cronologico 1802–1803, è così possibile scorgere in che modo i membri dell'Accademia cercarono di

2001; M. Bussoni, *Napoleone in Italia: i luoghi delle campagne militari*, Fidenza 2019; F. Ambrosini, *Napoleone e l'Italia*, Forlì 2020; G. Rocca, *Napoleone alla conquista dell'Italia, 1796–1797 e 1800*, Santarcangelo di Romagna 2020; P. Baima Bollone, *Napoleone: dalle campagne d'Italia alla morte criminale a Sant'Elena*, Ivrea 2021.

⁴ Sull'atteggiamento filonapoleonico dell'Accademia dei primordi cfr. P. Sobrero, *Accademie e cultura: la Filopatridi*, in D. Mengozzi (a cura di), *L'89 in Romagna. Studi e materiali degli anni giacobini*, Bologna 1990, pp. 68–71; A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., pp. 34–35; G. Garattoni, *Savignano Ottocento* cit., pp. 67 sgg.; 76. Sull'adesione convinta di Borghesi alla politica napoleonica cfr. A. Campana, *Borghesi, Bartolomeo*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 12 (1970), p. 624; L. Lotti, *Bartolomeo Borghesi e il Risorgimento italiano*, in G. Susini (a cura di), *Bartolomeo Borghesi. Scienza e libertà*, Bologna 1982, pp. 327–328.

⁵ L'aggregazione di Napoleone all'Istituto fu anche commemorata con una lastra celebrativa incisa da Francesco Rosaspina (1762–1842), di cui si riporta qui il testo: NAPOLEONE. BONAPARTE / PRIMO. CONSOLE. DELLA. REP. FRANCESE / GVERRIERO. LETTERATO. POLITICO / SOMMO. INCOMPARABILE / FV. ACCLAMATO. SOCIO / DI. QVESTO. ISTITVTO / ADD. XXIII. VENDEMMIATORE. ANNO. IX / A. MEMORIA. ETERNA / DVN. EVVENIMENTO. COSI. GLORIOSO / ALL'ITALIANA. LETTERATVRA / L'AMMINISTRAZIONE. DEL. DIPARTIMENTO. DEL. RENO / POSE. Cfr. A. Bernucci, P.G. Pasini, *Francesco Rosaspina «Incisor celebre»*, Morciano di Romagna 1995, p. 118.

⁶ Sulla nomina di Bonaparte presso l'Istituto Nazionale della Repubblica Cisalpina vd. L. Pepe, *Istituti nazionali, Accademie e Società scientifiche nell'Europa di Napoleone*, Firenze 2005, pp. 133; 158. Napoleone entrerà poi anche a far parte dell'Istituto Nazionale della Repubblica Italiana, che si poneva in continuità con il precedente Istituto, per cui vd. ancora L. Pepe, *Istituti nazionali* cit., p. 148. Le sopramenzionate istituzioni sembrano le uniche a cui Napoleone abbia formalmente aderito in Italia come membro effettivo.

ingraziarsi il favore del primo console francese, proponendogli l'associazione all'Accademia dei Filopatri e di divenirne "Mecenate". Di questa delicata missione diplomatica⁷ si ignorava finora l'esistenza, non solo per il carattere inedito del carteggio Borghesi-Nardi⁸, ma anche per la natura segreta dell'operazione messa in atto dagli accademici: il nome di Napoleone, infatti, non è quasi mai scritto per esteso nel carteggio, ma sono utilizzate perifrasi come "il noto soggetto" o sigle come *N.B.*, *B.P.* o solo *B.* per cercare di nascondere l'identità del personaggio e mantenere così salve le apparenze pubbliche dell'Accademia, che temeva di veder pregiudicata la propria reputazione qualora il tentativo non fosse andato in porto.

Di noto, sinora, vi era solo una componente della strategia messa in gioco dai nostri attori, ossia la dedica delle Leggi Pemeniche⁹, lo statuto legislativo per l'ordinamento interno dell'Accademia, che doveva essere indirizzata, almeno secondo le intenzioni, proprio a Napoleone Bonaparte. Nella lettera preparatoria, con cui ufficialmente l'Accademia aspirava a presentarsi a Napoleone per formulare tale richiesta, fortunatamente conservata nell'archivio accademico e già discussa in lavori precedenti¹⁰, vi era solo un accenno alla possibilità che il Primo Console diventasse protettore del consesso culturale savignanese. Non era tuttavia esplicitato se in qualità di membro interno, un dettaglio su cui nuovi dati hanno permesso di far luce.

Un aspetto che assume un ruolo centrale in questa vicenda, e che si rivelerà poi il tramite privilegiato per tentare di raggiungere gli obiettivi che gli accademici si erano prefissati, è rappresentato dal fascino evocativo della storia antica e, più in generale, della cultura e delle lettere. La fama di Napoleone come uomo di lettere, avallata dallo stesso e

⁷ Il termine diplomazia è inteso in questo contributo nella sua accezione più ampia, considerato che le parti in causa non agiscono ufficialmente per conto delle ambascierie dei loro rispettivi Paesi. Ci si riferisce dunque, più concretamente, alle capacità di trattazione di affari delicati e alle modalità di relazione fra personalità coinvolte in attività politiche e culturali.

⁸ Una selezione del carteggio scientifico fra i due interlocutori è ora raccolta per la prima volta in A. Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione* cit.

⁹ D. Mazzotti, *Rubiconia* cit., pp. 110–113; I. Fellini, *Savignano* cit., pp. 79–80; L. Cappelli, *La legge e gli ordinamenti*, in S. Foschi (a cura di), *La Rubiconia Accademia* cit., pp. 23–34.

¹⁰ RAF, ASP, Carteggio, 3.2, Protopemenia IV, M 28. Cfr. F. Rocchi, *Notizie aneddotiche della prima età di Bartolomeo Borghesi*, in "Atti e memorie della Regia Deputazione di Storia Patria per le province di Romagna", I (1862), pp. 72–74; D. Mazzotti, *Rubiconia* cit., p. 110; I. Fellini, *Savignano* cit., p. 79; A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., pp. 13–14; R. Garattoni, *Savignano Ottocento* cit., p. 76.

sapientemente alimentata *ad hoc* dal suo entourage e dai suoi elogiatori¹¹, ma senza corrispondere a effettivi meriti culturali, non poteva che indurre i Filopatrìdi, visti gli obiettivi costitutivi dell’Accademia, a intavolare un dialogo su questo piano. Non a caso già Francesco Rosaspina (1762–1842), nella sua iscrizione commemorativa per l’ingresso del Primo Console nell’Istituto di Bologna¹², aveva celebrato Napoleone come letterato sommo. E fu proprio grazie alla condivisione di interessi intellettuali comuni, allo scambio di pareri in materia storiografica e letteraria, che Luigi Nardi riuscì ad avvicinare e poi addirittura a cooptare in Accademia personalità francesi di altissimo livello, come il ministro della guerra Lazare Carnot (1753–1823)¹³, che avevano inoltre la possibilità, grazie alla loro rete di contatti, di informare Napoleone circa i *desiderata* dell’Accademia dei Filopatrìdi.

Il luogo in cui si crearono le basi di queste relazioni culturali e diplomatiche fu Parma, dove Nardi si trovava, a partire dal novembre del 1801, come precettore di due rampolli della famiglia Bernini, e in particolare presso la stamperia di Giambattista Bodoni (1740–1813)¹⁴. La tipografia bodoniana era al tempo un’attiva fucina di idee, che attirava a sé numerosi intellettuali, anche francesi, ormai stabilitisi in città per ricoprire ruoli più o meno importanti nell’amministrazione della Repubblica Italiana, come ad esempio Moreau de Saint-Méry (1750–1819), giurista ed esperto della storia delle colonie francesi in America, cui erano stati affidati nel 1802 dallo stesso Napoleone i ducati di Parma, Piacenza e Guastalla, e che sarà anch’egli accolto nell’ottobre del 1802 in Accademia con il nome di Filandro Atlantide¹⁵.

Tra i letterati e gli scienziati che frequentavano la tipografia bodoniana ricopre una certa importanza, all’interno del nostro discorso, la presenza di un medico militare francese, con velleità artistiche, di nome

¹¹ Su questi aspetti vd. in generale A. Jourdan, *Napoléon. Héros, imperator, mécène*, Paris 2021.

¹² Vd. *supra* nt. 5.

¹³ Sul personaggio vd. almeno J.-P. Charnay (a cura di), *Lazare Carnot ou le savant citoyen: actes du colloque tenu en Sorbonne les 25, 26, 27, 28 et 29 janvier 1988*, Paris 1990; J. Dhombres, N. Dhombres, *Lazare Carnot*, Paris 1997; P. Bertaud, *Carnot Lazare Nicolas Marguerite*, in A. Soboul (a cura di), *Dictionnaire historique de la Révolution française*, Paris 2005, pp. 189–191.

¹⁴ Vd. A Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione* cit., pp. 33–34.

¹⁵ Per l’aggregazione vd. RAF, ASP, Atti degli Eptandri, Protopemenia III, XXIV Pianepsione, f. 35. Sul personaggio vd. D. Taffin (a cura di), *Moreau de Saint-Méry ou Les ambiguïtés d’un créole des Lumières*, in *Actes du colloque organisé par les Archives départementales de la Martinique et la Société des amis des archives et de la recherche sur le patrimoine des Antilles, avec le concours de l’Université des Antilles et de la Guyane (10–11 septembre 2004)*, Paris 2006.

Jean-Louis Brad (1776?-post 1826)¹⁶, che strinse un forte sodalizio proprio con Luigi Nardi. È infatti a Brad che Nardi, con una lettera del 29 agosto 1802, in cui trasmetteva la “pemenografe”, ossia l’atto che sanciva la sua ufficiale aggregazione all’Accademia e la concessione del nuovo nome pastorale¹⁷, si rivolse suggerendo, per la prima volta, l’opportunità di ricevere Bonaparte nel novero degli accademici:

*Si autem magnum militum Imperatorem Consulemque Gallicae Reipublicae aeternum in Socium seu instituti Moecenatem consociandum optimum putabis, quod Simpoemeniae in votis est curam tibi committunt*¹⁸.

L’impegnativo e ambizioso progetto, che sembra essere stato concepito da Nardi almeno dall’agosto del 1802, non senza la consultazione di Borghesi, che riceverà subito copia della suddetta lettera inviata a Brad (il cui originale non è invece pervenuto), ritorna più esplicitamente in altre due lettere a Borghesi del febbraio del 1803¹⁹. In una di esse Nardi, rispetto alle prime intenzioni accademiche che prevedevano la sola dedica delle leggi, consiglia di pensare innanzitutto all’aggregazione di Napoleone a socio:

Tuttavia sentite il mio pensiero: meglio è prima aggregarlo a socio. Ermippo [Brad] s’incarica della trasmissione. L’affare andrà con segretezza, ed in caso d’un rifiuto, del quale non v’è apparenza, le nostre convenienze in pubblico sono salve, ed io nello scrivere ad Ermippo saprei come contenermi. Quando N. sia socio, noi abbiamo, un titolo di più, anzi un adito aperto per fare la dedica. E se noi l’avessimo a socio senz’altra dedica non sarebbe sufficiente? Riflettete, che se prima lo interroghiamo sulla dedica e la rifiuta, noi ci priviamo del vantaggio di potere fargli presentare la pemenografe, cui potessimo unire una copia della famosa lettera Egoniana²⁰, una copia del Proclo se fosse edito, l’Elenco etc²¹.

¹⁶ Poche le notizie su questo ufficiale, per cui vd. A. Chereau, *Le Parnasse médical français ou Dictionnaire des médecins-poètes de la France, anciens ou modernes, morts ou vivants*, Paris 1874, pp. 90–92.

¹⁷ Brad sarà noto in Accademia con il nome pastorale di Ermippo Sequanio. La sua aggregazione avvenne in occasione della seduta del collegio degli Eptandri del 27 luglio 1802 (RAF, ASP, Atti degli Eptandri, Protopemenia III, XXVIII Metagitnione, f. 28).

¹⁸ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.1, Protopemenia III, 2 Memacterione.

¹⁹ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 18 febbraio; 2 Munichione.

²⁰ G.B. Bodoni, *Alla coltissima Rubiconia Simpemenia dei Filopatridi*, Parma 1802.

²¹ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 2 Munichione.

Nardi intendeva quindi puntare tutto e subito sull'associazione, grazie anche alle rassicurazioni di Brad, che si offriva da tramite:

Il sera possible que le *Héros du Siècle* entre comme membre ou plutôt comme *Maecenas* dans *notre* Société; je connais à Paris quelqu'un qui l'approchée; pourrait on y admettre aussi un autre personnage fameuse, et qui déplus est connu dans la littérature française, je veux parler de Carnot, dont le nom a retentit dans le monde initier; j'ai l'avantage de posséder son amitié. Vous me direz cela²².

Non è chiaro chi fosse, secondo Brad, l'uomo che avrebbe dovuto approcciare in modo più diretto Napoleone. In altra lettera egli affermava che si trattava di un personaggio vicino a Bonaparte sin dalla prima campagna in Italia, ma senza ulteriori precisazioni²³. In ogni caso, anche Lazare Carnot, suggerito da Brad per l'aggregazione e che proprio insieme a Napoleone aveva congegnato il piano di massima per la campagna d'Italia, poteva fungere da intermediario più diretto, sebbene i suoi rapporti con il primo console non fossero più idilliaci. Carnot si era infatti opposto, dopo essere rientrato in Francia come ministro della guerra in seguito al colpo di stato del 9 novembre 1799 (18 brumaio), ai programmi di instaurazione di un potere personale da parte del futuro imperatore, ritirandosi così a vita privata già un anno dopo²⁴.

Nonostante ciò, Carnot fu poi trattato generosamente da Bonaparte, che gli assicurò una pensione di diecimila franchi annui e gli affidò la composizione di un trattato militare, considerato uno dei suoi capolavori²⁵. Non era quindi preclusa la possibilità di un dialogo tra i due, malgrado una differente visione politica: tant'è vero che più avanti Carnot tornerà nuovamente in scena per aiutare l'imperatore in occasione

²² Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi di Forlì, *Carte Romagna*, c. 336, 39 (13 settembre 1802).

²³ Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi di Forlì, *Carte Romagna*, c. 336, 54 (28 febbraio 1803): «Je crois, mon ami, que vous ferez bien de m'adresser tout ce que la Société destine pour Bonap... et moi je le ferai passer à un personnage qui approche ce grand homme, que je connais particulièrement, et qui accompagne Bonap. dans ses premières campagnes d'Italie».

²⁴ Carnot aveva inoltre ceduto il passo proprio a Napoleone in seno all'*Institut de France*, nella sezione di arti meccaniche, in seguito al fallito colpo di stato del 18 fruttidoro del 1797, che gli era inoltre costata la rimozione dal Direttorio. Vd. L. Pepe, *Istituti nazionali* cit., p. 11. Anche però F. Rocchi, *Notizie aneddote* cit., p. 72 suggerisce il ruolo di mediatore che Carnot, insieme a Moreau de Saint-Mery, avrebbe potuto ricoprire per gli interessi dei Filopatridi.

²⁵ L. Carnot, *De la défense des places fortes. Ouvrage composé pour l'instruction des élèves du Corps du Génie*, Paris 1810.

dell'invasione subita dalla Francia nel 1814, divenendo poi Ministro degli Interni durante i famosi Cento giorni²⁶.

I Filopatrìdi accolsero così anche Carnot in Accademia, nonostante qualche dubbio iniziale²⁷, con il nome di Clearco Luteziano, il 19 ottobre 1802²⁸. Tramite la mediazione di Carnot e soprattutto di Brad, l'Accademia pianificava di inviare a Napoleone l'incartamento contenente la proposta di dedica delle leggi, che gli verrà poi effettivamente decretata nell'adunanza accademica dell'8 gennaio 1803²⁹, e l'eventuale cooptazione come socio. Era infatti necessario, come faceva notare Bodoni, rendere avvertito Napoleone delle intenzioni dell'Accademia; senza il suo consenso non si sarebbe mai potuto procedere con la stampa delle leggi in suo nome:

Non si costuma e non si può fare una dedica ad un principe o personaggio di quella fatta senza l'assenso del medesimo³⁰.

Sebbene l'amico Brad intanto tranquillizzasse Nardi circa la propria disponibilità a impegnarsi per la trasmissione dei documenti, l'abate savignanese, in una lettera a Borghesi del 18 febbraio 1803, non scartava anche altre soluzioni diplomatiche per avvicinare il Primo Console:

Riguardo a B.p., Brad promette ancora di incaricarsi della trasmissione; anzi ultimamente ebbi da lui lettera di rimprovero, dicendomi che a Carnot non poteva spedire la Pemenografe, senza la campagna, ed una lettera della Simp(emeni)a d'accompagnamento. Tutto bene; ma se col mezzo d'Azzara amico d'Egone, o del vostro Marescalchi... Basta,

²⁶ F. Ercole, A. Baldini, U. Forti, *Carnot, Lazare-Nicolas-Marguerite*, in *Enciclopedia Italiana*, IX, Roma 1931, pp. 105–106. Vd. anche H. Wauwermans, *Napoléon et Carnot: épisode de l'histoire militaire d'Anvers (1803–1815)*, Bruxelles – Leipzig 1888.

²⁷ «Relativamente poi al parere di Lipaulo [Nardi] di concedere l'aggregazione ai due Francesi Moureau e Carnot fu deciso che non si sarebbe mai giunto ad un tale passo, finché il proponente non avesse data miglior contezza dei due indicati forestieri totalmente ignoti ai magistrati» (RAF, ASP, Atti degli Eptandri, Protopemenia III, XXII Memacterione, f. 30).

²⁸ RAF, ASP, Atti degli Eptandri, Protopemenia III, XXIV Pianepsione, f. 35.

²⁹ F. Rocchi, *Notizie aneddote* cit., pp. 72–74; D. Mazzotti, *Rubiconia* cit., pp. 111–112; I. Fellini, *Savignano* cit., pp. 79–80; L. Cappelli, *Le leggi* cit., p. 26. Alla seduta non era però presente anche Lazare Carnot, come sostenuto da Mazzotti, tratto in inganno probabilmente dall'erronea identificazione di Ermippo Sequanio, Jean-Louis Brad, con il nome pastorale di Lazare Carnot, che era invece Clearco Luteziano.

³⁰ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 2 Munichione (22 febbraio 1803).

intanto inviate a me il tutto che procurerò arrivi ogni cosa al suo destino³¹.

José Nicolas de Azara (1730–1804) era diplomatico influente, oltre che grande collezionista di opere d'arte³². Dopo essere stato ministro del re di Spagna presso la Santa Sede per diversi anni, fu nominato nel 1798 ambasciatore di Spagna a Parigi. I rapporti di Azara con i francesi erano positivi in quel periodo (1801–1802) e la sua vicinanza contemporaneamente alle istituzioni transalpine e anche ai Filopatridi³³ poteva rivelarsi certamente utile per raggiungere lo scopo dell'Accademia.

D'altra parte, anche il conte bolognese Ferdinando Marescalchi (1754–1816) era sicuramente personaggio molto vicino a Napoleone, essendo in quegli anni Ministro degli Affari Esteri della Repubblica Italiana proprio presieduta dal Bonaparte. Inoltre, Marescalchi aveva contribuito nel riorganizzare il nuovo Istituto Nazionale della Repubblica Italiana con sede a Bologna, proponendo a Napoleone una lista dei primi membri da nominare³⁴. Il suggerimento dell'alternativa Marescalchi è richiamato da Nardi ancora nella lettera del 22 febbraio 1803 («Voi potreste tentare la strada di Milano, o quella di Marescalchi»³⁵), ma non sembra che Borghesi abbia poi cercato di sperimentare questa soluzione o almeno non vi è traccia di un loro possibile scambio epistolare, vista la formula «il vostro Marescalchi» usata da Nardi, che potrebbe lasciar supporre una certa vicinanza tra i due sulla questione.

3. I documenti per la cooptazione di Napoleone Bonaparte

In ogni caso, i Filopatridi si erano già messi all'opera per preparare tutto l'incartamento e in particolare la bozza dell'istanza di cooptazione di

³¹ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 18 febbraio.

³² Cfr. G. Sánchez Espinosa, *Las memorias de José Nicolás de Azara. (ms. 20121 de la BNM)*, Frankfurt am Main 1994; G. Sánchez Espinosa, *La biblioteca de José Nicolás de Azara / Calcografía Nacional, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando*, Madrid 1997; J. Jordán de Urríes y de la Colina, *José Nicolás de Azara, protector de las Bellas Artes*, in Ch. Frank (a cura di), *Spanien und Portugal im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, Frankfurt am Main 2002, pp. 81–97.

³³ Fu infatti accolto in Accademia con il nome pastorale di Erastideno il 27 marzo 1803 su proponimento di Borghesi e Nardi (RAF, ASP, Albo Pemenico, f. 5, nr. 108).

³⁴ L. Pepe, *Istituti nazionali* cit., pp. 147–148.

³⁵ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 2 Munichione.

Napoleone, allestita nel dicembre³⁶ del 1802 e oggi custodita in Accademia³⁷ (fig. 1). Da essa emerge certamente il carattere celebrativo nei confronti del Primo Console, ma al contempo anche la visione di un uomo percepito convintamente come istitutore di una nuova *Pax* universale³⁸, molto simile a quella di memoria augustea:

A Napoleone Bonaparte
Primo Console della Repubblica Francese,
e Presidente dell'Italia

La Rubiconia Simpemenia dei Filopatridi

Una Società letteraria istituita sul Rubicone vi si presenta, ardisce anzi di pregarvi di ricevere la dedica delle sue Leggi. Quest'omaggio della sua riconoscenza non sarà contaminato dall'adulazione. Essa riconosce dalla fondazione della Repubblica Italica la sua esistenza, e la fondazione della Repubblica da Voi. Essa deve alla pace data all'Universo la sua prosperità, ed a Voi solo la Pace dell'Universo. Essa esercitando gl'ingegni in ogni sorta di scienze, ed arti aspira a preparare, giusta gli antichi esempj, in mezzo agli Orti; ed ai Portici de' nobili Genj alla Patria; e sa, che niuno apprezza tanto gli esempj de Romani, e de Greci, quanto Voi, che ne avete superate le gesta, e la fama. Permettete adunque, che la nascente Società dimentica della sua piccolezza chieda protezione dal Pacificatore delle Nazioni, e mostri quanto i suoi membri

³⁶ Del resto Brad, in una lettera del 5 novembre 1802, si augurava che l'Accademia si stesse già attivando per ricevere Napoleone e Carnot: «j'espère qu'en ce moment l'académie s'occupe de la réceptions des deux candidats que vous les avez proposés: Bonaparte et Carnot... ces deux noms désignent deux grands hommes de notre Siècle, et le dernier a montré des droits comme littérateur auprès de la compagnie savante de Savignano» (Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi di Forlì, *Carte Romagna*, c. 336, 51).

³⁷ RAF, ASP, Carteggio, 3.2, Protopenia IV, M 28. Cfr. *supra* nt. 10 per bibliografia.

³⁸ Il tema della *Pax* nella produzione encomiastica di questo periodo, sia latina, sia italiana, ricorre molto spesso per esaltare la figura di Napoleone in Europa. Si vedano ad esempio i numerosi componimenti raccolti, per quanto riguarda la produzione in latino, in H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus*, vol. I, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2011, pp. 228–230; 266 sgg. In essi Napoleone è in genere designato come *Fundator Pacis* (H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus*, cit., vol. I, p. 282), *Pacificator* (H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus*, cit., vol. I, p. 313; vol. II, pp. 193, 330, 680), *Pacificus* (H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus*, cit., vol. I, p. 486), *Princeps Pacis* (H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus*, cit., vol. II, p. 232), *Restaurator Pacis* (H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus*, cit., vol. I, p. 316) e così via.

sian degni del nome di Filopatridi consecrandosi al Padre della loro patria

Savignano — Dipartimento del Rubicone
Dicembre 1802.

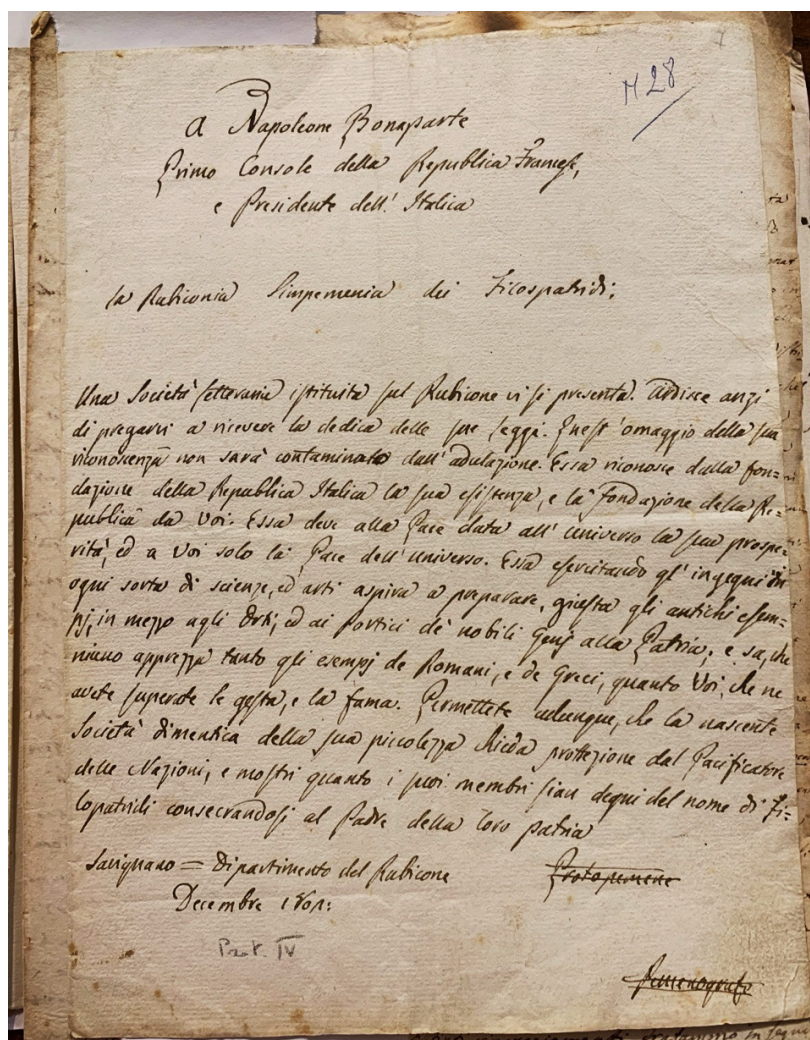


Fig. 1. La lettera per Napoleone Bonaparte.

La dedica delle leggi, nelle quali è facile intravedere un richiamo alle antiche leggi delle XII tavole romane³⁹, anche per la scelta del latino arcaico con cui saranno redatte, era preceduta da una *praefatio* dedicatoria in latino, ideata secondo i classici canoni epigrafici romani, ben

³⁹ Rafforzando dunque ulteriormente il legame di Napoleone con il mondo romano e, più nello specifico, con l'ambito del diritto, per cui vd. S. Marino, *Ei fu. Lui è ancora. Napoleone e il diritto romano*, in “FuturoClassico”, 8 (2022), pp. 201–248.

evidenti nel ricorso ad aggettivi come *Pius, Felix, Invictus*, tipici dell'epigrafia dell'età imperiale inoltrata⁴⁰ e altrove impiegati nella produzione in lingua latina per celebrare Napoleone⁴¹:

*Neapoleoni Bonapartio
Pio, Felici, Invicto Imperatori,
Germanico, Italico, Aegyptiaco Maximo,
Primo Gallorum Consuli,
Italarum summo Praefecto,
Pacificatori Orbis Terrarum,
has XII tabularum leges suas
Sympoemenia Philopatridarum ad Rubiconem
D. D*⁴².

Attraverso questi titoli si sottolineava ulteriormente la sua azione pacificatrice del mondo (*Pacificatori Orbis Terrarum*)⁴³, quale emulo di

⁴⁰ Con maggiore diffusione a partire dall'età dei Severi, cfr. A. Magioncalda, *Lo sviluppo della titolatura imperiale da Augusto a Giustiniano attraverso le testimonianze epigrafiche*, Torino 1991, pp. 48–49; 84, con riferimento anche alla medesima sequenza degli epiteti elogiativi; D. Lassandro, *L'imperator invictus*, in "Classica et Christiana", 1 (2006), pp. 99–110.

⁴¹ Cfr. a titolo esemplificativo H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus* cit., vol. I, pp. 138; 486; vol. II, pp. 174; 186; 232; 494; 502; 708.

⁴² RAF, ASP, Atti costitutivi, 1–4, con anche traduzione in italiano. Cfr. anche F. Rocchi, *Notizie aneddoti* cit., p. 72; D. Mazzotti, *Rubiconia* cit., pp. 110–111; I. Fellini, *Savignano* cit., p. 79.

⁴³ Nella documentazione epigrafica antica la formula non sembra mai ricorrere, così come il solo titolo di *Pacificator*. È invece ben attestata la formula *Pacator orbis* almeno dall'età di Commodo (*CIL* XIV, 3449 = EDR144172), per poi diffondersi ampiamente sotto i Severi (cfr. ad esempio *AE* 1924, 19 = *CIL* XVII², 548; *CIL* II, 1969; *CIL* II², 5, 76; *CIL* II², 7, 60 = *CIL* II, 2124) e in seguito con imperatori come Claudio Tacito (*CIL* VIII, 22122; VIII, 22083 = *ILS* 589, con la variante *urbis* in luogo di *orbis*), Aureliano (*CIL* XVII², 160), Probo (S. Merten, *Probus als pacator orbis: eine unbekannte Büste des Probus mit Friedenszweig auf einem Antoninian*, in "Numismatisches Nachrichten Blatt" 43, 8 [1994], p. 200), Caro e Carino (*AE* 1923, 16), Diocleziano e Massimiano (*CIL* VIII, 7003), il cui significato è sicuramente interscambiabile con quello di *Pacificator orbis terrarum*. Chiaramente la *iunctura* non può che rimandare, in virtù di una maggiore affinità ideale fra Napoleone e Augusto, anche all'*incipit* delle *Res Gestae divi Augusti (orbem terrarum imperio populi Romani subiecit)* o ancora a *CIL* XI, 1421 = EDR142467, in cui Augusto è definito *Praeses orbis terrarum*. Ma è anche vero che in queste circostanze si intendeva piuttosto rimarcare un'idea di forza di sottomissione, con la quale Augusto era riuscito a garantire al popolo romano il controllo sul globo terraqueo, e la capacità di governo e tutela dell'equilibrio geopolitico da parte del *princeps*. Per Napoleone è invece il concetto di pace che deve prevalere e ciò spinge poeti e panegiristi del tempo a ricercare

Augusto, anch’egli indicato come padre della Patria alla stregua del *princeps* romano, sebbene questi titoli non sembrino aver particolarmente entusiasmato Napoleone, che giocava sull’ambiguità di porsi come un “nuovo Cesare”, con tutta l’aura di solennità dell’antico, e la voglia di superare i modelli e distinguersi da essi⁴⁴. Ma questo gli accademici non potevano saperlo⁴⁵ e, a ben vedere, già nella lettera in latino che Nardi indirizzò a Brad il 26 agosto 1802⁴⁶ il richiamo al principato augusteo, in particolare alla sfera culturale e letteraria, è presente nella prefigurazione di Napoleone come potenziale mecenate dell’Accademia (*instituti Moeccenatem consociandum*).

La suddetta lettera di Nardi è importante non solo per conoscere i piani dell’Accademia, ma anche per comprendere su quali aspetti storico-culturali i suoi membri puntassero per raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissati e in che modo ritenessero opportuno presentarsi al pubblico. Oltre al richiamo più generico ad Augusto, congeniale probabilmente per ogni uomo di governo che aspiri a mantenere l’equilibrio sociopolitico, non poteva mancare un riferimento storico più stretto e coerente con la terra di Savignano, ossia ripercorrere il celebre passaggio di Giulio Cesare sul Rubicone⁴⁷. Esso è menzionato da Nardi a Brad per spiegare perché l’Accademia portasse il nome di *Rubiconia* e accattivarsi, sin dal principio, la sua curiosità intellettuale:

*tuam omnibus notam doctrinam offenderem si tibi dicerem hunc olim
fuisse amnem antiquum Italiae Galliaeque limitem insignem, atque*

soluzioni letterarie ed epigrafiche anche lontane dal classicismo augusteo e maggiormente tipiche dell’epoca tardoimperiale, purché esse avessero ai loro occhi maggiore attinenza con l’immagine che intendevano costruire del condottiero francese.

⁴⁴ È interessante notare che sia qui impiegato anche il titolo *Germanicus*, che Napoleone rifiuterà espressamente il 3 ottobre 1809, quando l’Institut aveva proposto di conferirglielo insieme a quello di Augusto. È probabile che avrebbe così rifiutato anche quelli di *Italicus* e di *Aegyptiacus Maximus*, a giudicare dalla risposta che diede in quell’occasione all’Institut: «Il titolo dell’Imperatore è “Imperatore dei Francesi”. Egli non vuole nessun nome che trasmetta associazioni aliene — né “Augusto”, né “Germanico”, né “Cesare”». Vd. A. Giardina, A. Vauchez (a cura di), *Il mito di Roma. Da Carlo Magno a Mussolini*, Roma-Bari 2000, pp. 152–153. Sul tema delle analogie storiche per Napoleone vd. F. Santangelo, *Napoleon and Ancient Rome: The Models of the Republic and the Empire, 1779–1815*, in “FuturoClassico”, 8 (2022), pp. 86–115.

⁴⁵ Tant’è che in una seconda iscrizione formulata da Nardi, questa volta in italiano, per l’incoronazione di Napoleone nel 1805 sarà ancora adoperato il titolo di Germanico (vd. A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., p. 43).

⁴⁶ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.1, Protopemenia III, 2 Memacterione.

⁴⁷ Cfr. *infra* nt. 55.

*Caium Iulium Caesarem contra senatus iussum hunc traicientem libertati Romanae finem imposuisse*⁴⁸.

Il legame dell'Accademia con il Rubicone e, di conseguenza, con Cesare in un momento cruciale della sua parabola politica, doveva costituire un elemento di forte attrattiva non solo per Brad, ma ovviamente per Napoleone, che al generale romano ha sempre guardato, com'è noto, quale modello e fonte di ispirazione, ma anche in un'ottica di competizione con il passato, come emerge chiaramente dal suo commento alle guerre di Cesare⁴⁹, lette e rilette sin dalla giovinezza, dettato negli ultimi anni del riposo forzato a Sant'Elena⁵⁰. Non è dunque un caso che nella costruzione dell'epistola Nardi accenni, subito dopo la menzione del Rubicone, alla possibilità di cooptare Napoleone in Accademia.

Viene del resto da chiedersi quali altri motivi di persuasione avrebbero potuto mai avere dei giovani letterati (Borghesi aveva solo ventun anni), ancora semisconosciuti, di un piccolo paesino della Romagna, per provare a raccogliere l'interesse e il sostegno dell'*Héros du siècle*⁵¹, come lo definì Brad, che controllava ormai gran parte dell'Italia settentrionale, se non facendo perno sulle proprie glorie del passato.

Tutto ciò sembrava poter bastare anche agli occhi del francese Brad che, reputando ormai imminente⁵² l'aggregazione di Napoleone e Carnot, dichiarava, il 29 settembre 1802:

Obtenez pour Bonaparte et Carnot l'admission dans la Société et je me chargerai de la leur faire passer. Mon cher, les pasteurs du Rubicon

⁴⁸ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.1, Protopemenia III, 2 Memacterione.

⁴⁹ Sul complesso rapporto fra Cesare e Napoleone, fra *imitatio* e, soprattutto, *aemulatio*, ci si limita a rimandare ad A. Giardina, A. Vauchez (a cura di), *Il mito di Roma* cit., pp. 147–159; L. Polverini, *Imitatio Caesaris. Cesare e Alessandro, Napoleone e Cesare*, in A. Barzanò et al. (a cura di), *Modelli eroici dall'antichità alla cultura europea* (Bergamo, 20–22 novembre 2001), Roma 2003, pp. 403–414 e da ultimo D. Amendola, *Tra imitatio ed aemulatio: Bonaparte e la "geo-historiographie d'Alexandre"*, in "FuturoClassico", 8 (2022), p. 7 nt. 3 con raccolta della corposa bibliografia precedente.

⁵⁰ I. Eramo, *Leggere Cesare a Sant'Elena. Il Précis des guerres de César*, in "FuturoClassico", 8 (2022), p. 53, nt. 7 con bibliografia precedente.

⁵¹ *Heros* è altresì utilizzato nella produzione latina come epiteto per Napoleone. Cfr. ad esempio H. Krüssell, *Napoleo Latinitate vestitus*, cit., vol. I, pp. 200; 208; 238; 284.

⁵² Si consideri anche quest'altra riflessione di Brad manifestata a Nardi il 15 novembre 1802 circa la fattibilità dell'operazione: «Mon cher, j'ai bien le moyen de faire présenter à Bonaparte le diplôme qu'on lui destine, mais je ne nu charge pas du reste, cependant je ne crois pas qu'il ne prise les hommages des *Bergers du Rubicon*, ainsi vous pouvez agir» (Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi di Forlì, *Carte Romagna*, c. 336, 55).

s'honoreront en recevant dans leur Sein ces deux hommes célèbres, les quels à leur tour seront honoré en venant se reposer de leurs nobles occupations sur le bords tranquilles de fleuve qui vous rendez fameuse par vos talents ⁵³.

Sembrava dunque sufficiente questo quadretto bucolico, un *locus amoenus* attraversato da un fiume intriso di storia come il Rubicone, ove trascorrere periodi di *otium* lontano dalle impegnative faccende politiche, per far sentire onorati i futuri membri di partecipare della vita accademica.

Per rincarare la dose di attrazione storica e culturale, oltre a Cesare e al passaggio del Rubicone⁵⁴, che per Nardi e gli accademici non poteva che essere il corso d'acqua che attraversa tutt'oggi Savignano⁵⁵, Nardi

⁵³ Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi di Forlì, *Carte Romagna*, c. 336, 46.

⁵⁴ Suscita quanto meno della curiosità il poco spazio concesso da Napoleone nel suo *Précis* (per cui vd. A. Paradiso (a cura di), *Napoleone. Le guerre di Cesare*, Roma 2005, p. 98) a un momento decisamente significativo nella carriera politica di Cesare, limitandosi semplicemente a constatare l'attraversamento del fiume e l'inizio delle guerre civili. È probabile, per come era stato concepito il *Précis*, che l'episodio non rivestisse una grande rilevanza militare e non fornisse pertanto elementi utili per discutere le strategie da adottare per affrontare Cesare in battaglia. Il passaggio del Rubicone poteva essere visto solo come un atto puntuale e simbolico a suggello di un quadro politico già imbastito, che avrebbe inevitabilmente portato alle guerre civili. Non escluderei, tuttavia, la possibilità che l'ex imperatore, ormai esiliato, abbia deciso di proposito di non soffermarsi su un evento che, come ha sottolineato O.B. Hemmerle, *Crossing the Rubicon into Paris: Caesarian Comparisons from Napoleon to de Gaulle*, in M. Wyke (ed.), *Julius Caesar in Western Culture*, Malden 2006, pp. 285–292, era essenzialmente accostato ai colpi di stato, di cui Napoleone era stato del resto protagonista nel 1799, e alle guerre civili. Considerato lo stigma che al tempo l'attraversamento del Rubicone generava (nella prima prosa delle *Feste dei Pastori* scritte dai Filopatridi [vd. A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., p. 16] è notevole come proprio l'attraversamento del Rubicone da parte di Cesare fosse visto come un atto di ferocia contro la Patria, allorquando Napoleone, al contrario, veniva elogiato perché con le sue vittorie era riuscito a garantire la tanto agognata pace) forse Bonaparte preferì non dilungarsi su questo episodio, per quanto di assoluta rilevanza storica, e non cercare dunque di dare adito a termini di *comparatio* con quanto da lui compiuto in prima persona nel 1799. Anche Nardi, nella sua lettera a Brad del 29 agosto 1802 (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.1, Protopemenia III, 2 Memacterione), definì il superamento del Rubicone da parte di Cesare come l'atto che pose fine alla libertà romana (*libertati Romanae finem imposuisse*).

⁵⁵ La *quaestio* è ancora aperta. Non è questa la sede per discutere di un argomento che ha dato adito a una bibliografia piuttosto densa. Per un inquadramento del problema, si rimanda pertanto a P. Aebischer, *Considerations sur le cours du Rubicon*, in «Museum Helveticum» 1, 4 (1944), pp. 258–269; N. Berti, *Il Rubicone, confine religioso e politico, e l'inizio della guerra civile tra Cesare e Pompeo*, in “Contributi dell'Istituto di Storia antica dell'Università del Sacro Cuore”, XII (1987), pp. 212–233;

coinvolse Brad anche nella discussione relativa al luogo in cui, nel 43 a.C., si registrò l'incontro preliminare tra i membri del futuro secondo triumvirato. Nardi, infatti, che aveva intenzione di esaltare ulteriormente l'importanza storica del proprio centro d'origine e aumentare così le probabilità di successo della cooptazione di Napoleone, insisteva per una collocazione del congresso triumvirale sul Rubicone e, più precisamente, nei pressi del *Compitum*, probabilmente una *statio*, collocata presso San Giovanni in Compito, distante appena due chilometri dal centro di Savignano⁵⁶:

Dicam tibi tantum, auctoritate Lucii Florii (lib. 4 Romanarum Rerum cap. 6 de Triumvirato), *sussultus, prope hunc fluvium ubi olim Sabinianum seu Compitum conditum erat ad Confluentes [...] ibi inter Lepidum, Octavianum, et M. Antonium Triumviratum efformatum initumque fuisse*⁵⁷.

In verità, come ormai si ritiene e come aveva del resto già dimostrato anche Borghesi⁵⁸ sulla base di un passo plutarcheo⁵⁹ non considerato da Nardi, che invece dava arbitrariamente maggior credito all'epitomatore Floro⁶⁰, l'incontro sarebbe avvenuto su un isolotto del fiume Reno nei pressi di Bologna. Anche Brad⁶¹ inizialmente condivideva la ricostruzione

G. Susini, *Rubicone segno di confine*, in *Atti Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatrìdi*, Savignano sul Rubicone 1989, pp. 5–11; A. Veggiani, *Il Rubicone. Studi sull'idrografia e sul territorio dell'antico Urgan-Rubicone*, Cesena 1995; C. Pascucci, *Fluvius Rubico, quondam finis Italiae: osservazioni sul corso del Rubicone in epoca romana*, in «Orizzonti», 8 (2007), pp. 79–85; C. Ravara Montebelli, *Il passaggio del Rubicone*, in C. Ravara Montebelli (a cura di), *Alea iacta est. Mostra tenuta presso l'Archivio di Stato di Rimini* (25 settembre-25 novembre 2010), Cesena 2010, pp. 15–46 e 43–46, con utile elenco dei contributi prodotti tra XVII e XIX secolo. Più di recente vd. anche L. Fezzi, *Il dado è tratto. Cesare e la resa di Roma*, Bari – Roma 2017, pp. 191–194 e R. Morstein Marx, *Julius Caesar and the Roman People*, Cambridge 2021, p. 326, nt. 12, che ribadisce il carattere controverso dell'identificazione dell'antico Rubicone.

⁵⁶ *Mutatio Conpetu*, così in *It. Burd.* 615, 7. Cfr. G. Susini, *Le questioni della storia antica*, in A. Varni (a cura di), *Un castello di Romagna: Savignano sul Rubicone*, Verucchio 1997, pp. 27–28. Nardi proponeva di identificare la località *Ad Confluentes* della *Tabula Peutingeriana* (V, 1) con il *Compitum*, che egli riteneva sinonimi. Cfr. G. Radke, *Viae publicae romanae*, Bologna 1981 [trad. it.], pp. 253–256.

⁵⁷ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.1, Protopemenia III, 2 Memacterione.

⁵⁸ *Oeuvres Complètes de Bartolomeo Borghesi*, vol. IV, Paris 1875, pp. 91–100.

⁵⁹ Plut. *Cic.*, 46, 4.

⁶⁰ Flor. II, 16.

⁶¹ Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi di Forlì, *Carte Romagna*, 336, 39 (13 settembre 1802): «Je ne crois pas [...] que le dernier triumvirat de Rome cite est formé près du Rubicon; je crois avoir lu dans Plutarque que ce fuit à Bologna, aubin plus je puis me tromper».

borghesiana, ma il confronto con il pertinace Nardi, sulla scorta dell'erudizione settecentesca, gli fece cambiare idea, tant'è vero che a quest'ultimo dichiarò:

Pour ce qui est de notre discussions sur le lieu où se forma le dernier triumvirat de Rome, je pense que vous avez raison, et que le auteurs qui ont dit avec et après Plutarque, qu'il fuit formé *prope Bononiam*, n'ont nommé cette ville que parce qu'elle était grande, et par conséquent un point plus marquant pour cette époque fameuse dans l'histoire; la plupart de nos voyageurs français en Italie qui comme vous n'avez pas consulté ce qui a été écrite la dessus par Florus et d'autre ne jugeant comme moi que d'après Plutarque, avez commis et propagé la même erreur; je vous remercie d'avoir éclairé si savamment ce point d'histoire⁶².

L'opposizione di Borghesi a questa teoria di Nardi emerge anche dal loro stesso scambio epistolare dell'ottobre 1802. Borghesi riteneva che una sistemazione del sito di incontro fra Antonio, Ottaviano e Lepido sul Rubicone fosse da evitare, «non essendo ciò ancora abbastanza con alcun'opera provato»⁶³. Il suo interlocutore, tuttavia, spinto da un convinto desiderio di esaltazione della propria terra natia, non accettava di sopprimere dalla sua idea di presentazione dell'Accademia «uno dei monumenti di Storia Patria migliori»⁶⁴ e accusava Borghesi di codardia, perché dimostrava, pur con il suo legittimo scetticismo, di temere in realtà l'erudizione bolognese, che avrebbe reagito duramente a una proposta di sostituzione del luogo del congresso triumvirale⁶⁵. In ogni caso, questa vicenda storiografica evidenzia come i grandi momenti della storia antica fossero percepiti e letti in funzione delle loro potenzialità propagandistiche e, nel caso dell'affaire Napoleone, la coppia Cesare-Augusto poteva avere un rilevante impatto persuasivo in chiave diplomatica.

Proprio per questo Borghesi capiva quanto fosse comunque importante mantenere saldi i rapporti intellettuali per assicurare un buon esito della vicenda e, seguendo il consiglio di Nardi che invitava a ulteriormente interessare Brad «e cattivarsi il suo infervoramento»⁶⁶, inviò al

⁶² Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi di Forlì, *Carte Romagna*, c. 336, 46 (29 settembre 1802).

⁶³ A. Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione* cit., p. 100.

⁶⁴ A. Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione* cit., p. 103.

⁶⁵ Per approfondire questa discussione vd. A. Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione* cit., pp. 46–47.

⁶⁶ Vd. Nardi a Borghesi nella lettera del 17 marzo 1803 (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopenia IV, 25 Munichione).

medico francese, il 10 aprile 1803, due suoi «meschini sonetti»⁶⁷, di cui però non resta sfortunatamente traccia.

Accanto a Cesare, Augusto e il secondo triumvirato, un altro elemento che secondo Nardi poteva essere inserito in questa trattativa, sicuramente più insolito rispetto alla più schietta romanità, essendo collocato ormai al termine del mondo antico, era la presentazione di un'opera filosofico-religiosa del V sec. d.C., a cui gli Accademici stavano programmando di lavorare.

Tra i documenti che Nardi suggeriva a Borghesi per essere poi allegati al plico diretto a Napoleone (statuti, elenco completo dei soci⁶⁸, un'elegante lettera di ringraziamento stampata da Bodoni per la sua accoglienza in Accademia⁶⁹), spicca infatti l'edizione di due *Inni* (l'inno a Ecate e Giano e l'inno a Minerva) del filosofo di V sec. d.C. Proclo⁷⁰, da approntare sulla base di un manoscritto di Giovanni Cristofano Amaduzzi (1740–1792), ora alla Biblioteca Palatina di Parma (Ms. Parm. 1496). L'autografo, che conteneva anche la traduzione italiana e l'adattamento metrico di Ippolito Pindemonte (1753–1828), era giunto alla tipografia di Bodoni su precipuo volere testamentario di Amaduzzi, che agli *Inni* aveva dedicato gli ultimi anni della sua vita⁷¹. I Filopatridi avevano in programma di stampare il manoscritto presso la tipografia di Bodoni, inserendo anche una prefazione in lingua latina da loro appositamente allestita con l'obiettivo di presentare pubblicamente l'istituto che si era sobbarcato l'onere editoriale. Almeno nelle aspirazioni di Nardi, questo lavoro avrebbe potuto costituire un ulteriore biglietto da visita con cui presentarsi agli occhi di Napoleone, per dimostrare le capacità e le qualità degli accademici. Bonaparte, tuttavia, non visionò mai l'opera, dato che non fu mai completata, risultando tuttora inedita, ma sarebbe stato interessante conoscere quale giudizio avrebbe potuto mai esprimere l'imperatore su un'opera simile.

⁶⁷ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 20 Targellione.

⁶⁸ Sull'invio dell'elenco dei soci a Brad, l'Accademia ha cercato cautelativamente di prendere tempo, come si evince da questo passaggio degli Atti degli Eptandri con data 1 novembre 1802 (RAF, ASP, Atti degli Eptandri, Protopemenia III, VII Posideone, f. 32): «Ricusò parimenti l'adunanza di spedirgli [a Nardi] una copia dell'Albo Pemenico scusandosi coll'osservare, che non essendovi ancora ascritto un sufficiente numero di uomini celebri poteva colla pubblicazione, e colla diramazione ridondare su tutta la società pemenica invece di un onore un non ricercato danno».

⁶⁹ Vd. *supra* nt. 20.

⁷⁰ Cfr. E. Vogt, *Procli Hymni*, Wiesbaden 1957; R. Van den Berg, *Proclus' Hymni*, Leiden – Boston – Köln 2001.

⁷¹ A. Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione* cit., pp. 76–77.

Ricapitolando, erano dunque questi gli elementi tematici addotti dai Filopatri di per aggiudicarsi il favore del primo console: i profondi legami con il fiume Rubicone, i cui destini erano a loro volta intrecciati con quelli di Cesare e, almeno secondo Nardi, con quelli del secondo triumvirato e di Ottaviano Augusto; la realizzazione dell’edizione di due inni di Proclo.

Tutto sembrava avviato nella direzione giusta, almeno fino al 13 maggio 1803, quando Borghesi comunicava a Brad di trovarsi sul punto di inoltrare a Nardi una copia delle leggi e la lettera per Napoleone, che a sua volta Nardi avrebbe poi trasmesso a Brad per spedirle finalmente in Francia:

Trasmetterò quanto prima all’abb(at)e Nardi in Parma una copia delle nostre leggi insieme con una lettera nostra diretta a Bonaparte pregandolo a farvela pervenire. Voi avrete poi la bontà di spingerle a Parigi, e di farla presentare, come nelle vostre antecedenti mi spronaste di fare. Unirovvi anche per voi la lista dei nostri socii, la quale sarà stampata, in compagnia delle leggi⁷².

4. Il fallimento della trattativa

Tuttavia, gli improvvisi mutamenti politici costrinsero l’Accademia a rientrare inavvertitamente sui propri passi. Il fallimento della trattativa, almeno rispetto alle premesse, non è infatti da ricercare in un rifiuto esplicito di Napoleone, che avrebbe forse ritenuto utile, se non altro, concedere il proprio patrocinio a un’istituzione culturale che avrebbe sicuramente amplificato le proprie gesta e favorito l’affermazione del consenso nelle cerchie intellettuali, ma nella riapertura delle ostilità con gli inglesi appena cinque giorni dopo (il 18 maggio 1803)⁷³. Sono inoltre da prendere in considerazione i sospetti che ancora circolavano sul conto dell’Accademia quale circolo segreto ed eversivo⁷⁴. Le parole di Borghesi in proposito, scritte a Nardi in data 21 giugno 1803, sono inequivocabili:

⁷² RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 23 Scirroforione.

⁷³ Già il 29 aprile 1803 Nardi, citando Verg. *Aen.* VI, 77–78, così comunicava a Borghesi: «*Bella horrida bella... cerno*» (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 9 Scirroforione).

⁷⁴ I nomi pastorali avevano erroneamente indotto il sottoprefetto di Rimini a ritenere l’Accademia una sorta di associazione segreta filobritannica. Borghesi dovette pertanto spiegare alle autorità i reali obiettivi del consesso culturale e dal settembre del 1803 fu ammesso un prefetto ad assistere alle riunioni accademiche (cfr. D. Mazzotti, *Rubiconia* cit., p. 59; I. Fellini, *Savignano* cit., pp. 79–80; G. Garattoni, *Savignano Ottocento* cit., pp. 75–79). Anche l’affiliazione del gesuita reazionario Juan de Ossuna (1745–1818) era stata motivo di preoccupazione per le autorità locali, come

Le politiche circostanze del tempo, che lasciano in qualche modo ancora incerta la nostra sorte, ci fanno abbandonare il pensiero di ricercare protettori. Voi conoscerete bene che resta in conseguenza sospesa l'idea di dedicare le leggi al noto soggetto⁷⁵.

Su queste parole dovette però avere una certa influenza il parere personale di Girolamo Amati, che da Roma si era assunto il compito⁷⁶ di redigere la copia finale delle leggi accademiche da destinare a Bodoni per la stampa. Borghesi, anche quando ormai si respirava un vento di guerra, era convinto che si potesse ancora procedere con l'edizione, una volta conosciuto l'esito delle negoziazioni tra gli inglesi e la Francia⁷⁷. Amati invece, in modo molto più previdente e consapevole delle difficili circostanze che si stagliavano all'orizzonte e sui rivolgimenti che un possibile avvicendamento di governo avrebbe potuto provocare, così si esprimeva nei confronti di Borghesi il 28 maggio 1803:

Scoppi solamente una nuova guerra: produca questa una qualche vicenda di governo; ed io prevedo tremando le orribili fazioni de' secoli XIII°, e XIV°, che leggo nelle Storie. *Omen avertat [D]eus*: Ma anche senza di ciò; Io *insto* come un governo [gue]rriero per necessità, basato sui diritti della bajonetta, fir[ma]ti per mano del coltello alla gola, come mai, dissi, può [es]sere favorevole ad uno stabilimento letterario? Dovete [con]venir meco, o rinunciare al senso comune. Ma incocciate, e dite che sarebbe peggio una mutazione, ed una mutazione *giusta le mie idee*. Non ci sbilanciamo; e non v'ha nulla da temersi in una tal mutazione, anzi molto da sperarsi, particolarmente se fia accompagnata dalla tranquillità delle cose, tanto amica delle lettere. [...] L'Arcadia è protetta abbastanza, per non dir troppo. Il fossimo così noialtri! Vedete bene, che dipende da un'ombra sinistra, che si possa

si evince da queste parole di Borghesi del 9 agosto 1803: «è vero però ch'egli [Ossuna] innocentemente è stato causa che noi abbiamo sofferta una brutta crisi col Governo da cui però ci siamo liberati con onore e spero che una volta potremo dir con vantaggio» (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia V, 23 Boedromione). Cfr. G. Garattoni, *Savignano Ottocento* cit., pp. 77–78. In seguito, le 94 copie delle leggi accademiche stampate da Bodoni nel 1808 furono trattenute per circa due mesi presso la dogana di Cesena a causa dell'incapacità del Sovrintendente di Bologna di comprendere il latino arcaico con cui erano state redatte (vd. R. Necchi, *L'Accademia e il tipografo. Notizie sulla corrispondenza fra Luigi Nardi e Giambattista Bodoni*, in *Atti della sesta Giornata Amaduzziana*, vol. VII, Savignano sul Rubicone 2007, p. 159 e nt. 15).

⁷⁵ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia V, 3 Metagitnione.

⁷⁶ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 29 Scirroforione.

⁷⁷ È quanto egli afferma nella lettera ad Amati del 19 maggio 1803 (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 29 Scirroforione).

prendere della nostra Società e di alcuni poco cauti della medesima. Contestate voi stesso, che per pubblicare le leggi converrà attender l'esito delle vertenze con l'Inghilterra. Povere Muse che dovete stare attente a dove si volta il cannone! Io non leggo più le gazzette o piuttosto sono nauseato da gran tempo di considerare la prostituzione dell'Onore e delle Grandezze Europee. [...] Sull'esecuzione e permanenza di barattini, e rubatine, si è fondata la pace, che godiamo presentemente. [...] Ma tutte le apparenze congiurano fatalmente a farci conoscere, che queste permutazioni non si faranno tutte, o non saranno durevoli. *Concedo*. Se negate, *probo* col solo carattere delle due grandi Nazioni, che si sono diviso l'*Imperium Orbis*, e di una terza, che s'alza dal Settentrione, sempre ferace d'uomini invasori. Dunque la pace che abbiamo è precaria, provvisoria. Dunque avremo nuove guerre. *Atqui* queste sono perniciose ad ogni stabilimento letterario. Dunque... ma ripigliate i Francesi sono invincibili. *Transeat*. Il gran Buonaparte vuol la pace. Ma egli è guerriero e comanda ad una nazione bellicosissima. Dunque *transeat* per ora. Dunque, *ex permissis*, siamo in momenti pericolosissimi, e forse fatali per la nostra Simpemenia⁷⁸.

Lo scetticismo di Amati, divenuto col tempo concreta preoccupazione anche di fronte al comportamento poco rispettoso assunto dai francesi nei confronti del patrimonio culturale della penisola Italica e della Romagna in particolare⁷⁹, era già stato palesato in altra lettera a Borghesi del 7 maggio 1803:

Io per me (in tali circostanze particolarmente della nostra Patria) disapprovo non solo l'aggregazione alla nostra di altre Accademie forastiere, ma ben anche la troppa facilità, ed anzi follia di ascrivere molti e molti soggetti particolari. [...] Pensiamo prima a salvarci in questi *tempi di tribolazione*, che continuano a gravitare sempre più sull'infelice nostra Patria, e sui quali voi mi fate mirabilmente il sordo; e poi penseremo ad allargare un po' le ali⁸⁰.

Agli occhi di Amati, che si distingue, rispetto ad altri Accademici, per la scarsa simpatia nei confronti del regime francese⁸¹, era dunque

⁷⁸ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia V, 9 Ecatombeone.

⁷⁹ Si noti l'accento agli spogli e alle ruberie perpetrati dai francesi nei confronti delle opere d'arte e degli archivi, quando Girolamo parla di una pace fondata su «barattini e rubatine». Sulle requisizioni francesi, in particolare presso l'Istituto bolognese, si veda L. Pepe, *Istituti nazionali* cit., pp. 119–125.

⁸⁰ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 17 Scirroforione.

⁸¹ Correndo anche qualche rischio. Si ricordi che era attiva già al tempo una forte censura nei confronti di chi non si allineava con il potere. Si può ricordare, ad esempio,

importante non sbilanciarsi così tanto a favore di Napoleone di fronte a uno *status quo* ancora indefinito, che gettava un'ombra sinistra sulle sorti dell'Accademia e in grado di mettere in discussione la sua stessa sopravvivenza. Queste perplessità, come si è visto, ebbero i loro effetti e, intorno alla prima metà di giugno del 1803, gli Accademici decisero così di abbandonare ogni progetto di dedica delle leggi a Napoleone o ad altro protettore.

Malgrado l'impegno profuso da Borghesi e Nardi, i ritardi nella preparazione dei documenti richiesti⁸² e nella comunicazione con Jean-Louis Brad⁸³, i sospetti dell'autorità competente circa l'effettivo operato dell'Accademia, ma soprattutto, come si è appena visto, la riapertura delle ostilità tra francesi e inglesi nel maggio del 1803, provocarono il naufragio di un'azione diplomatica avviata con i migliori propositi e di cui non sembrava prospettabile un esito negativo.

L'Accademia dovette quindi ripiegare verso più miti consigli, costretta a rinunciare, per le difficili circostanze storiche, a stringere un legame di così alto prestigio. Nonostante i Filopatrìdi non avessero più in progetto di ricercare protettori⁸⁴, venne però caldamente consigliata dalle autorità del Dipartimento del Rubicone la proposta di individuare nel sostegno del vicepresidente della Repubblica Italiana Francesco Melzi d'Eril (1753–1816) un nuovo mecenate. In altra lettera di Borghesi ad Amati del 10 agosto 1803 si legge infatti:

Avrete a quest'ora ricevute le copie delle leggi latine e Italiane [...]. Avrete in esse veduto che manca il decreto e la dedica dirette al soggetto [Napoleone], cui si pensava di presentarle. Molti riflessi ci hanno astenuto dal mandare a effetto il nostro pensiero e specialmente il

il caso del poeta Giulio Giuseppe Ceroni (1774–1813), che per alcuni suoi versi era stato cacciato da Milano per tre anni (A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., p. 34).

⁸² Ben evidente nell'esternazione del 7 dicembre 1802 «Maledetto Proclo, gli Elenchi, le Leggi e quanta robba si trova da stampare» (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 14 Antesterione; A. Sansone, *Amicizia ed erudizione* cit., p. 104, nr. 6), che testimonia più in generale le difficoltà incontrate dall'Accademia nel dare sfogo a tutti gli impegni in corso.

⁸³ Nardi in una lettera a Borghesi dichiarava: «Neppur oggi Ermippo mi scrive. Che diamine! Sia ammalato?» (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia IV, 9 Scirroforione [29 aprile 1803]).

⁸⁴ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia V, 26 Metagitnione (14 luglio 1803) Borghesi ad Amati: «Debbo prevenirvi che le attuali circostanze hanno fatto credere alla Simpemenia cosa ben fatta il non ricorrere ad alcuno per la dedica, ma lo stamparla indipendentemente, onde vedete che ragionevolmente si è omessa l'iscrizione e il medesimo decreto» [in onore di Napoleone].

riflesso, che non ne avremmo ottenuto alla fine del giuoco che una sterile gloria. Ho comunicato il progetto che avevamo alle autorità del Dipartimento, che pei vantaggi dell'Accademia una tal dedica sarebbe rimasta inutile. Hanno però caldamente suggerito di presciogliere in nostro Mecenate il Vice-Presidente Melzi, esibendosi ad accompagnare la nostra lettera colle più prestanti commendatizie⁸⁵.

Ma anche questa seconda possibilità, di cui finora non si era a conoscenza⁸⁶, non andò in porto, considerato che la prima edizione bodoniana del 1808 delle leggi accademiche⁸⁷ non riporta il nome di alcun dedicatario. Forse i cambiamenti verificatisi dopo la notizia dell'incoronazione di Napoleone a imperatore, di cui si parlava ormai dalla primavera del 1804, poi ufficializzata il 18 maggio di quell'anno, con la vice reggenza affidata a Eugenio di Beauharnais (1781–1824), mentre Melzi di fatto usciva di scena dagli incarichi che contavano e, forse, anche dalle simpatie dell'imperatore, provocarono l'abbandono anche di questo progetto.

5. Conclusioni

Nonostante il fallimento della trattativa, resta significativo lo sforzo effettuato da Borghesi e più direttamente da Nardi, che poco più che ventenni non ebbero timore a imbarcarsi in un'impresa ambiziosa, per quanto ammantata da una certa adulazione di comodo, e forse per i tempi più grande di loro. Importante è inoltre l'attenzione rivolta verso l'antichità e il fascino lusinghiero che essa poteva suscitare in individui di così alto livello come Carnot e Napoleone (in quest'ultimo soprattutto in chiave di opportunità politica), quale mezzo di presentazione celebrativa e di comodo della propria immagine pubblica. Infatti, anche ammesso, come riteneva Brad, che Napoleone e Carnot avessero apprezzato le attenzioni di un piccolo borgo della Romagna, quale luogo dove trovare ristoro alle continue preoccupazioni istituzionali, richiamandosi così all'ideale dell'*otium* degli antichi⁸⁸, è ragionevole credere che l'eventuale adesione di Napoleone all'Accademia sarebbe stata piuttosto incoraggiata

⁸⁵ RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia V, 24 Boedromione.

⁸⁶ Anche Nardi fu informato del cambio di programma da parte di Borghesi il 25 agosto 1803: «Debbo però prevenirvi che le leggi saranno dedicate al Vice-presidente della Repubblica Melzi, e che perciò occorrerà che la stampa sia fatta con un certo tal qual lusso tipografico» (RAF, ASP, Carteggio 3.2, Protopemenia V, 9 Memacterione).

⁸⁷ *Leces Robiconiai Sumpoimenias Pilopatridarom*, Parma 1808.

⁸⁸ Vd. *supra* nt. 53.

dalla consapevolezza che ciò si sarebbe tradotto per lui in un vantaggio politico, presentandosi sotto la veste di un nuovo mecenate.

Se la cooptazione di Napoleone in Accademia fu accantonata, a non essere tuttavia di certo abbandonata fu l'opera di celebrazione dell'imperatore, che continuò a essere osannato nei componimenti d'occasione dei Filopatridi. Innanzitutto, l'incoronazione di Bonaparte e la proclamazione del Regno d'Italia spinsero gli Accademici, in mutate condizioni politiche, a produrre nel 1805 un'opera encomiastica in suo onore, consistente in una favola pastorale dal titolo *Feste dei Pastori* ambientata, non a caso, nella valle del Rubicone, che però rimase inedita⁸⁹. Non fu l'unico esperimento letterario di questo genere praticato dai Filopatridi. Del 1808 è l'edizione dello smaccato *Panegirico di Napoleone il Massimo* recitato da Giulio Perticari presso l'Accademia di Pesaro, di cui era vicepresidente, con un sonetto composto anche da Borghesi⁹⁰. Ancora due anni più tardi, questa volta presso la sala del municipio di Savignano, dopo che era stato decretato che l'inaugurazione dei nuovi anni accademici fosse dedicata a Bonaparte, si registrò una solenne cerimonia in onore dell'imperatore il 28 ottobre 1810, che fu esaltato in qualità di promotore degli studi e delle arti, a cui Borghesi prestò nuovamente la sua ispirazione poetica⁹¹. Sempre Borghesi, tra il 1810 e il 1811, compose due odi per onorare la gravidanza dell'imperatrice di Francia Maria Luisa e «l'epoca avventurosa della nascita del re di Roma»⁹².

L'attenzione nei confronti della massima autorità politica del tempo in Italia rimaneva dunque alta nell'operato letterario dell'Accademia, che nonostante l'esito negativo dell'associazione di qualche anno prima, continuava a manifestare convintamente la propria vicinanza al sovrano, rimarcando in modo particolare la restaurazione della *Pax*, in una nuova

⁸⁹ Per cui vd. A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit. Numerosi sono in questa raccolta i collegamenti con l'età antica, che tra l'altro sottolineano il paragone fra Cesare e Napoleone, quest'ultimo ritenuto migliore per aver garantito l'instaurazione della pace (A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., p. 16).

⁹⁰ G. Perticari, *Panegirico di Napoleone il Massimo detto ne L'Accademia Pisaurica*, Pesaro 1808, p. 43. Vd. anche A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit., pp. 11–12. Cfr. G. Gasperoni, *Un maestro di antichità* cit., pp. 117–118; D. Mazzotti, *Rubiconia* cit., pp. 122–124; R. Necchi, *L'Accademia e il tipografo* cit., p. 160.

⁹¹ Cfr. G. Gasperoni, *Un grande maestro di antichità*, p. 241.

⁹² Gasperoni, *ibid.*

età dell'oro anche per le arti, e le connessioni con il mondo antico e romano in particolare⁹³.

Non sembra tuttavia che quest'attività elogiativa abbia poi sortito qualche beneficio esplicito a favore dell'Accademia da parte dell'imperatore o abbia perlomeno condotto all'attuazione di un più diretto dialogo fra le parti.

Vale però la pena ricordare, infine, che, per una curiosa coincidenza del destino, se i tentativi di Borghesi di raggiungere Napoleone alla fine non si concretizzarono, furono gli sforzi di un altro membro della famiglia Bonaparte, Napoleone III, che a parti invertite troveranno invece soddisfazione nel poderoso progetto di pubblicazione di tutte le opere dello studioso savignanese⁹⁴. Dopo la morte di Borghesi, avvenuta 16 aprile 1860, Napoleone III fornì infatti sin da subito pieno sostegno, anche economico, all'impresa editoriale che si stava avviando, ratificando la nomina della commissione, guidata dal segretario Ernest Desjardins (1823–1866), che aveva il preciso compito di radunare le opere di Borghesi e rintracciarne per l'Europa l'epistolario superstite⁹⁵.

Si può dunque affermare che la ricerca di una connessione fra Borghesi e Bonaparte, tentata agli inizi dell'Ottocento, alla fine in qualche modo si realizzò con il nipote del sovrano, ma con la differenza sostanziale che in questa circostanza fu piuttosto la politica a muoversi primariamente per cercare un contatto con la cultura, sebbene con la medesima aspirazione: trarre lustro e prestigio dallo studio e dalla valorizzazione del mondo antico⁹⁶.

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⁹³ Per le tematiche affrontate nei componimenti si veda A. Piromalli, T. Iermano (a cura di), *Le feste dei pastori* cit.

⁹⁴ *Oeuvres Complètes de Bartolomeo Borghesi*, voll. I–X, Paris 1872–1897.

⁹⁵ A. Campana, *Borghesi, Bartolomeo*, cit., pp. 638–639.

⁹⁶ Sono note le simpatie di Napoleone III per il mondo romano e per Giulio Cesare in particolare. Cfr. a tal proposito B. Hemmerdinger, *L'«Histoire de Jules César» par Napoléon III et Stoffel*, in “Quaderni di Storia”, 25 (1987), pp. 5–22; A. Giardina, A. Vauchez (a cura di), *Il mito di Roma* cit., pp. 158–159; L. Christiansen, *The Return of Caesarism*, in “Analecta Romana Instituti Danici”, 45 (2020), pp. 211–227.

EPIGRAPHISCHE ZEITREISEN. HEINRICH DRESSELS NOTIZBÜCHER DER ITALIENREISEN 1874–1876 UND 1878*

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ABSTRACT

In der Berliner Arbeitsstelle des Akademienvorhabens Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (CIL) befinden sich acht Notizbücher, die Heinrich Dressel während seiner Italienreisen in den Jahren 1874–1876 und 1878 führte. Dressels Aufgabe war es, systematisch die Inschriften jener Regionen aufzusuchen und aufzunehmen, für die Theodor Mommsen 1852 mit den Inscriptiones regni Neapolitani Latinae den Prototyp einer für die damalige Zeit modernen lateinischen Inschriftenedition vorgelegt hatte. Mit seinen Reisenotizen schuf Dressel die Grundlagen für die 1883 von Mommsen herausgegebenen Bände CIL IX und CIL X.

Die Notizbücher wurden 2023 im Rahmen einer Drittmittelförderung durch das Berliner Einstein-Zentrum CHRONOI digitalisiert, transkribiert und in ersten Grundzügen erschlossen. Der vorliegende Beitrag gibt Einblicke in

* Digitalisierung, Transkription und erste inhaltliche Erschließungen der acht Reisenotizbücher erfolgten zwischen April und Dezember 2023 unter dem Titel „Epigraphische Zeitreise“ im Rahmen einer von Ulrike Ehmig beantragten Explorationsförderung durch das Berliner Einstein-Zentrum CHRONOI. Für die Digitalisierung zeichnete die MIK-Center GmbH Berlin verantwortlich. An der Transkription und den inhaltlichen Arbeiten haben neben der Antragstellerin mitgearbeitet: Beate Zielke, an der Arbeitsstelle *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL) der *Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* insbesondere für das Archiv verantwortlich; ferner als studentische Hilfskräfte Janine Meisel, stud. phil. der Provinzialrömischen Archäologie an der *Universität Freiburg*, Hannah Orth, cand. phil. der Lateinischen Philologie an der *Universität Bamberg*, sowie Jona Winzek, stud. phil. der Klassischen Archäologie an der *Freien Universität Berlin*.

Die systematische Auseinandersetzung mit den Notizbüchern ist seit Sommer 2023 Gegenstand einer Dissertation an der Universität Bamberg: Katrin Naumann untersucht anhand der Bücher die Praxis der systematischen Edition lateinischer Inschriften im fortgeschrittenen 19. Jahrhundert. Im Vordergrund steht ein Vergleich der von Dressel erhobenen Daten mit der Edition der Inschriften in den CIL-Bänden IX und X und damit die Frage, was mit vorhandenen Informationen auf dem Weg zum Druck passierte. Ein besonderes Augenmerk gilt u. a. auch dem Verhältnis von Text und Monument, also dem Anteil der Archäologie in der Epigraphik. Vor dem Hintergrund der begonnenen Dissertation werden hier viele Perspektiven auf das Genre der wissenschaftlichen Reisenotizbücher nur angerissen, manche Punkte gar nicht angesprochen.

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Dressels Reisen und skizziert anhand von Beispielen die praktische Organisation seiner Aufnahmefahrten: die Routen samt der besuchten Orte und aufgenommenen Inschriften, die an den Orten von ihm genutzten und aufgebauten Personennetzwerke sowie die Arbeitsumstände.

Eight notebooks compiled by Heinrich Dressel during his travels in Italy in the years 1874–1876 and 1878 are kept in the Berlin office of the academy project Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (CIL). Dressel's task was to systematically identify and record the inscriptions of those regions for which Theodor Mommsen had presented the prototype of a modern edition of Latin inscriptions for its time with the Inscriptiones regni Neapolitani Latinae in 1852. By the notes of his travels, Dressel prepared the basis for the volumes CIL IX and CIL X, which were edited in 1883 under the aegis of Mommsen.

In 2023, the notebooks were digitized, transcribed and made accessible in their fundamental characteristics by funding through the Berlin Einstein Centre CHRONOI. This article provides insights into Dressel's travels and gives examples of the practical organization of his field work: the routes, including the places he visited and the inscriptions he recorded, the network of people he used and built up at the various places, and the working conditions.

KEYWORDS

Lateinische Inschriften, Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Heinrich Dressel, Reisenotizbücher, Italien, 19. Jahrhundert

Im Januar 2022 wurden im Archiv des *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL), Akademienvorhaben der *Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, acht zusammengehörende epigraphische Notizbücher von Heinrich Dressel aufgefunden (Abb. 1).¹ Die Notizbücher dokumentieren die Reisen, die Dressel in den Jahren 1874 bis 1876 und 1878 im Auftrag von Theodor Mommsen in den Regionen östlich und südöstlich von Rom bis zur Adria unternahm. Unterbrochen wurden die Expeditionen im Jahr 1877, in dem Dressel mit einem Stipendium des seinerzeit Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Griechenland bereiste.² Ziel der Italienreisen war, die inschriftlichen Funde der unter Augustus eingerichteten und ab dem 2. Jahrhundert administrativ wichtigen *regiones* IV, Samnium, das zentrale Mittelitalien, und II, Apulia et Calabria, mit dem Gebiet des samnitischen Stamms der Hirpini, systematisch neu zu erfassen und zu bearbeiten.³

¹ Die acht Bücher sind in chronologischer Folge als „Codex Nr. 96“ bis „Codex Nr. 103“ im Archiv des CIL inventarisiert.

² Vgl. REGLING 1922, 5 und DRAGENDORFF 1921, 489.

³ Vgl. die Karten in CIL IX Tab. II und III.



Abb. 1: Die Reisenotizbücher von Heinrich Dressel aus den Jahren 1874–1876 und 1878, chronologisch gereiht, links das älteste Buch I, rechts das jüngste Buch VIII.

Für diese Regionen hatte Mommsen dreißig Jahre zuvor erstmals lateinische Inschriften im Kontext der Edition der *Inscriptiones regni Neapolitani latinae* (IRN) aufgenommen und mit dem betreffenden Band den Prototyp für das 1853 an der *Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* eingerichtete Unternehmen *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* geschaffen.⁴ Dressel legte mit seinen Erkundungen im Gelände die zentralen Grundlagen für die 1883 erschienenen Bände CIL IX und CIL X. Als Herausgeber dieser beiden Editionen würdigte Mommsen Dressels Arbeit im Vorwort folgendermaßen: „Longe maximam autem operis huius partem in se suscepit Henricus Dressel peragrato itineribus ac difficillimis et fructuosissimis territorio Hirpinorum et Samnitium et Aprutino universo, cuius opera non minus fidelis quam fortis nec minus

⁴ Mommsen edierte die IRN 1852. Zu Genese und Rezeption des Bandes vgl. KAHLERT 2017, 98–109.

fortis quam perita si mihi defuisset, numquam ego haec volumina ita ut opus erat perfecissem“.⁵

I. Formale Beobachtungen

Dressel versah die acht Bücher selbst im sog. fliegenden Vorsatz mit Jahreszahlen: Buch I und II bis einschließlich Seite 120 benutzte er „1874“. Der Rest von Buch II und Buch III sind mit „1875“ überschrieben. Buch IV wurde von Dressel im „Herbst 1875“ verwendet. Im „Frühling 1876“ machte er Notizen in Buch V. Buch VI und VII bis Seite 15 füllte er im „Sommer 1876“, den Rest von Buch VII im „Herbst 1876“. In Buch VIII notierte Dressel die Beobachtungen seiner Reisen im Jahr „1878“.

Die acht Notizbücher gelangten über den Nachlass von Theodor Mommsen in das Archiv des CIL. Hier erfolgte jeweils ebenfalls auf dem fliegenden Vorsatz mit dem typischerweise von Hermann Dessau verwendeten blauen Kopierstift eine zusätzliche Kennzeichnung und Durchnummerierung in der Form „Dressel I“ bis „Dressel VIII“. Im gezeigten Exemplar (Abb. 2) wurde von derselben Hand und ebenfalls in Blau in der oberen rechten Ecke eine „2“ ergänzt.⁶ Bei dem betreffenden Buch VI handelt es sich um das zweite von Dressel während seiner Reisen im Frühjahr 1876 geführte Notizbuch. Dem Aufkleber auf dem jeweiligen Anpappblatt des vorderen Vorsatzes zufolge wurden die Bücher in der Cartoleria A. Ricci, Piazza Colonna 214/215, in Rom erworben. Es ist wahrscheinlich, dass Dressel sie selbst dort kaufte, denn seine Wohnung im Vicolo del divino amore 14 lag nur gerade 600 m entfernt.⁷

⁵ „Bei weitem den größten Teil dieser Arbeit aber hat Heinrich Dressel übernommen, indem er auf den schwierigsten und zugleich ertragreichsten Wegen das Territorium der Hirpiner und Samniten durchstreifte und das gesamte Gebiet der Abruzzen. Ohne seine Arbeit, die nicht minder zuverlässig als unerschrocken und nicht weniger unerschrocken als sachkundig war. Hätte sie mir gefehlt, hätte ich diese Bände niemals so vollendet, wie es notwendig war.“ — CIL IX p. XVIII und CIL X p. XVIII; dazu REGLING 1922, 5–6.

⁶ Hermann Dessau war ab 1889 für das epigraphische Archiv des CIL verantwortlich. Vgl. MOMMSEN – HIRSCHFELD 1889, 39 und EHMIG 2024, 50.

⁷ Zu den Wohnumständen von Dressel vgl. REGLING 1922, 2.

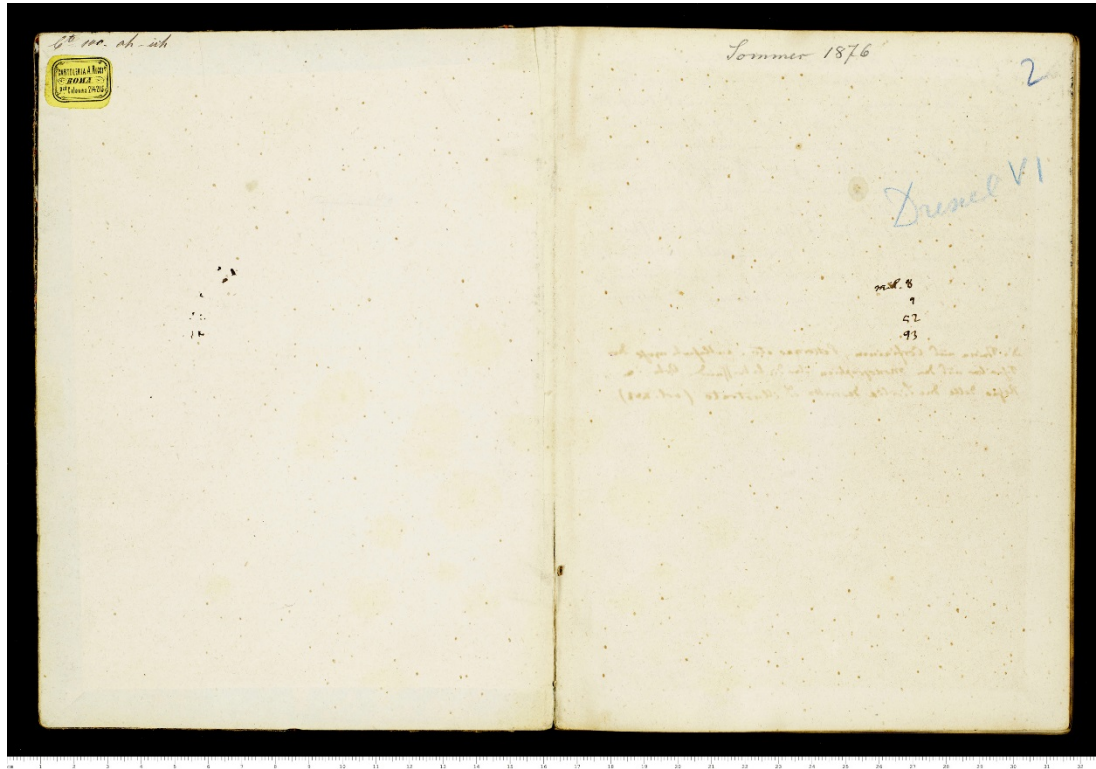


Abb. 2: Anpappblatt und fliegendes Blatt des vorderen Vorsatzes von Buch VI vor schwarzem Fotohintergrund. Am linken oberen Buchrand ist der innere Buchdeckel erkennbar. Das Anpappblatt ist hier leicht schräg und nicht ganz den Buchdeckel abdeckend aufgeklebt worden. Dressel notierte mittig am oberen Rand des fliegenden Vorsatzes „Sommer 1876“. Mit blauem Kopierstift steht rechtsbündig 4–5 cm unterhalb des Randes schräg nach oben verlaufend „Dressel VI“. Dieselbe Schriftrichtung zeigt die in der oberen rechten Ecke positionierte, ebenfalls in Blau ausgeführte „2“. Beides wurde vermutlich zum selben Zeitpunkt von ein und derselben Hand notiert. Von Mommsen stammt die unter „Dressel VI“ mit schwarzer Tinte niedergeschriebene Liste von Meilensteinen in der Form „mil. 8 | 9 | 52 | 93“ Mommsen fertigte entsprechende Zusammenstellungen der Meilensteine auf dem fliegenden Vorsatz aller acht Bücher, da die Meilensteine der Orte jeweils gesondert aufgenommen wurden. Über dem Aufkleber der Cartoleria A. Ricci in der linken oberen Ecke des Anpappblattes steht „C^{te} 100. ah–iih“. Die Bedeutung des Kürzels, das in ähnlicher Form in allen Büchern, außer Buch IV, vorkommt, bleibt unklar.

Ihrem Format nach bilden die Notizbücher zwei Gruppen. Die beiden ersten und zugleich auch ältesten Bücher sind mit 18 × 14 cm kleiner als die Bücher III bis VIII mit 20 × 15 cm. Hiervon weicht Buch IV mit Maßen von 20 × 13,5 cm ab. Zusammen mit der Beobachtung, dass nur in diesem Buch mit Rand ein rosafarbenes Vorsatzblatt eingeklebt wurde und der Aufkleber des Schreibwarengeschäftes samt darüber notiertem

Buchstaben und Zahlenkürzel⁸ fehlen, legt nahe, dass dieses Buch aus einer anderen Bezugsquelle stammt. Buch VIII misst 20 × 14 cm. Ursprünglich war aber auch dieses 20 × 15 cm groß. Der nur mit ca. zwei Drittel seiner ursprünglichen Breite erhaltene Aufkleber der Cartoleria und die darüber befindlichen Notiz, bei der das initiale „C“ fehlt, zeigen, dass das Buch der Länge nach beschnitten worden ist (Abb. 3).⁹ Dieser Zuschnitt erfolgte sekundär, jedoch bevor Dressel seine Notizen, die am Buchrand alle vollständig sind, dort hinein schrieb.

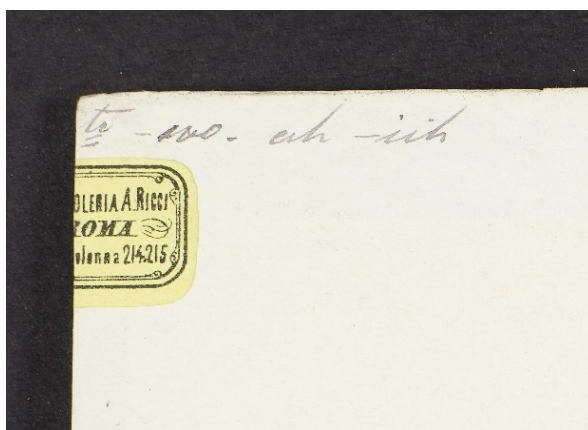


Abb. 3: Obere linke Ecke des Anpappblattes von Buch VIII vor schwarzem Fotohintergrund. Bedingt durch die Beschneidung des Buches fehlen das „C“ der Notiz „C^{te} – 100. ah–iih“ sowie das linke Drittel des Aufklebers der Cartoleria A. Ricci.

Die Notizbücher haben in der Regel knapp unter 100 Blätter. Sie wurden von Heinrich Dressel mit Bleistift foliiert, immer in der oberen rechten Ecke des Rectos, also der rechten Seite, wobei die Bücher I–III eine fortlaufende und die Buchgrenzen überschreitende Zählung aufweisen. Beschrieben hat Dressel auch immer nur die Rectos, während die linken Seiten stets frei blieben, sofern es dort nicht zu späteren Ergänzungen kam. Nicht alle acht Notizbücher sind vollständig genutzt worden: In den Büchern III, IV und VIII sind am Ende größere Seitenbereiche frei

⁸ In den Bücher I und II lautet das Kürzel „100 re–i“, in Buch III „70 th–i“, in den Büchern V bis VIII „C^{te} 100 ah–iih“.

⁹ Es ist auszuschließen, dass auch Buch IV um 1,5 cm in der Breite beschnitten wurde. Dagegen spricht, dass das Anpappblatt mit umlaufendem Abstand zum Rand auf den inneren Buchdeckel geklebt wurde. Wäre das Buch beschnitten, müsste jenes an der Langseite des Buches unmittelbar bis zum Rand reichen.

geblieben, im Falle von III und VIII sind es annähernd 2/3 des Notizbuchs. Dressel benutzte demzufolge, wie eingangs ausgeführt, für die einzelnen Feldkampagnen jeweils neue Notizbücher.

II. Epigraphische Zeitreisen

Transkription und erste Erschließung der acht Notizbücher bedeuten in mehrfacher Hinsicht epigraphische Zeitreisen. Primär sind Dressels Italienreisen in den Jahren 1874–1876 und 1878 Begegnungen mit Landschaften, Orten und inschriftlichen Zeugnissen der römischen Antike, also in gewisser Weise seine eigene Zeitreise. Darüber hinaus führt die heutige Analyse der Bücher in der Art einer Rückblende an die Anfänge der systematischen Auseinandersetzung, Sammlung und Edition lateinischer Inschriften, die institutionell und organisatorisch beim *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* als Unternehmen der seinerzeitigen *Königlichen Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* in Berlin beheimatet waren.

Dressels Notizen hatten über die vier Jahre seiner Reisen hinweg einen einheitlichen Aufbau, der hier an einem Beispiel erläutert wird (Abb. 4):



Abb. 4: Buch I f. 56. Beispiel eines Inschrifteneintrags in Dressels Reisenotizbüchern.

„1585 Benevent im Keller des Liceo Giannone, Localst. ~~gute~~ saubere Buchst. mächtiger Sarcophag 82c hoch, ~~und~~ 2,07 lang und mindestens 1,30 tief.“

Im Schriftfeld zeichnete Dressel Beschädigungen ein, er kennzeichnete eine Steinflückung durch den Vermerk „eingesetztes Stück“ und machte ferner Stellen durch Schraffur kenntlich, wo, wie vor BVS in Zeile 6, nur noch Schatten von Buchstaben zu sehen waren.

Mommsens IRN bildeten das Gerüst für Dressels Reisen, daher beginnt die Notiz für eine Inschrift mehr oder minder regelmäßig mit der Nummer, unter der sie 1852 publiziert worden war. Im Beispiel handelt es sich um IRN 1585. Danach steht der Name des Ortes, an dem Dressel den Stein aufnahm, üblicherweise mit einer genaueren Lokalisierung, Das abgebildete Stück traf Dressel in Benevent im Keller des 1810 gegründeten Liceo Giannone an. Es folgt eine Spezifizierung des Materials der Inschrift. Im Zusammenhang mit seinen Arbeiten in Benevent und Umgebung notierte Dressel häufig „Localst.“ Dazu hielt er auf dem Verso vor Folio 1 von Buch I fest: „NB. Für Benevent und Umgegend ist Localstein = muschelartiger Kalkstein, eine Art Travertin“. Eine Charakterisierung der Buchstaben, die einen Eindruck gaben, wie sorgfältig ein Text eingemeißelt worden war, zugleich Dressel aber auch Datierungskriterien lieferte, schließt an. Dabei gebrauchte Dressel eine Vielzahl an Attributen, die eine Skala von „grandiose ältere Buchst.“ bis „späte häßliche Buchst.“ umfasste.¹⁰ Die Bezeichnung der texttragenden Objekte, die im Einzelfall oftmals von Maßangaben begleitet wurde, fasste Dressel in knappe, standardisiert immer wieder gebrauchte Begriffe wie „Basis“, „Säule“ oder „Sarcophag“. Zusätzlich zu den Beschreibungen fertigte Dressel in großer Zahl Zeichnungen der Inschriften an. Wie Vergleiche mit heute erhaltenen Stücken zeigen, dokumentierte Dressel sehr sorgfältig: Die Skizzen geben eine überaus zuverlässige Vorstellung der Inschriften, d. h. sowohl der Objekte, ihrer Erhaltung und Gestaltung, wie auch des jeweiligen Schriftdukts und des Layouts der Texte.

Nicht selten verzeichnete Dressel damit in seinen Notizbüchern Informationen, die in der Edition des CIL dann jedoch keine Berücksichtigung gefunden haben. Bei der in Abb. 4 gezeigten Inschrift, einem Sarkophag, den Castricia Felicissima für ihre Eltern gestiftet hatte, hat Dressel beispielsweise die signifikante peltenförmige, seitliche Rahmung des Schriftfeldes auf der Front des Sarkophags zeichnerisch hervorgehoben. In der CIL-Edition wird diese spezielle Gestaltung gar nicht erwähnt, obwohl ein weiterer Sarkophag, den dieselbe Castricia Felicissima für ihre mit 14 Jahren verstorben Tochter ebenfalls in Benevent setzen ließ, exakt dasselbe Merkmal aufweist.¹¹

¹⁰ Die beiden Zitate finden sich in Buch V f. 65 und Buch III f. 215.

¹¹ Die beiden Sarkophage der Castricia Felicissima sind in Band CIL IX in den beiden aufeinander folgenden Nummern 1781 und 1782 ediert. Giuseppe Camodeca spricht im Eintrag zur hier abgebildeten Inschrift in der Epigraphic Database Rome von „un sarcofago di tipo ‘beneventano’“: http://www.edr-edr.it/edr_programmi/res_complex_comune.php?do=book&id_nr=EDR167108 (11.1.2025).

In einer initialen inhaltlichen Auseinandersetzung mit den acht Notizbüchern interessierten folgende Aspekte¹²: Welche Orte bereiste Dressel? Welche Hinweise auf seine Reiserouten ergeben sich aus den Büchern? Wie viele Inschriften nahm er an den einzelnen Plätzen in welcher Zeit auf? Besuchte Dressel alle Orte, an denen er nach Mommsens IRN von Inschriften wusste, oder gab es für ihn Gründe, manche auszulassen? Als zweiter Punkt stand die Frage nach dem Netz der Personen im Vordergrund, mit denen Dressel im Kontext seiner Inschriftenaufnahmen interagierte. Welche Funktionen hatten sie am jeweiligen Ort bzw. auch über diesen hinaus? Was waren die Motive für die Kontakte, und in welcher Form waren die betreffenden Personen für Dressel hilfreich oder gegebenenfalls auch nicht? Ein dritter Fokus lag auf Beobachtungen zu den Bedingungen, unter denen Dressel arbeitete. Gefragt wird hierbei einerseits nach der Erhaltung der Inschriften und den Kontexten, in denen Dressel sie antraf, insbesondere im Vergleich zu ihrem Zustand dreißig Jahre früher, als Mommsen sie für die Edition der IRN erfasst hatte. Andererseits geht es darum, aus den Notizbüchern eine Vorstellung von den unmittelbaren Arbeitsumständen in den 1870er Jahren und Hinweise auf den Einsatz von Hilfsmitteln zu gewinnen.

Orte

Dressel verzeichnet in den acht Notizbüchern auf insgesamt annähernd 500 beschriebenen Seiten rund 400 Orte und 2000 Inschriften (Abb. 5). Für ein Fünftel der Lokalitäten, also etwa 85 Orte, notierte Dressel explizit, dass es dort keine Inschriften gab. Es ist davon auszugehen, dass er dieses Resultat jeweils aufgrund eigener Nachforschungen am betreffenden Ort bzw. der Informationen durch Gewährsleute formulierte. An weiteren 90 Orten konnte er insgesamt mehr als 300 Inschriften, von denen er aus älteren Notizen oder Editionen, insbesondere Mommsens IRN, wusste, nicht wiederfinden und sehen. Entweder waren die betreffenden Stücke in der Zwischenzeit zerstört worden bzw. verschollen, oder sie waren nicht zugänglich.

¹² Der mit neun Monaten eng bemessene Rahmen des Drittmittelprojektes setzte der Erschließung der Notizbücher Grenzen. Als Gegenstand einer archäologisch-epigraphischen Dissertation aber sind nicht nur umfangreiche vertiefende Untersuchungen zu den hier angerissenen Aspekten im Gange, sondern Katrin Naumann verfolgt auch zahlreiche weitere Aspekte, so dass ihre Arbeit vielfältige Ergebnisse und Forschungsperspektiven erwarten läßt.

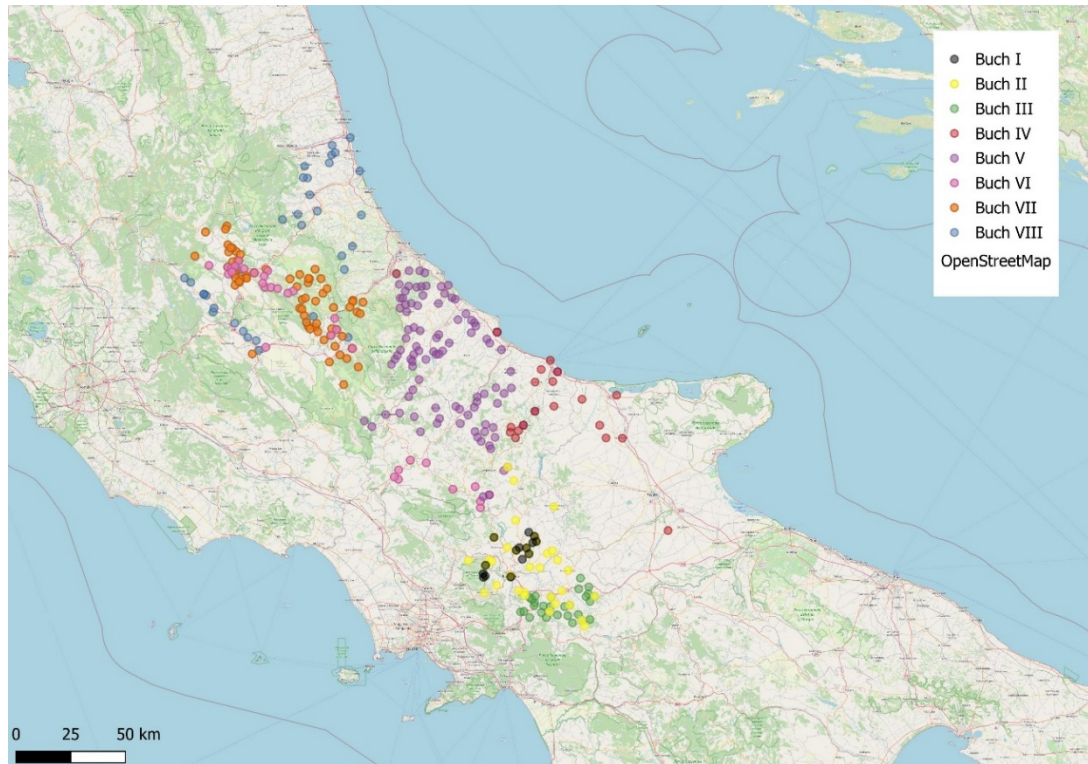


Abb. 5: Kartierung der in den Notizbüchern genannten Fundorte lateinischer Inschriften. Zahlreiche Punkte fallen auf der Karte aufgrund der topographischen Nähe der Orte, die sie bezeichnen, zusammen.

Nur wenige Male ist zu erkennen, dass Dressel Orte bewusst nicht aufsuchte, obwohl er wusste, dass sich dort Inschriften befanden. Im Sommer 1876 entschied er, vier von Mommsen edierte Inschriften in der Umgebung von Ferrazzano, einer kleinen Gemeinde südlich von Campobasso, nicht im Original aufzunehmen¹³, da ihn die Wege zu den Steinen eineinhalb Tage gekostet hätten. Diesen Aufwand wog er gegen den erwartbaren inhaltlichen Gewinn ab und: „unterließ ... angesichts des geringen Werths jener Steine den Ausflug“ (Abb. 6). Blättert man im betreffenden Notizbuch weiter, ahnt man Dressels Beweggründe: Unmittelbar nach dem Eintrag folgen nämlich über mehrere Seiten hinweg Aufzeichnungen zu über 130 Inschriften in L'Aquila. Dressel verlagerte im Sommer 1876 also seine sehr punktuellen und immer nur mit der Aufnahme einzelner Inschriften verbundenen zeitintensiven Aktivitäten aus einer Reihe kleiner Orte südlich von Campobasso um mehr als 110 km Luftlinie nach Nordwesten in das inschriftenreiche Zentrum der Abruzzo.

¹³ IRN 4944 = CIL IX 2479 cf. p. 695; IRN 4970 = CIL IX 2523 cf. p. 971; IRN 4976 = CIL IX 2538 cf. p. 973; IRN 4979 = CIL IX 2497 cf. p. 967.

Die übrigen Inschriften (4944. 4970. 4979. 4976) sind alle weit
 von Ferrazzano entfernt und liegen theils nach Gildone theils nach
 Campodipietra zu. 4970. 4979 sind wahrscheinlich in der Masseria
 di Francesco Cerio fu Giambattista, ^{contrada S. Nicola} 4976 in der masseria di Fran-
 cesco Baranello alias Centrone, ^{contrada S. Bartolomeo} 4944 am bezeichneten Ort, con-
 trada Quartilia zu suchen. Außerdem soll in contrada Pizzogarofole,
 masseria di Luigi Fazio etwas sein. Da das Aufsuchen dieser Inschriften
 mich um 1 1/2 Tage gebracht hätte, unterließ ich angesichts des geringen Werths jener Steine den Ausflug.

H. Dressels

Abb. 6: Buch VI f. 32. Dressels Erklärung, vier Steine bei Ferrazzano nicht aufzunehmen.

„die übrigen Inschriften (4944. 4970. 4979. 4976) sind alle weit von Ferrazzano
 entfernt und liegen theils nach Gildone theils nach Campodipietra zu. 4970. 4979
 sind wahrscheinlich in der masseria di Francesco Cerio fu Giambattista, contrada
 S. Nicola, 4976 in der masseria di Francesco Baranello alias Centrone, contrada
 S. Bartolomeo u. 4944 am bezeichneten Ort, contrada Quartilia zu suchen.
 Außerdem soll in contrada Pizzogarofole, masseria di Luigi Fazio etwas sein. Da
 das Aufsuchen dieser Inschriften mich um 1 1/2 Tage gebracht hätte, unterließ ich
 angesichts des geringen Werths jener Steine den Ausflug“.

Ein Wechsel zwischen Arbeiten an zentralen und umfangreichen In-
 schriftenbeständen und -sammlungen sowie verstreuten Exemplaren an
 einzelnen Orten im gebirgigen Umland, von denen Dressel oftmals von
 Gewährsleuten wusste, prägte immer wieder sein Reiseverhalten in den
 Jahren von 1874 bis 1876 und 1878. Exemplifizieren lässt sich dies gleich
 anhand seiner in Buch I dokumentierten Wegrouten (Abb. 7).

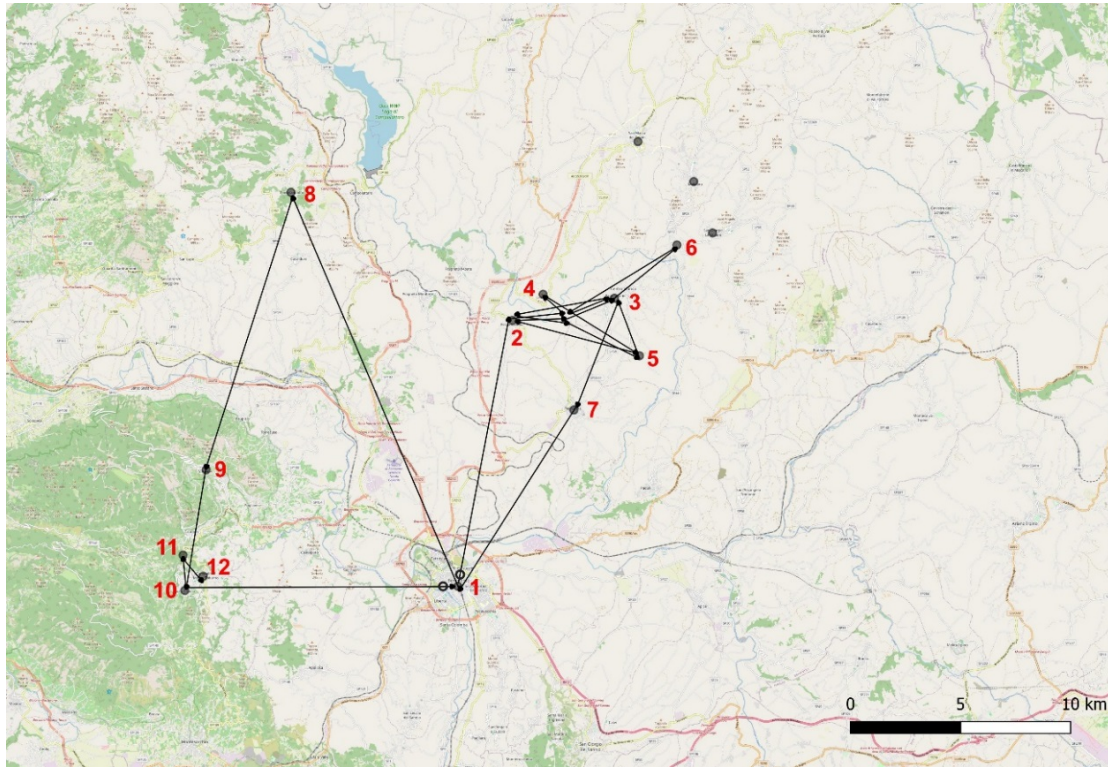


Abb. 7: Reiseroute Dressels im Jahr 1874 nach Buch I.

Dressel begann seine von der *Königlich Preußischen Akademie* finanzierten Italienreisen im Auftrag Mommens 1874 in Benevent (1) und zog von dort weiter in das 10 km nord-nordöstlich gelegene Pesco (2). Von Pesco aus pendelte er mehrfach in das Luftlinie 2 km entfernte Pago Veiano (3), da rechts und links „vom alten Wege von Pesco nach Pago“¹⁴ einige Inschriften lagen.¹⁵ Er besuchte die genannten Orte selbst und ebenso die umliegenden Fundplätze Monteleone (4), S. Michele in Terraloggia (5), eine *contrada*, also einen Ortsteil, namens Calise bei S. Giorgio (6) und Pietrelcina (7). Von dort kehrte er nach Benevent zurück und setzte seine Reise in das 15 km nord-nordwestlich gelegene Pontelandolfo (8) fort. Von hier wandte er sich nach Südwesten, zuerst in das 12 km entfernte Vitulano (9) und reiste dann über die im Abstand weniger Kilometer voneinander entfernt liegenden Plätze, den Ort Tocco (10), die Bergschlucht Asciello (11) und den Ort Campoli (12), wieder zurück an seinen Ausgangsort, nach Benevent (1), wo das erste Notizbuch seiner Italienreise endet.

¹⁴ So etwa beschrieben in Buch I f. 36, vgl. dazu auch unten Abb. 8.

¹⁵ Das betrifft die Inschriften IRN 4944 = CIL IX 2479 cf. p. 695; IRN 4970 = CIL IX 2523 cf. p. 971; IRN 4976 = CIL IX 2538 cf. p. 973; IRN 4979 = CIL IX 2497 cf. p. 967.

Den größten Teil der insgesamt 240 in Buch I erfassten Inschriften, nämlich 185, also mehr als drei Viertel, nahm Dressel in Benevent auf. Dabei beschäftigte er sich zu Beginn seiner Reise vor allem mit zwei Sammlungen, der im Liceo Giannone, zu der auch der in Abb. 4 vorgestellte Sarkophag gehört, und jenen Stücken im Palazzo Arcivescovile. Bei den beiden folgenden Aufenthalten am Ort kümmerte sich Dressel dann um kleinere Kollektionen von nur mehr jeweils zwei bis fünf Inschriften, oder er dokumentierte Inschriften einzelner Fundstellen in Benevent.

Personennetzwerke

Dressel traf an fast allen besuchten Orten auf Personen, die in unterschiedlicher Weise für seine Arbeiten wichtig waren. Teils tauschte er sich inhaltlich mit ihnen aus, teils lieferten sie ihm Informationen über Fundorte von Inschriften bzw. ihren Verbleib, fertigten Abschriften oder Abklatsche, teils, und nicht minder wichtig, waren es Personen, die über den Schlüssel zu Gebäuden verfügten, in denen sich gesuchte Inschriften befanden.

Die im Sommer 1876 unternommene und in Buch VI dokumentierte Reise begann Dressel in Isernia. Die Inschriftenaufnahmen führten ihn zunächst in das südlich gelegene Umland, u. a. auch in das 23 km südöstliche Bojano. Über mehrere Seiten hinweg beschreibt Dressel die inschriftlichen Funde am Ort.¹⁶ In zwei Drittel der Fälle nennt er dabei seinen örtlichen Kontaktmann Bonifacio Chiovitti. Chiovitti war 1810 in Bojano geboren worden, in verschiedensten Wissenschaftsbereichen zwischen Botanik, Medizin, Geschichte, Literatur und Sprachen der Antike gebildet und politisch aktiv. Zum Zeitpunkt von Dressels Besuch hatte Chiovitti bereits eine Sammlung von Funden aus dem antiken Samnium angelegt. Darunter befanden sich auch eine Reihe von Inschriften.¹⁷ Dressel dokumentierte dementsprechend etliche Stücke in Chiovittis Haus¹⁸, auf andere war er von ihm hingewiesen worden¹⁹, oder aber Chiovitti hatte selbst Lesungen von Texten vorgenommen, die Dressel explizit referierte und die so wiederholt in den Apparat in der Edition der

¹⁶ Buch VI f. 11–15.

¹⁷ Zuletzt dazu TAVONE 2024.

¹⁸ IRN 4986 = CIL IX 2563 cf. p. 1033; IRN 4997 = CIL IX 2576 cf. p. 1037; IRN 5005 = CIL IX 2584 cf. p. 1038; CIL IX 2583 cf. p. 1038. Bei IRN 4993 = CIL IX 2574 cf. p. 1037 vermerkte Dressel in Buch VI f. 13: „soll nächstens in das Haus Chiovitti wandern“.

¹⁹ CIL IX 2521 cf. p. 1032.

betreffenden Stücke im CIL und die spätere epigraphische Fachdiskussion Eingang fanden²⁰.

Chiovitti aber teilte nicht alle Informationen mit Dressel: Neufunde wollte er zunächst selbst publizieren. Er zeigte sie Dressel, wie dieser schreibt, daher erst im letzten Augenblick seines Aufenthaltes am Ort und bat darum, dass er ihre Texte nicht abschreibe (Abb. 8). Zu einer Edition der Inschriften durch Chiovitti, der eine Reihe von Scheden angelegt hatte, ist es aber nicht gekommen²¹, so dass Mommsen in Band CIL IX am Ende der *praefatio* zu den Inschriften aus Bovianum Undecimanorum — Bojano harsch formulierte: „Hodie Bonifatius Chiovitti diligenter eos composuit, sed nescio quo livore neque edidit neque nobis rogantibus utendos concessit.“²²

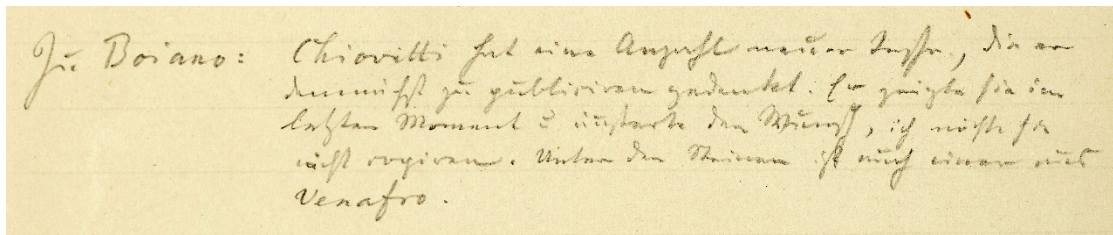


Abb. 8: Buch VI f. 15. Dressels Anmerkung zu den neuen Inschriften aus Bojano.

„Zu Boiano: Chiovitti hat eine Anzahl neuer Inschr., die er demnächst zu publiciren gedenkt. Er zeigte sie im letzten Moment u. äußerte den Wunsch, ich möchte sie nicht copiren. Unter den Steinen ist auch einer aus Venafrö.“

Neben Sammlern und Heimatforschern hatte Dressel an den besuchten Orten v. a. mit Personen zu tun, die in verschiedener Hinsicht über eine Schlüsselgewalt verfügten, die Türen faktisch oder im übertragenen Sinn

²⁰ CIL IX 2582 cf. p. 1038; CIL IX 2698 cf. p. 1100; ohne Referat von Chiovittis Lesung: IRN 4998 = CIL IX 2572 cf. p. 1036. — Die Frage, was von Dressels Beobachtungen überhaupt Eingang in die von Mommsen herausgegebenen Bände fand, wird hier nicht weiter behandelt. Vgl. dazu oben die Anmerkungen zu Abb. 4 sowie auch EHMIG 2022, 153–155.

²¹ Dazu DE BENEDITTIS 1986, insbesondere 67. De Benedittis veröffentlicht die Dokumentation zu insgesamt 39 von Chiovitti in den Jahren zwischen 1849 und 1877, also bis wenige Jahre vor seinem Tod 1881, zusammengetragenen Inschriften.

²² „Dieser Tage hat Bonifatius Chiovitti sie sorgfältig zusammengestellt, aber ich weiß nicht, aus welcher Bosheit er sie weder veröffentlicht, noch uns zur Nutzung überlassen hat, als wir danach fragten.“ — CIL IX p. 239. Auf die betreffende Stelle verwies Mommsen zudem im Eintrag zu Bonifatius Chiovitti im *index auctorum* CIL IX p. XXXIII.

öffneten. In den Notizbüchern nennt Dressel eine große Zahl von Personennamen. Es handelt sich dabei vorrangig um die Besitzer von Grundstücken, auf denen sich Inschriften befanden, bzw. von Häusern, in denen ebensolche verwahrt oder vermauert waren. Gelang Dressel der Zugang problemlos, waren die einzelnen Begegnungen üblicherweise keiner näheren Schilderung wert. Nur wenn die Umstände jenseits typischer und erwarteter Situationen lagen, scheinen sie in kurzen Notizen in Dressels Reisenotizbüchern auf.

1875 bereiste Dressel u. a. den Ort Passo di Mirabella Eclano in der Provinz Avellino, rund 20 km südöstlich von Benevent, und suchte dort nach bekannten und neuen Inschriften. Im Hinterhaus von Nr. 25 — Dressel nennt hier keinen Hausbesitzer — registrierte und beschrieb er vier bis zu seinem Besuch nicht erfasste Steine.²³ Dressel hielt, vermutlich weil ihn die Situation überraschte und er mit Entsprechendem bis dato nicht konfrontiert war, in seinem Notizbuch fest, dass drei von ihnen unter dem Bett aufbewahrt wurden (Abb. 9).²⁴

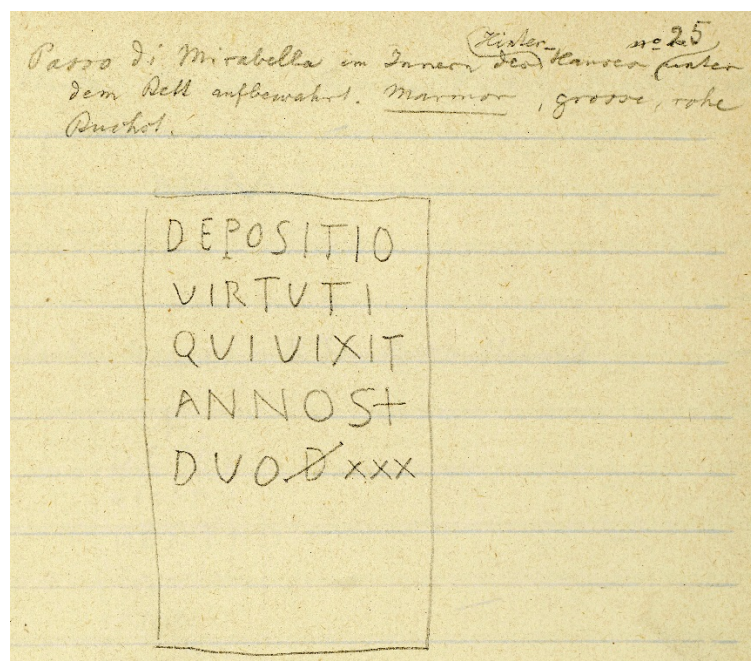


Abb. 9: Buch II, f. 166. Dressels Beschreibung der Aufnahme einer Inschrift unter einem Bett.

„Passo di Mirabella im Innern des Hinterhauses n° 25 unter dem Bett aufbewahrt. Marmor, grosse, rohe Buchst.“

²³ Buch II f. 166 und 167. Es handelt sich, in der Abfolge der Nennung bei Dressel, um CIL IX 1397. 1356. 1374 und 1395.

²⁴ Drei Grabinschriften aus dem 5. Jh. n. Chr.: CIL IX 1397. 1374 und 1395.

Nicht immer aber war Dressel in Häusern ein gern gesehener Gast oder waren die Inschriften auch zugänglich.

Dressel hatte Kenntnis davon, dass die von Mommsen in den IRN unter Nr. 5775 edierte Basis für den *Xvir stlitibus iudicandis* Publius Tebanus von San Sabino dei Colli in das benachbarte Teora dei Colli, beides Fraktionen, also Ortsteile, von Barete, 10 km nordwestlich von L'Aquila, gebracht worden war. Als er die Inschrift dort im Sommer 1876 sehen wollte, wurde er schroff der Tür verwiesen (Abb. 10). Die Begebenheit fand sogar Eingang in den betreffenden Inschrifteneintrag im CIL, wo Mommsen formulierte: „Inde asportata est in villam Teora eorundem Collium in domum Manieri, sed rusticus dominus Dresselium vetuit titulum inspicere.“²⁵

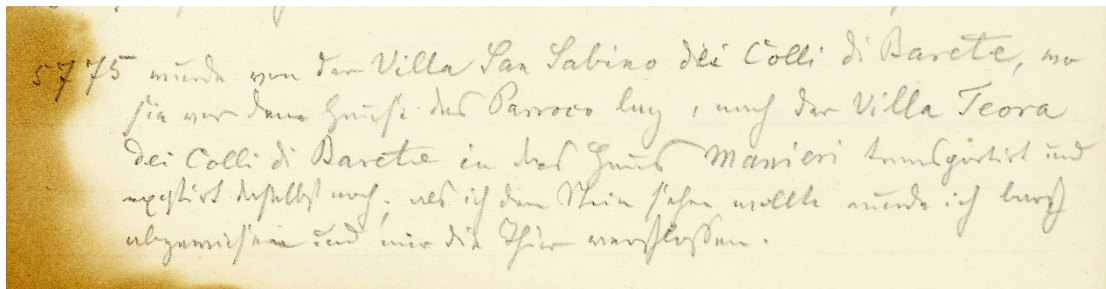


Abb. 10: Buch VII f. 15. Dressels Beschreibung, in San Sabino dei Colli der Tür verwiesen worden zu sein.

„5775 wurde von der Villa San Sabino dei Colli di Barete, wo sie vor dem Hause des Parroco lag, nach der Villa Teora dei Colli di Barete in das Haus Manieri transportiert und existiert daselbst noch; als ich den Stein sehen wollte wurde ich barsch abgewiesen und mir die Thür verschlossen.“

In anderen Fällen waren die Besitzer zwar auskunftsfreudig und einladend, jedoch erlaubten es die Umstände nicht, dass Inschriften gesehen und aufgenommen werden konnten. Wiederum in Passo di Mirabella Eclano hatte Dressel im Jahr 1875 Inschriften in der Locanda della novella aufgenommen.²⁶ Der Inhaber des Lokals bedeutete ihm, noch mehr als ein weiteres Dutzend Inschriften zu besitzen. Zugänglich waren sie jedoch nicht, da er sie unter den Weinfässern im Keller lagerte (Abb. 11). Wenn Dressel vermutet, dass auch diese Stücke wie die beiden zuvor

²⁵ „Von dort war sie in nach Teora in denselben Colli in das Haus Manieri gebracht worden, aber der Landmann verwehrte Dressel, die Inschrift anzusehen“. — CIL IX 4518.

²⁶ CIL IX 1135. 1366 und 1369.

von ihm in der *locanda* aufgenommenen²⁷ christlich seien, kann dies nur aus einem Austausch über den Fundort der Inschriften resultieren. Es liegt nahe, dass die von Dressel nicht gesehenen Steine vom selben Fundplatz stammten, denkbar wären Bestattungen im Kontext der frühchristlichen Basilika von Mirabella Eclano.²⁸

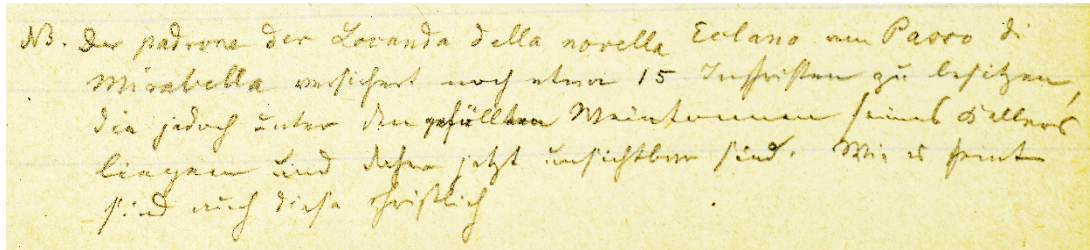


Abb. 11: Buch II f. 160. Dressels Beschreibung der Unzugänglichkeit von Inschriften in einem Lokal in Eclano.

„NB: Der padrone der Locanda della novella Eclano am Passo di Mirabella versichert noch etwa 15 Inschriften zu besitzen, die jedoch unter den gefüllten Weintonnen seines Kellers liegen und daher jetzt unsichtbar sind. Wie es scheint sind auch diese christlich.“

Neben den genannten Privatpersonen, auf deren Kooperation Dressel angewiesen war, wenn er Inschriften in Häusern und Geschäften in Augenschein nehmen und für das *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* aufnehmen wollte, fungierten v. a. Kleriker und Ortsvorsteher als Türöffner. Personen dieser beiden Gruppen waren für Dressel offensichtlich allgemein Ansprechpartner, wenn es um Informationen zu möglichen römischen Relikten und lateinischen Inschriften an einem Ort sowie die Frage, wie diese gezielt aufgesucht werden könnten, ging.

In Campoli beispielsweise, das Dressel gegen Ende seiner in Buch I dokumentierten Reise 1874 aufsuchte (vgl. Abb. 7 Nr. 12), hatte er offensichtlich mit dem lokalen Pfarrer über bekannte Funde am Ort gesprochen. Dieser erinnerte sich nur, dass dort vor drei Jahrzehnten ein Stein mit Figuren und darunter geschriebenem Text lag. Nach der Beschreibung erwog Dressel, dass es sich um den von Mommsen in den IRN unter Nr. 1632 edierten Stein handeln könne (Abb. 12).²⁹

²⁷ CIL IX 1366 und 1369.

²⁸ Vgl. auch die von Dressel in Haus Nr. 25 am selben Ort aufgenommenen Inschriften (Abb. 9). Zum Territorium von Eclano zwischen Spätantike und Hochmittelalter vgl. LO PILATO 2013.

²⁹ IRN 1632 ist CIL IX 2138. Entsprechend Dressels Notizbucheintrag ist dort im Kommentar ausgeführt: „Dresselio narravit parochus Campolensis Campoli ante

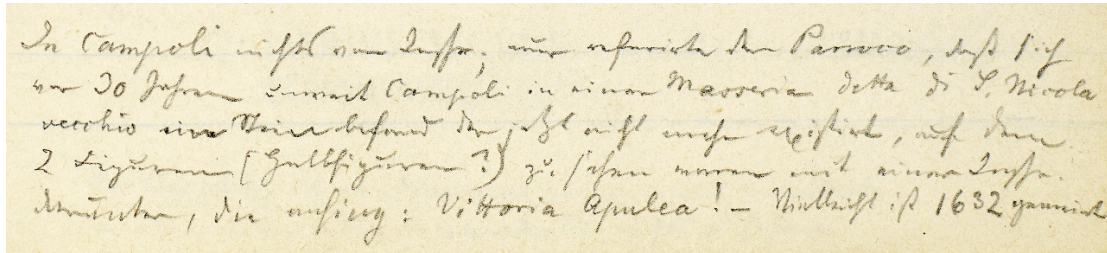


Abb. 12: Buch I f. 81. Dressel zu den lokalen Informationen zu Inschriften in Campoli.

„In Campoli nichts von Inscr., nur referierte der Parroco, daß sich vor 30 Jahren unweit Campoli in einer masseria detta di S. Nicola vecchio ein Stein befand, der jetzt nicht mehr existiert, auf dem 2 Figuren (Halbfiguren?) zu sehen waren mit einer Inscr. darunter, die anfing: Vittoria Apulea! — Vielleicht ist 1632 gemeint.“

Aber nicht in jedem Fall waren diese lokalen Instanzen auch greifbar. Immer wieder einmal notiert Dressel, dass Kirchenleute verreist waren.³⁰ Besonders enttäuschend dürfte das in Fällen gewesen sein, die mit langen, mühevollen und eigens für nur eine Inschrift unternommenen Wegen verbunden waren. 1875 wollte Dressel eine Inschrift in der Einsiedelei San Menna sehen, die 450 Höhenmeter oberhalb von Vitolano am Nordrand des Taburno Camposauro lag.³¹ Dressel notierte (Abb. 13), dass der Eremit gerade Almosen erbettelnd unterwegs war und die Kirche versperrt sei. Aus der Bemerkung wird nicht eindeutig klar, ob Dressel die Wanderung zur Einsiedelei vergeblich unternommen hatte, d. h. am Gipfel unvermittelt vor verschlossener Tür stand. Denkbar ist auch, dass man im Ort wusste, dass der Eremit nicht da war und Dressel darüber informiert hatte, bevor er sich auf den Weg machte.

annos XXX in massa S. Nicolai Veteris lapidem repertum esse statuas habentem duas in inscriptionum incipientem VITTORIA •APVLEA.“

³⁰ Zum Beispiel Buch VII f. 2 in Civitatomassa wenige Kilometer westlich von L'Aquila.

³¹ Vermutlich handelt es sich um CIL IX 2127.

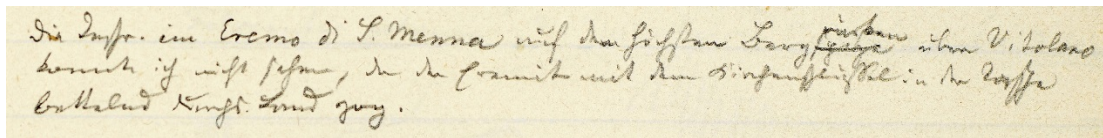


Abb. 13: Buch I f. 81. Dressels Erklärung, eine Inschrift in der Einsiedelei von San Menna nicht sehen zu können.

„Die Inschr. im Eremo di S. Menna auf dem höchsten Bergrücken über Vitulano konnte ich nicht sehen, da der Eremit mit dem Kirchenschlüssel in der Tasche bettelnd durchs Land zog.“

Kirchenschlüssel waren wiederholt nachgefragte und wichtige Gegenstände, da Kirchengebäude prädestinierte Orte zur Aufbewahrung antiker Inschriften waren und noch heute sind. Dort, wo Kirchen aufgelassen worden waren, sie also nicht mehr als sakrale Gebäude genutzt wurden, hatte offenbar der zuständige Ortsvorsteher die Schlüsselgewalt. Bei seinen Reisen im Umland von L'Aquila wollte Dressel im Sommer 1876 auch eine Anzahl von Steinen zwischen den Gebirgsorten Calascio und Castel del Monte, beide auf über 1.000 m Höhe gelegen, aufsuchen. Das aber schlug fehl, weil ihm der Vorsteher der Gemeinde Calascio einerseits einen örtlichen Führer und andererseits den Schlüssel zur Kirche S. Marco verweigerte. Diese, so erfuhr Dressel später, war nicht nur aufgelassen, sondern zwischenzeitlich auch als Steinbruch benutzt worden und die gesuchten Inschriften nicht mehr am Ort (Abb. 14).

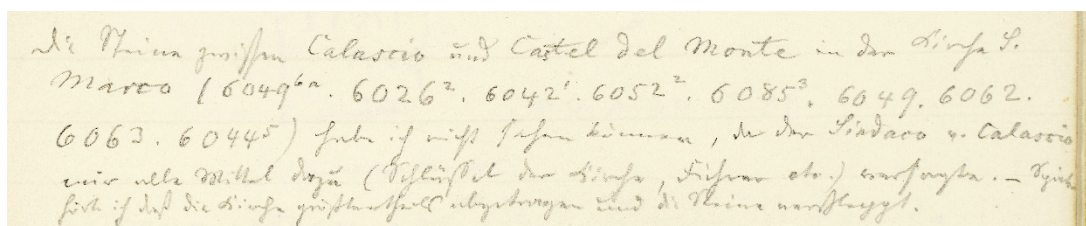


Abb. 14: Buch VII f. 5. Dressels Erklärung, die Inschriften zwischen Calacio und Castel del Monte nicht sehen zu können.

„Die Steine zwischen Calascio und Castel del Monte in der Kirche S. Marco (6049^{6a}. 6026². 6042¹. 6052². 6085³. 6049. 6062. 6063. 6044⁵) habe ich nicht sehen können, da der Sindaco v. Calascio mir alle Mittel dazu (Schlüssel der Kirche, Führer etc.) versagte. — Später hörte ich daß die Kirche größtentheils abgetragen und die Steine verschleppt.“³²

³² Zu den Hochzahlen vgl. Anm. 38.

Arbeitsumstände

Die mit wenigen Beispielen umrissenen Personennetzwerke, auf die Dressel an den besuchten Orten zurückgriff bzw. die er sich dort jeweils erarbeitete, definieren zweifelsohne das notwendige Fundament für seine epigraphischen Arbeiten in Italien in den Jahren 1874 bis 1876 und 1878. Dazu kommt eine Reihe verschiedenartigster Faktoren, die als äußere Umstände Dressels Unternehmungen begünstigten oder aber auch erschwerten.

Es ist ein konstantes sozialpsychologisches Phänomen, dass negative Erfahrungen stärkeren Einfluss auf Personen haben als positive. Entsprechend diesem sogenannten Negativitätseffekt³³ berichtete auch Dressel in seinen Notizbüchern viel häufiger von Umständen, die seine Arbeiten behinderten oder die er negativ wahrnahm, als von förderlichen Faktoren und Ereignissen. Die nachfolgenden Beispiele geben aus verschiedenen Perspektiven einen Einblick in die Umstände, unter denen Dressel arbeitete.³⁴ Sie schlagen einen Bogen von Erfahrungen, die er mit der heimischen Bevölkerung machte, über den Einfluss des Wetters, ferner Beobachtungen, die Umarbeitungen und Umnutzungen bekannter Inschriftensteine aus der Region betreffen, bis hin zu Notizen, die mit der exakten Benennung von Hilfsmitteln sehr konkrete Vorstellungen von Dressels Arbeitsweise und den Arbeitsbedingungen geben.

Im Frühjahr 1876 bereiste Dressel die Regionen östlich des Gebirgsmassivs der Majella. An der Kirche in Sambuceto, Luftlinie 2 km nordöstlich der Nordspitze des Lago di Bomba, autopsierte und beschrieb er zwei sehr schlecht erhaltene Inschriften. Ferner registrierte er dort eine dritte, bei der gar keine Lesung mehr möglich war.³⁵ Dressel hätte bei den beiden ersten Steinen, für die er auch Skizzen im Notizbuch anfertigte, offenbar gerne versucht, weitere Buchstaben zu identifizieren und so den Sinn der Texte und Monumente zu verstehen. Jedoch fand zum Zeitpunkt seiner Aufnahme ein Fest an der Kirche statt, und er sah sich in einem Maße angetrunkenen und zudringlichen Personen ausgesetzt, dass er seine Bemühungen vor Ort einstellte (Abb. 15).

³³ Dazu stellvertretend BAUMEISTER – TIERNEY 2020; ROZIN – ROYZMAN 2001.

³⁴ Da Dressel im Auftrag Mommsens die Region bereiste, war er sicherlich im Sinne eines Rechenschaftsberichtes auch bestrebt, alle jene Umstände zu dokumentieren, die es verhinderten, dass er einen Ort besuchte und dort Inschriften aufnahm.

³⁵ Buch V f. 24–25. Die beiden erstgenannten Inschriften sind ediert als CIL IX 2972 und CIL IX 2978.

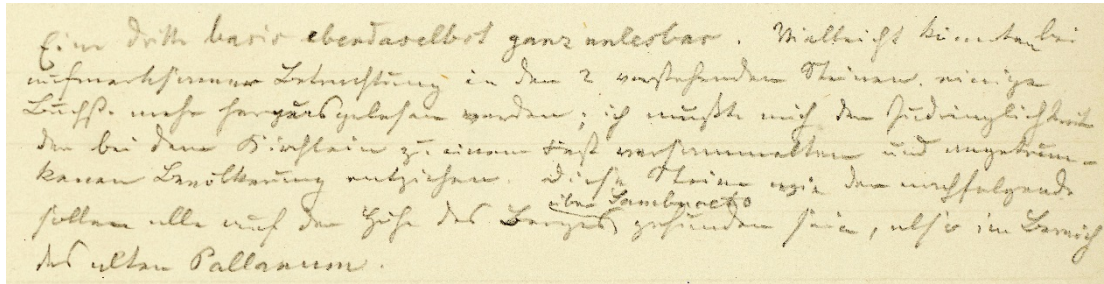


Abb. 15: Buch V f. 25. Dressels Bericht zur Begegnung mit der angetrunkenen und zudringlichen Bevölkerung in Sambuceto.

„Eine dritte Basis ebendasselbst ganz unlesbar. Vielleicht könnten bei aufmerksamer Betrachtung in den 2 umstehenden Steinen einige Buchst. mehr herausgelesen werden; ich mußte mich der Zudringlichkeit der bei dem Kirchlein zu einem Fest versammelten und angetrunkenen Bevölkerung entziehen. Diese Steine wie der nachfolgende sollen alle auf der Höhe des Berges über Sambuceto gefunden sein, also im Bereich des alten Pallanum.“

Zu weiteren hinderlichen Arbeitsumständen, die Dressel wiederholt in seinen Notizbüchern thematisiert, gehören Wetterphänomene. Anhaltender Regen und Gewitter führten dazu, dass er Orte mitunter nicht aufsuchen und dort nicht nach bekannten oder neuen Inschriften suchen konnte. Im Herbst 1876 gelangte Dressel aufgrund von Regen nicht nach San Valentino am Nordrand des Majella-Massivs. Entsprechend blieb es ihm verwehrt, sich dort nach einer Inschrift umzusehen, die Mommsen bekannt war und die dieser in den IRN unter Nr. 5338 ediert hatte.³⁶

Im Jahr zuvor hatte Dressel Lioni in der Irpinia bereist und keine Inschriften im Ort und in der Umgebung gefunden. Für das Exemplar, das Mommsen 1852 unter Nr. 1342 mit der Fundortangabe „prope Leoni agro dicto Piscopo“ ediert hatte, stellte Dressel, sicher nach einem Austausch mit der lokalen Bevölkerung, fest, dass die korrekte Ortsspezifizierung nicht „Piscopo“, sondern „lo pisco“ heiße und einen Kastanienwald südlich und südwestlich des Ortes bezeichne, der sich über die gesamte Höhe des Gebirgsrückens erstrecke. Gemeint sein muss damit eine Stelle am Nordhang der Monti Picentini, die keine 5 km südlich von Lioni beginnen. Aus Dressels Beschreibung wird implizit zugleich aber auch klar, dass die Suche nach dem Stein³⁷ aufgrund der wenig spezifischen Fundortangabe und der Größe des Waldes längere Zeit in Anspruch nehmen würde. Verhindert wurde eine solche Suche schließlich durch die täglichen Gewitterregen in der Region (Abb. 16).

³⁶ Buch VII f. 65: „5338 soll noch existieren, doch konnte ich des Regenwetters wegen den Ort nicht aufsuchen“. Die Inschrift ist unter CIL IX 3055 cf. p. 1309 ediert.

³⁷ Im *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* ist er unter CIL IX 994 ediert.

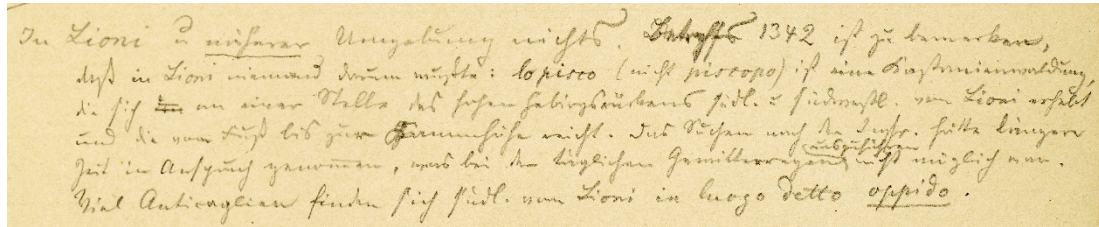


Abb 16: Buch III f. 196. Dressels Erklärung, eine Inschrift in Lioni nicht sehen zu können.

„In Lioni u. näherer Umgebung nichts. Betreffs 1342 ist zu bemerken, dass in Lioni niemand darum wußte: lo pisco (nicht piscopo) ist eine Kastanienwaldung, die sich an einer Stelle des hohen Gebirgsrückens südl. u. südwestl. von Lioni erhebt und die vom Fuß bis zur Kammhöhe reicht. Das Suchen nach der Inschr. hätte längere Zeit in Anspruch genommen, was bei dem täglichen Gewitterregen auszuführen nicht möglich war.“

Dressel dokumentiert in seinen Notizbüchern des Weiteren eine Reihe von Fällen, in denen er nach bekannten und teils auch von Mommsen 30 Jahre zuvor in den IRN edierten lateinischen Inschriften suchte, diese aber mittlerweile für andere Nutzungen umgearbeitet worden waren. Immer gingen mit diesen Prozessen Informationsverluste einher. Im äußersten Fall wurde eine Inschrift dadurch völlig zerstört. Vielfach verwendete man einen Stein entsprechend seiner Form und Maße in Bau- und Arbeitskontexten wieder, ohne auf den antiken Text und die ehemalige Funktion des Monuments Rücksicht zu nehmen.

Mit zwei derartigen Vorgängen war Dressel im Sommer 1876 konfrontiert, als er im Gebiet zwischen Cercepicola und Cercemaggiore, 10 km südlich von Campobasso, nach zwei Inschriften suchte, die ihm als provisorische Nachträge zu den IRN vorlagen (Abb. 17).³⁸ Die beiden Stücke waren für den Bau der *masseria*, also eines v. a. für den Süden Italiens typischen befestigten Bauernhofs des Gutsbesitzers und Landwirts Giovanni della Vecchia verwendet worden. Dabei hatte man die eine Inschrift völlig zerschlagen, und es ist zu vermuten, dass ihre Bruchstücke als Mauersteine benutzt worden waren. Aus der zweiten wurde eine Türschwelle. Als Dressel diese sehen wollte – es scheint also, dass man sie so eingebaut hatte, dass der Inschriftentext nach oben zeigte –, war,

³⁸ Bei den mit Hochzahlen versehenen IRN-Nummern in Dressels Reisenotizbüchern handelt es sich um Inschriften, die nach Erscheinen des Bandes 1852 bekannt wurden und provisorisch hinter edierte Nummern gereiht wurden. Wenn für die betreffenden Inschriften in den Notizbüchern keine Texte gegeben sind, ist ihre Identifizierung in der Regel schwierig. Bei einer der beiden hier diskutierten Stücke, 4955¹ bzw. 4972¹, handelt es sich der Beschreibung zufolge aber sicher um CIL IX 2501 cf. p. 968. Der Hinweis ist Marcus Dohnicht, CIL Berlin, zu verdanken.

wie es ihm wiederholt passierte, der Hausherr samt dem Schlüssel zur betreffenden Tür nicht anwesend.³⁹

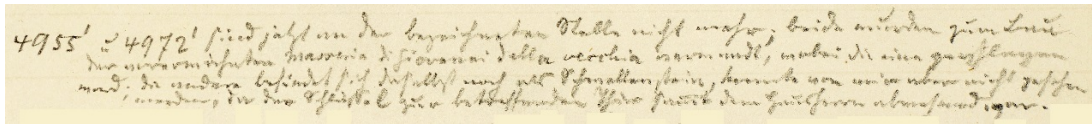


Abb. 17: Buch VI f. 30. Dressels Erläuterung zur Wiederverwendung zweier Inschriften bei Cercepicola.

„4955¹ u. 4972¹ sind jetzt an der bezeichneten Stelle nicht mehr; beide wurden zum Bau der vorerwähnten masseria di Giovanni della vecchia verwandt, wobei die eine zerschlagen ward; die andere befindet sich daselbst noch als Schwellenstein, konnte von mir aber nicht gesehen werden, da der Schlüssel zur betreffenden Thür sammt dem Hausherrn abwesend war.“

Die Umnutzung von Inschriftensteinen in ländlichen und landwirtschaftlichen Kontexten war kein Einzelfall. Kurze Zeit nach seinen Erfahrungen bei Campobasso war Dressel im Herbst desselben Jahres in Trovigliano, einem Ortsteil von San Valentino in Abruzzo Citeriore, 20 km südwestlich von Chieti. Er schaute sich dort die Grabinschrift der Varia Firma für ihren Vater Firmus, der *vilicus*, also Gutsverwalter, des Varius Ambibulus war, an (Abb. 18).⁴⁰ Der 1,5 m hohe Steinblock war, wie Dressel schreibt, zu einer „vasca da uva“⁴¹, einer Traubenwanne, umgearbeitet worden. Dressel dokumentierte die Textseite der Inschrift in einer Zeichnung, so dass anzunehmen ist, dass die Rückseite des Steins wannenförmig ausgehöhlt worden war. Da entsprechende Wannen, v. a. wenn sie so groß, schwer und immobil sind, wie der beschriebene Stein, für das darin stattfindende Pressen der Trauben einen Ablauf benötigen, ist davon auszugehen, dass mindestens an einer Steinseite auch ein Loch in die Inschrift gearbeitet worden war, so dass der Traubensaft abfließen konnte.

³⁹ Zu den Inschriften des bezeichneten Gebietes zwischen Cercepicola und Cercemaggiore und ihrer Geschichte vgl. VANNOZZI 2018.

⁴⁰ Die Inschrift ist ediert unter CIL IX 3056 cf. p. 1309. Vgl. dort im Supplement auch Marco Buonocores Zusammenstellung der jüngsten Literatur zur Diskussion um die Identifizierung und Charakterisierung des Varius Ambibulus mit Quintus Planius Sardus Lucius Varius Ambibulus, *consul suffectus* des Jahres 132 oder 133 n. Chr.

⁴¹ Die hier besprochene Inschrift ist ein Beispiel für den in Dressels Notizen immer wieder zu beobachtenden Wechsel in der Benutzung von Deutsch und Italienisch. Als Sohn eines deutschen Vaters und einer italienischen Mutter wuchs Dressel vollkommen zweisprachig in Rom auf. Zu Dressels familiärem Hintergrund und seinem Leben und Wirken zwischen Rom und Berlin vgl. WEISS 2014.

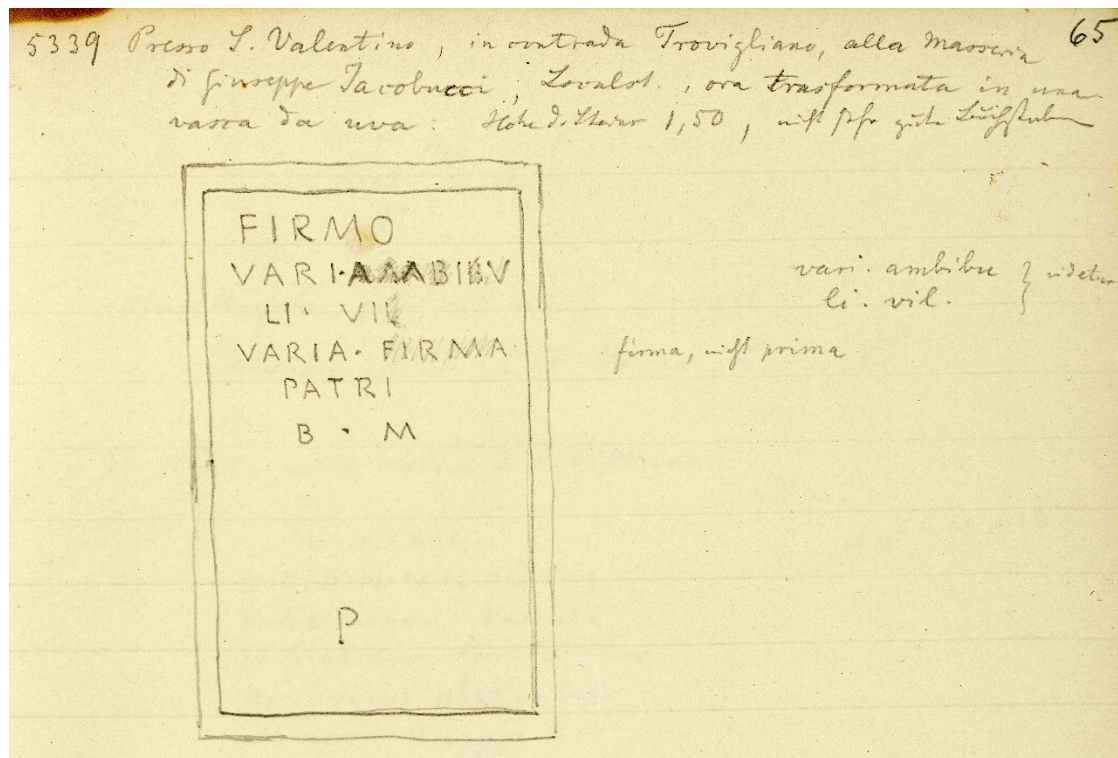


Abb. 18: Buch VII f. 65. Dressels Beschreibung der Umarbeitung einer Inschrift bei S. Valentino.

„5339 Presso S. Valentino, in contrada Trovigliano, alla masseria di Giuseppe Jacobucci, Localst., ora trasformata in una vasca da uva: Höhe d. Steins 1,50, nicht sehr gute Buchstaben.“

Es waren allerdings nicht allein Privatpersonen, die aus persönlichen Interessen antike Inschriften umfunktionierten und in baulichen oder wirtschaftlichen Kontexten weiterverwendeten. Als Dressel 1874 die Inschriften im Umland von Benevent aufnahm, führte ihn die Reise auch in das 25 km östlich gelegene Ariano Irpino. Er suchte dort nach der 22 Jahre zuvor von Mommsen in den IRN unter Nr. 1404 edierten Stiftung einer Seppia Fidelis, einer Freigelassenen eines Caius Seppius, an den *genius* der Kolonie Benevent.⁴² Der *genius* von Benevent ist ansonsten lediglich noch ein weiteres Mal inschriftlich aus der Kolonie selbst bezeugt.⁴³ Dressels Recherche brachte das Ergebnis, dass die Inschrift nicht mehr existierte (Abb. 19). Sein zwar knapper, aber sehr expliziter und durch den Nachtrag der Zeitangabe „vor 4 Jahren“ überaus detaillierter Hinweis, dass die Umarbeitung des Monuments mit

⁴² IRN 1404 ist CIL IX 1418 = 1544. Zu den Seppii vgl. SILVESTRINI 1997.

⁴³ Nur AE 1969/70, 166, eine Basis im Theater von Benevent, deren Inschriftentext mit *Genio Beneventi* beginnt, bietet einen weiteren Beleg für den *genius* der Kolonie.

Billigung der Stadt — gemeint ist wohl die Stadt Benevent selbst — erfolgte, zeigt, für wie ungeheuerlich er den Vorgang hielt.⁴⁴ Da man die Inschrift zu einer „Rolle zum Wegebau“, also einer Walze, umfunktioniert hatte, dürften vom Text keine Spuren geblieben sein. Die Information „Steinrolle“ aber lässt nachträglich Rückschlüsse auf die Form des ehemaligen, römischen Monuments zu: Eine Walze ist in der Regel länglich und hat als Hauptmerkmal einen gleichmäßigen Durchmesser. Um ein solches Hilfsmittel aus einem Steinblock zuzuschlagen, wird man zu einem Exemplar mit annähernd quadratischem Querschnitt gegriffen haben, so dass hauptsächlich nur die vier Kanten abgearbeitet werden mussten. Bei der Inschrift dürfte es sich demnach um einen hochrechteckigen Stein mit ungefähr gleicher Breite und Tiefe gehandelt haben. In der Edition des CIL ist er als „basis“ bezeichnet. Es ist denkbar, dass ehemals darauf eine Statue des *genius* der Kolonie aufgestellt war.

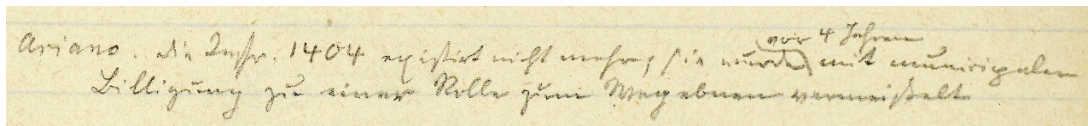


Abb. 19: Buch II f. 114. Dressels Beschreibung der Umarbeitung einer Inschrift in Ariano Irpino.

„Ariano, die Inschr. 1404 existiert nicht mehr; sie wurde vor 4 Jahren mit municipaler Billigung zu einer Rolle zum Wegebau vermeißelt“.

Einige Beschreibungen in Dressels Reisenotizbüchern geben sehr konkrete Vorstellungen davon, welche Hilfsmittel er für seine Arbeiten an den Steinen benötigte. Zugleich lassen sie Aussagen darüber zu, wie Dressel methodisch vorgeht.

Auch wenn Inschriften erhalten und grundsätzlich zugänglich waren, waren sie nicht immer auch faktisch zu erreichen. Das gilt insbesondere für in großer Höhe in Kirchtürmen vermauerte Stücke. Einer solchen Inschrift sah sich Dressel im Sommer 1876 gegenüber: Im Turm der Basilika San Pelino in Corfino, 11 km nordwestlich von Sulmona, war das von Mommsen in den IRN unter Nr. 5372 edierte Fragment in einer so großen Höhe vermauert, dass Dressel zur Begutachtung und Lesung ein Fernglas benutzen musste. Dressel räumte in einer Notiz zu dem Stück

⁴⁴ Im CIL wurde der Vermerk von Mommsen mit dem Satz „A. 1870 iussu municipii fracta est ad viam publicam sternendam DRESSEL“ allgemeiner und weniger explizit referiert.

ein, aus diesem Grund, d. h. wegen der Nutzung eines Fernglases, nicht für die Exaktheit seiner Abschrift zu garantieren (Abb. 20).

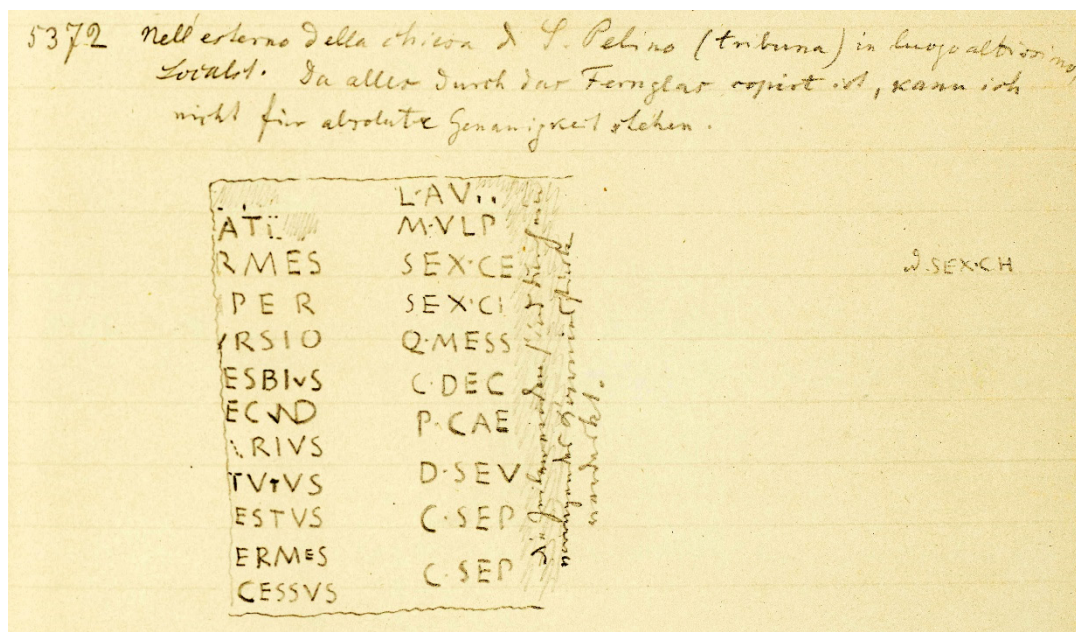


Abb. 20: Buch VI f. 67. Dressels Aufnahme einer Inschrift in Corfino mit Hilfe eines Fernglases.

„5372 Nell'esterno della chiesa di S. Pelino (tribuna) in luogo altissimo, Localst. Da alles durch das Fernglas copiert ist, kann ich nicht für absolute Genauigkeit stehen.“

Rechts neben der Inschrift schreibt Dressel um 90° nach links gedreht: „Die Zeilenenden sind durch ein vorragendes Karniesstück verdeckt.“

Dabei wäre diese Einschränkung nicht notwendig gewesen, wie ein Vergleich der Zeichnung, die Dressel für die Inschrift anfertigte, mit der Edition des Stücks im *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* – sowohl jener von Theodor Mommsen aus dem Jahr 1883 unter Nummer CIL IX 3209, wie auch der Neuvorlage von Marco Buonocore aus dem Jahr 2019 unter Nummer CIL IX 7265⁴⁵ – zeigt. Dressel hatte insbesondere die Anordnung der beiden Namenskolumnen mit ihren jeweiligen Zeilenabständen sehr exakt wiedergegeben. Dass er am rechten Rand des Steins wenig zu sehen vermochte, lag daran, dass – wie er rechts neben seiner Skizze um 90° nach links gedreht schreibt – die Zeilenenden durch ein vorragendes Karniesstück, also ein leistenförmiges Zierelement, verdeckt waren.

⁴⁵ Die Inschrift befindet sich noch immer am selben Ort. Marco Buonocore hat sie 1982 und 1999 dort in Augenschein genommen.

Anders verhält es sich bei einer zweiten, im selben Kirchturm eingemauerten Inschrift. Hier war es Dressel aufgrund der Höhe, in der sich der Stein befand, selbst mithilfe des Fernglases nicht möglich, den Text in weiten Teilen zu lesen.⁴⁶ Entsprechend lückenhaft erschien die Grabinschrift im Jahr 1883 unter Nummer CIL IX 3235 in Mommsens Edition des CIL.⁴⁷

Insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund der Schilderung zur letztgenannten Inschrift⁴⁸ ist zu vermuten, dass das von Dressel genutzte Fernglas keine allzu große Vergrößerung ermöglichte. Es liegt nahe, dass er ein Theaterglas mit sich führte, wie es ab dem frühen 19. Jahrhundert mit Verwendung von Linsen mit einer zwei- bis dreifachen Vergrößerung produziert wurde.⁴⁹

Ein anderes Hilfsmittel, das Dressel auf seinen Reisen selbst nicht dabei hatte, das aber unabdingbar war, um in größerer Höhe befindliche Inschriften genauer zu studieren, war die Leiter. Dressel wird eine solche an vielen Orten benötigt und verwendet haben; dann war die Situation keine Erwähnung wert. Anders verhielt es sich, wenn keine Leiter zur Hand war. Einen solchen Fall beschrieb Dressel in Buch VII⁵⁰: In einem kleinen Anbau an der Kirche San Biagio in Capodacqua, knapp 35 km östlich von L'Aquila, waren zwei einander formal überaus ähnliche Inschriftensteine in einer Höhe angebracht, die Dressel ohne Leiter nicht erreichen konnte. Insbesondere da Mommsen in den IRN nur die eine von ihnen unter Nummer 6038 erfasst hatte, bemühte sich Dressel, das Verhältnis der beiden Inschriften zueinander näher zu charakterisieren. Das fiel nicht leicht, denn es fehlte eine Leiter, um die beiden mit Falzprofilen gerahmten Texte und ihre Buchstaben zu messen und chronologisch zu bewerten. Mommsen edierte schließlich beide Inschriften 1883 im CIL

⁴⁶ Buch VI f. 68: „5397 Nel muro esterno della chiesa di S. Pelino, Localst., sehr hoch eingemauert, sodass der grösste Theil davon selbst durch das Glas nicht gelesen werden kann.“

⁴⁷ Die Neuedition durch Marco Buonocore unter Nummer CIL IX 7293 beruht auf Autopsie in den Jahren 1982, 1986 und 1999.

⁴⁸ Dressel nutzte ein Fernglas auch bei der Autopsie weiterer Inschriften: 1. Buch VI f. 84 an der Kirche San Giustino nahe Paganica, 5 km östlich von L'Aquila. Es handelt sich um CIL IX 3597 cf. p. 1668. 2. Buch I f. 84 am Pfeiler einer Brückenruine im Fluß Calore, ½ Stunde unterhalb von Castelpoto, knapp 6 km westlich von Benevent. Die Inschrift ist unter CIL IX 2135 ediert.

⁴⁹ Federführend war die Werkstatt von Johann Friedrich Voigtländer, der dafür in Wien seit 1823 ein kaiserliches Privileg innehatte. Zu Voigtländer als Person vgl. GRABENHORST 2020; zur Firmengeschichte ferner GRABENHORST 2002. Allgemein zum Fernrohr vgl. SCHMITZ 1982.

⁵⁰ Buch VII f. 30.

mit dem entsprechenden Hinweis auf Dressels Bemühungen und die fehlende Leiter: „Uterque titulus cum suis marginibus concludatur, nihilominus alter alterum continuare videtur. Dresselius tamen adnotat lapides quidem aequabiles videri, sed prioris tituli litteras paullo antiquiores sibi visas esse et maiores quoque quam sunt alterius. Mensuras sumere non potuit scalis destitutus.“⁵¹

Außer Nachmessungen waren auch andere Arbeitspraktiken nicht möglich, wenn man einer Inschrift nicht wirklich nahe kommen konnte: Im Sommer des Jahres 1876 war Dressel in Civitatomassa, 10 km westlich von L'Aquila. Er prüfte dort u. a. eine in der Ostmauer der Kirche vermauerte, von Mommsen in den IRN unter Nr. 5893 edierte Grabinschrift.⁵² Dressel notierte knapp, dass am Ort keine Leiter aufzutreiben war und er daher die Buchstaben nicht betasten konnte (Abb. 21).

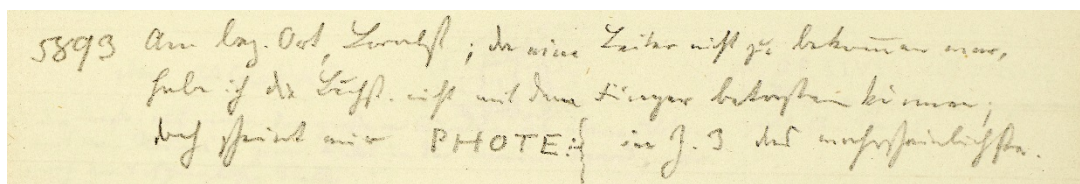


Abb. 21: Buch VII f. 3. Dressels Beschreibung, wie das Fehlen einer Leiter die Inschriftenbearbeitung erschwerte.

„5893 Am bez. Ort, Localst.; da eine Leiter nicht zu bekommen war, habe ich die Buchst. nicht mit dem Finger betasten können, doch scheint mir PHOTEA in Z. 3 am wahrscheinlichsten.“

Der kurze Vermerk exemplifiziert Dressels Arbeitsweise: Er erfasste die Inschriften systematisch in ihrem Text und ihren materialen, archäologischen Eigenschaften und zog aus diesen beiden Komponenten, die die epigraphische Arbeit ausmachen, historische Schlüsse. Entsprechend las er die Buchstaben eines Inschriftentextes nicht nur optisch, sondern vollzog sie auch haptisch nach. Dressel dürfte nicht zuletzt durch diese Praxis zu einem wieder und wieder eingeübten und überprüften Verständnis von Duktus und Buchstabenschnitt gelangt sein. Dieses erlaubte

⁵¹ „Obwohl beide Inschriftentexte gerahmt sind, scheint einer dennoch den anderen fortzusetzen. Dressel aber hält fest, dass die Steine scheinbar gleich seien, ihm die Buchstaben des ersten Textes jedoch etwas älter und auch größer erschienen als die des zweiten. Er konnte keine Messungen vornehmen, weil eine Leiter fehlte.“ — CIL IX 3387 cf. p. 1579.

⁵² Die Inschrift ist unter CIL IX 4428 cf. p. 2156 ediert.

es ihm, antike und nachantike Inschriften mit großer Sicherheit begründet voneinander zu unterscheiden. Illustrieren lässt sich das in seiner Bewertung einer Inschrift, die Mommsen für seine Edition der IRN in Benevent aufgenommen und unter Nr. 1828 vorgelegt hatte.⁵³ Dressel fiel bei der Autopsie des Stücks auf, dass der Buchstabenschnitt ganz anders war als bei den sonst von ihm untersuchten lateinischen Inschriften. Er fertigte vergleichende Querschnittszeichnungen, die die Unterschiede zu den üblicherweise mit Spitzprofil vertieft gearbeiteten römischen Buchstaben deutlich machten und seine Zweifel an der antiken Datierung des Stücks begründeten (Abb. 22).⁵⁴

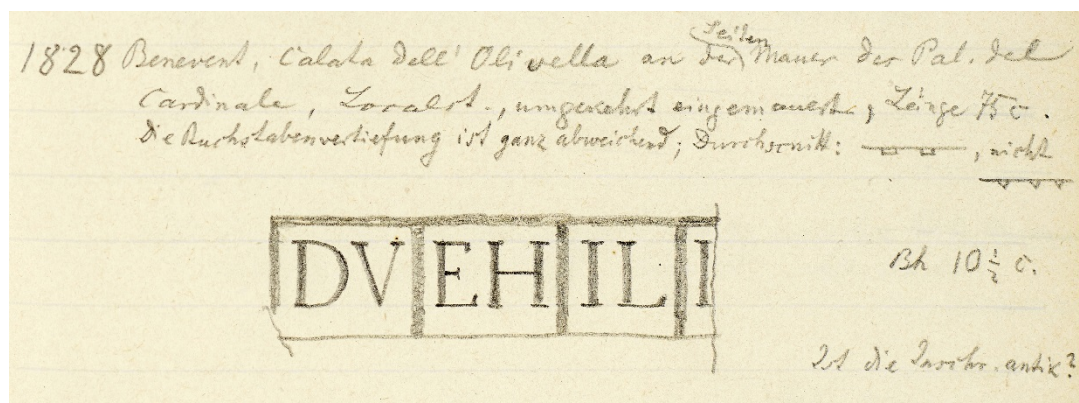


Abb. 22: Buch I f. 59. Dressels Zweifel an der antiken Datierung einer Inschrift aufgrund ihres Buchstabenschnitts.

„1828 Benevent, Calata dell'Olivella an der Seitenmauer des Pal. del Cardinale, Localst., umgekehrt eingemauert, Länge 75 c. Die Buchstabenvertiefung ist ganz abweichend; Durchschnitt:  nicht  | B(uchstaben)h(öhe) 10 1/2 c. | Ist die Inschr. antik?“

Im nachfolgenden und zugleich letzten Beispiel kommt in der Zusammen- und Gegenüberstellung von Akteuren und Aktanten eine gewisse allgemeine Resignation Dressels angesichts der angetroffenen Umstände zum Ausdruck: Im Herbst 1876 war Dressel in der Abteikirche San Clemente di Casauria südlich des Zentrums von Torre De'Passeri und

⁵³ Die Inschrift ist unter CIL IX 220* ediert.

⁵⁴ Die beiden kleinen Zeichnungen der Schriftquerschnitte, die Dressel neben seine Erläuterungen zu IRN 1828 (Abb. 20) setzte, finden sich noch heute in dieser Form in Steinmetzhandbüchern; vgl. so beispielsweise BERUFSBILDUNGSWERK DES STEINMETZ- UND BILDHAUERHANDWERKS e. V. 1998, 239 Abb. 36. Gleichartige Darstellungen finden sich unter den Überschriften „Kerbe rechtwinklig“ bzw. „Kerbe dreieckig“ in der Beschreibung der technischen Ausführung dreidimensional gearbeiteter Schriften in: MITARBEITER DER INSCHRIFTENKOMMISSIONEN 1999, 16.

23 km südwestlich von Chieti. Er wollte dort eine auf den 19. September 343 n. Chr. datierte Grabinschrift aufsuchen und prüfen, die Mommsen in den IRN unter Nr. 5349 vorgelegt hatte.⁵⁵ Dressel fand nur den rechten, größeren Teil der Grabplatte, fertigte, wie üblich, eine detaillierte Zeichnung an und notierte: „Das zugehörige Fragment habe ich nicht finden können“.

Dabei aber beließ er es nicht, sondern fügte in plastischer Schilderung einen persönlichen Vermerk an, der seinem Ärger über den desolaten Zustand der Kirche deutlichen Ausdruck verlieh (Abb. 23).

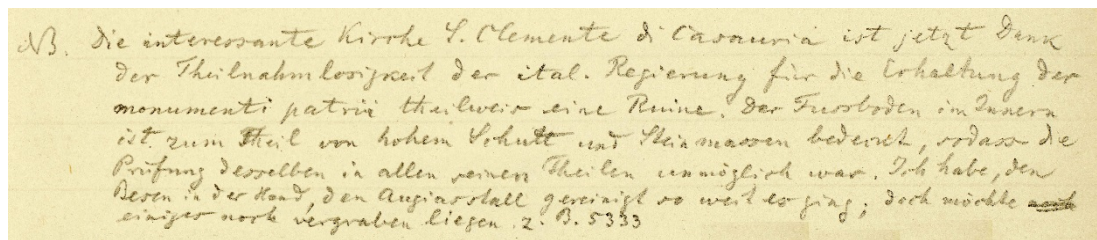


Abb. 23: Buch VII f. 60. Dressels Bemerkung zum Zustand der Kirche S. Clemente di Casauria.

„NB. Die interessante Kirche S. Clemente di Casauria ist jetzt Dank der Theilnahmslosigkeit der ital. Regierung für die Erhaltung der *monumenti patrii* theilweis eine Ruine. Der Fussboden im Innern ist zum Theil von hohem Schutt und Steinmassen bedeckt, sodass die Prüfung desselben in allen seinen Theilen unmöglich war. Ich habe, den Besen in der Hand, den Augiasstall gereinigt so weit es ging; doch möchte einiges noch vergraben liegen z. B. 5333“.

Der Innenraum war von Schutt und Steinen übersät, so dass weder im Fußboden eingelassene noch möglicherweise lose darauf liegende Inschriften zu identifizieren waren.⁵⁶ Dressel sah sich genötigt, einen — vielleicht in einer Ecke herumstehenden oder aus der Nachbarschaft besorgten — Besen zu greifen und den Kirchenraum, der ihm dem Augiasstall glich, auszukehren. Dressel stellte den Besen als einfachstes, praktisches Arbeitsmittel der italienischen Regierung gegenüber, deren Lethargie und Gleichgültigkeit er für den ruinösen Zustand der Kirche, und allgemeiner der *monumenti patrii*, verantwortlich machte.

⁵⁵ Die Inschrift ist unter CIL IX 3073 cf. p. 1311 ediert.

⁵⁶ Dressel vermutete, in der Kirche aufgrund des Zustands IRN 5333 übersehen zu haben. Die betreffende Inschrift ist unter CIL IX 3047 cf. p. 1307 ediert und wurde auch nach Dressels Besuch am Ort nicht mehr aufgefunden.

* * *

Die skizzierten Beispiele aus den Notizbüchern, die Heinrich Dressel während seiner Italienreisen in den Jahren 1874–1876 und 1878 führte, geben erste Einblicke in diese Gattung von Dokumentation und Bericht im Kontext des *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Die hier nur begonnene Analyse der Bücher bereichert die Wissens- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte um sehr pragmatische, letztlich aber entscheidende Aspekte: Das Gelingen des epigraphischen Vorhabens war ganz maßgeblich von gut geplanten Reiserouten, persönlichen Netzwerken, die an den Orten die Zugänglichkeit der Inschriften garantierten, und förderlichen Arbeitsbedingungen abhängig.

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Abbildungennachweise

- CIL, Richard von Bremen: Abb. 1.
- CIL, Janine Meisel: Abb. 4.
- CIL, Janine Meisel, Bearbeitung Ulrike Ehmig: Abb. 6.
- MIK-Center GmbH: Abb. 2. 3. 5. 7–22.

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PROFESSORS OF LATIN
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL 1884–1988:
PHILOLOGY, HELLENISM AND THE PROFESSIONALISATION
OF LATIN AT ENGLAND'S CIVIC UNIVERSITIES
IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

— ROY GIBSON —

ABSTRACT

The story of Latin and its professors at the University of Liverpool (UK) is not only of intrinsic interest for its procession of prestigious figures and their scholarly achievements, but can also tell us much about the surprisingly slow emergence and gradual professionalization of Latin as a distinctive field of study in the UK, from the late Victorian wave of new university foundations to the late 20th century.¹

KEYWORDS

*Latin, Greek, Classics, UK higher education, Liverpool University,
Postgate, Walbank, Brink, Austin, Rudd, Cairns*

Latin and the Origins of the University of Liverpool

The origins of the University of Liverpool can be traced back to several institutions already in existence in the early 19th century, but the modern institution edges into being in the late 1870s and early 1880s, with the grant of a charter in October 1881 to Liverpool University College.² Matthew Arnold gave the opening address at the first

¹ In telling this story I am profoundly indebted to Chris Stray, chief authority on the history of Classics in the UK — and author of an authoritative contribution on one of the early holders of the Liverpool Latin chair, John Percival Postgate (forthcoming). The present contribution was delivered as the second Postgate Lecture at the University of Liverpool in 2014. The material help and assistance of the following is also gratefully acknowledged: Adrian Allan, the late Ian DuQuesnay, Tom Harrison, John Henderson, Stephen Hinds, Niklas Holzberg, the late Niall Rudd, Richard Tarrant, and above all Tony Woodman (whose 2024 paper in this journal may usefully be read alongside the present paper). Sincere thanks are due also to the two anonymous peer reviewers who offered helpful criticisms and further food for thought.

² For the broad background of change in English higher education in the period 1870–1920, see Lowe (1987), and specifically on the origins of Manchester, Leeds and

full session of the College, on 30 September 1882. The first Principal of the College, G.H. Rendall, combined his post with the Gladstone Chair of Classical Literature and History; in 1884 his chair became the Gladstone Chair of Greek.³ Incorporation of the College into the newly created federal Victoria University based in Manchester was soon sought. Rendall reported to Senate in November 1882, after consultations with the Victoria University, that ‘in order to meet the requirements of the University it would be necessary, as a first step, to provide a Professor of Latin, a Professor of History, a Lecturer in Geology and Mineralogy, an additional Demonstrator in Chemistry, and some further assistance in Mathematics’.⁴ The substantial funds necessary to raise the posts specified by Rendall were raised by May 1884, and the College was formally incorporated into the Victoria University on 5 November 1884. The first Professor of Latin — of whom more in due course — had meanwhile been appointed with effect from 1 October 1884.⁵

The post of Professor of Latin is entwined with the origins of Liverpool as a University, but equally the creation of a Chair of Latin was part of a new wave within the broader study of Classics itself.⁶ We may think of the institutional study of Latin as a thing of great antiquity, stretching back well into the Middle Ages, yet Latin as a humane discipline possessed a low profile until a surprisingly recent date — at least in a specifically English context (matters were very different in Germany). In the early 19th century to its enduring shame England had only two universities (we are still feeling the effects); Scotland had four. Both Oxford and Cambridge possessed a Regius Chair of Greek: Cambridge since 1540, and Oxford since 1541; but Oxford did not have a Chair of Latin until 1854, and Cambridge did not endow theirs until 1869.⁷ The creation of a Chair of Latin at the University of Liverpool only

Liverpool universities, see Burstyn (1988). On the foundation of Birmingham University, see Ives, Drummond and Schwarz (2000).

³ Kelly (1981) 1–60.

⁴ Kelly (1981) 63

⁵ Kelly (1981) 63–4

⁶ For the close connections between the foundation of universities outside Oxbridge, the shift towards Latin (away from Hellenism), and the move towards subject specialism, see Stray (1998) 227–32.

⁷ The Chair of Humanity (i.e. Latin) at Glasgow, for example, stretches back to at least 1682. Matters were little different in Ireland: the Regius Chair of Greek at TCD was founded in 1761; the Chair of Latin in 1870. But the matter is slightly more complex than I present it here: for instance, Owens College — the predecessor of Manchester University — had a Chair of Latin from its foundation in 1851, held by J.G. Greenwood (concurrently with the Chair of Greek), later Principal of Owens College and the first

fifteen years after Cambridge at the very moment of the foundation of the University is part of the story in which Latin language and literature as disciplines start to come of age in England. If we now think of Vergil's *Aeneid* as an established classic of incontestable stature and grandeur, this was certainly not the view of many critics in mid-Victorian England. Gladstone — whose name was associated with the Chair of Greek at Liverpool — could in 1858 declare that the *Aeneid* was 'more like the performance of a trained athlete, between trick and strength, than the grandeur of free and simple Nature' and that Virgil 'does not sing from the heart, nor to the heart'.⁸ Gladstone preferred the 'primitive' and Romantic originality of Homer. It is only in the last third of the 19th century that views such as this begin to be challenged, and that Vergil — helped along by such advocates as Matthew Arnold and Lord Tennyson — began to be studied more widely at universities. Prior to that the study of Vergil tended to be confined to (elite) secondary level education.⁹

The creation of a Chair of Latin at the University of Liverpool in 1884 is part of that story, part of a new wave determined to give the study of Latin a higher institutional profile in England. That wave is everywhere in evidence at other civic universities as they come into existence in the later 19th century.¹⁰ What gives the Chair of Latin at Liverpool added interest is the simple fact that it has been held by some of the most

Vice-Chancellor of the (federal) Victoria University. But Owens College did not become part of that University until 1880.

⁸ Harrison (2007), who provides context for Henry Nettleship (third holder of the Corpus Chair) and his promotion of Vergil (building on the work of his predecessor Conington) in the last third of the 19th century, and for his attempts to introduce the German research 'method' — concentrating on textual criticism, and linguistic and stylistic analysis — into an Oxford obsessed with examinations and prose and verse composition.

⁹ Stray (2015) — where information on the progress of teaching Vergil in secondary level education is also provided.

¹⁰ The expansion of colleges (later universities) outside Oxbridge coincided with an agricultural depression which limited opportunities for new staff at Oxbridge (since many colleges depended on rural rents): hence the need and willingness for young graduates to move to these new institutions; see Stray (forthcoming). A.S. Wilkins is first Professor of Latin in Liverpool's sister institution in Manchester from 1880; Edward Sonnenschein is appointed first Professor of Greek and Latin in 1883 at the institution that would later become the University of Birmingham; and E.V. Arnold becomes first Professor of Latin in Bangor (a now forgotten centre of Classics) from 1884. On Sonnenschein see Stray (2004). A.S. Wilkins remains better known as the author of a substantial commentary on Cicero's *de Oratore* and editor of Cicero's rhetorical works in the *Oxford Classical Texts* series, not to mention an edition of the *Epistles* of Horace still in use up to the 1970s. There are entries on Wilkins both in the *ODNB* and in R. Todd (ed.), *Dictionary of British Classicists* (2004).

distinguished figures in the field in the last one hundred years. I review below not their institutional achievements, but rather their achievements as scholars, hoping to gain some insight into the history and development of Latin as a field of study in the UK from the late 19th century till the late 20th century.

The list of the holders of the Liverpool Chair of Latin between 1884 and 1988 is as follows:

1884–1909	Herbert Augustus Strong	106
1909–1920	John Percival Postgate, FBA	107
1920–1932	David Ansell Slater, FBA	109
1932–1945	Sir James Mountford (Vice Chancellor 1945–63)	111
1946–1951	Frank Walbank (later Rathbone Chair of Ancient History & Classical Archaeology, 1951–77), FBA	112
1951–1954	Charles Brink, FBA	113
1954–1968	R.G. Austin	115
1968–1973	Niall Rudd	117
1974–1988	Francis Cairns	119

H.A. Strong

Herbert Augustus Strong (1841–1918),¹¹ like several other figures on this list, passed through the University of Glasgow at an early point in his career. Glasgow had had a Chair of Humanity (i.e. Latin) since at least 1682: almost two centuries before anyone in England had thought to introduce the same. At the age of 30, Strong was appointed to the Chair of Classical and Comparative Philology and Logic at the University of Melbourne. In ill-health by 1883, he was granted leave of absence by Melbourne and returned to England, and took up the post in Liverpool in 1884.¹²

Prof. Strong's publication record is typical of its era in one important sense. This was a time when the study of language *per se* (rather than literature) was accorded great prestige. This was also a time before 'Philology' broke apart into 'Linguistics' on the one hand and a whole range of single-language specialisms on the other (of which Latin and

¹¹ Source: G.R. Manton *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 6 (1976) 209–10.

¹² Various *Testimonials in favour of Herbert A. Strong, M.A.* — now held in Glasgow — suggest that he applied for the Chair of Greek at Glasgow in 1875; for the Principalship of the College of North Wales in 1884; and later for the Chair of Humanity at Edinburgh in 1891. On the university of Melbourne, see Selleck (2003).

Greek were just one part).¹³ Alongside contributions of an obviously classical nature, Strong produced a series of books on other Indo-European languages, including an adaptation of a standard work, originally German, entitled *Introduction to the Study of the History of Language* (1891), plus — in collaboration with the Liverpool Chair of Teutonic Languages, Kuno Meyer — an *Outline of a History of the German Language* (1886), and *An Historical Reader of Early French* (1901), and so on.¹⁴

J.P. Postgate

The next holder of the Chair, John Percival Postgate, is something of a transitional figure, since he shared Strong's interest in Indo-European languages, but other aspects of his work look forward to the increasing specialization of the Humanities, and in particular to the on-going establishment of Latin literature as a field of study all of its own. Before arriving in Liverpool in 1909, Postgate combined duties as classical lecturer in Cambridge with the post of professor of Comparative Philology at University College London, until 1910. (The duties of the latter post appear not to have been too taxing.) He produced grammatical and linguistic works, ranging from his *New Latin Primer* of 1888 to the introduction written for C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards' *Meaning of Meaning* of 1923.¹⁵ Postgate also published an impressive series of Classical works on which his reputation rests today, namely editions and commentaries of the major Latin poets, including Propertius, Tibullus, Lucan and his most ambitious work, the *Corpus Poetarum Latinorum*.

¹³ For philology and the humanities, see Turner (2014).

¹⁴ On Strong's personal side, I owe the following piece of information to Adrian Allan (*per e-litteras*), former University Archivist at Liverpool: 'Consulting copies of University College Magazine and its successor *The Sphinx* for another purpose — the creation of a bibliography of the history of the University — I was interested to read what Prof. Postgate's predecessor, Prof. Strong, had to say about "The Education of Women" (*UCM*, Vol. V, 1890, pp. 8–14) — revealing that if he had a daughter he would deem it "unwise to place her in a position where she is led to regard the attainment of academical distinctions or even the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake as the sole object of a girl's life", women having to "remember ... that they are intended to be wives and mothers". One receives a different impression of Prof. Strong on viewing his portrait or on reading such as the account of one of his annual Latin Socials, in October 1906, with draughts, chess, cards, choruses, songs and an ample supply of refreshments provided (*The Sphinx*, Vol. 14, No.2, p.33).'

¹⁵ We shall see this *New Latin Primer* again soon: its main — and ultimately triumphant — rival was B.H. Kennedy's *Revised Latin Primer* also of 1888, set to be revised once more by one of Postgate's successors at Liverpool.

(Postgate was general editor of this enterprise, which aimed to make available in two volumes modern critical texts of every Latin poet between Ennius in the second century BCE and Juvenal in the second century CE.) Characteristically of the age, the emphasis is on work of a textual critical nature: the study of Latin *literature* is still in its infancy, despite the efforts of W.Y. Sellar (1825–90) and others.¹⁶ Nevertheless, it is clear from Postgate's publishing career that Latin is emerging as a distinct area in its own right. I have already mentioned the break up of 'Philology' into 'Linguistics' and a range of single-language specialisms. Now is the time to say something about its causes.

Since at least the middle of the 19th century, there had been a move to challenge the dominance of Greek and Latin as the pre-eminent fields of study. And no wonder: such learning — thanks in part to the fact that England had only two universities, both of them overtly religious in character — was strongly associated with 'an oppressive social hierarchy represented by the college dons of the Oxbridge Anglican establishment'.¹⁷ To develop the study of other fields was thus to challenge this hierarchy. Despite the work of characters such as Strong (whose work crossed the boundaries between Greek, Latin and a range of other languages), we find Indo-European philology — i.e. 'Linguistics' — gradually developing as a rival field. This rival field even possessed its own queen of languages to steal the crown of Greek, namely Sanskrit. In the 1890s a whole series of subject associations — such as the Modern Languages Association — were established to promote non-classical subjects. All of these things were part of 'a more general movement towards the construction of a university curriculum of separate specialist subjects, which challenged the old dominance of mathematics at Cambridge and of Classics at Oxford'.¹⁸

This is the context in which Postgate belongs. It was not just in the Universities that things were changing. The 1902 Education Act — the first major instance in England of state intervention in secondary school education — gave notice that Greek and Latin would be removed from their position of dominance within the curriculum, and much greater space would be given to science and modern languages.¹⁹ One result was the foundation in 1903 of a new association to advocate the interests of

¹⁶ Sellars was author of several ground-breaking volumes, including *The Roman Poets of the Republic* (1863), *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age* (1877) and *Horace and the Elegiac Poets* (1892) — all frequently reprinted.

¹⁷ Stray (2004).

¹⁸ Stray (2004).

¹⁹ Stray (2003) 5–7. For Postgate's own reaction to the 1902 Education Act, see Postgate (1902).

Greek and Latin: the Classical Association. One figure who played a leading part in its foundation was in fact Postgate, first Honorary Secretary of the Association (1903–6) and later President in 1924–5, just after he had retired from Liverpool. The age of subject specialism was under way.

Why did Postgate come to Liverpool in 1909 after 25 years as a Fellow of Trinity College in Cambridge? First, an intuition, correct, as it turned out, that A.E. Housman would get the Cambridge Chair of Latin (which finally fell vacant in late 1910).²⁰ Secondly, the (frankly) enormous salary. In 1907 the Cambridge chair carried a salary of only £300, although this was subsequently raised to £800 after Housman's election. In Liverpool, meanwhile, a professorial salary was fixed at £500 a year, plus a share in student fees, which could amount to anywhere between £600 and £1000.²¹ In other words, Postgate could rely on a salary of more than £1000 a year: well over three times that on offer in Cambridge in 1909. Postgate also felt himself to be on 'a mission', bringing Classics to the industrial and commercial north.²²

D.A. Slater

From Postgate we turn to the perhaps rather less well-known figure of David Ansell Slater.²³ Like Strong, Slater held a lectureship at Glasgow early in his career, followed by the Chair of Latin at Cardiff in 1903 and then the Chair of Latin at Bedford College in London in 1914. In 1920 Slater then accepted the Latin Chair at Liverpool. One clear attraction — apart from the cash — must have been the identity of its previous incumbent, who was by then 'a scholar of European reputation'.²⁴ Slater continued in the trajectory begun by Postgate, moving ever further away from the multi-disciplinary interests of an earlier era and ever deeper into Latin as a specialist subject. Like Postgate, Slater's strengths lay in textual criticism, and while at Liverpool he published, in 1927, the book which

²⁰ On Housman and Postgate, see Hopkinson (2009).

²¹ Stray (forthcoming).

²² Stray, *ODNB*: Postgate, John Percival; Stray (forthcoming). While at Liverpool, Postgate produced several works, including one which is still in print and widely used to this day: the Loeb Classical Library text of Tibullus. And in general, one might add, while his other works are rarely read in their entirety today, his name can frequently be glimpsed at the foot of the page of today's critical editions of Propertius, Tibullus, and other writers, where his conjectures are still frequently cited and discussed. Upon his death in 1926, Postgate's bequest came (eventually) to Liverpool, bringing a sum of £27,000.

²³ Garrod (1939).

²⁴ Garrod (1939).

established his reputation and won him his FBA election: *Towards a Text of [Ovid's] Metamorphoses*. In the evaluation of Richard Tarrant, leading authority on the text of Ovid's great epic poem,²⁵ Slater's work is invaluable, because in it he '... tracked down three manuscripts that were of primary value for constituting the text, thereby nearly doubling the number of essential manuscripts. [Furthermore] the text [of the *Metamorphoses*] that [the book] proposed to print was radical for its time in departing often from the readings of the oldest manuscripts and in adopting conjectures, both his own and those of previous scholars'. It is some indication of the vastness of Slater's subject — and of the importance of his pioneering work — that no fully authoritative text of the *Metamorphoses* would appear until 2004.²⁶

²⁵ Richard Tarrant, *per e-litteras*, whose generous fuller estimation reads: 'After getting the commission to do the OCT of the *Metamorphoses*, Slater spent a number of years delving into the manuscript tradition and made several significant discoveries. First, he found in the Bodleian some editions of Ovid into which Nicolaas Heinsius had entered collations of numerous manuscripts not known to editors in Slater's day. (The other Heinsian collations had ended up in Berlin and did not come to light for another few decades.) Using the information provided by Heinsius, Slater then tracked down three manuscripts that were of primary value for constituting the text, thereby nearly doubling the number of essential manuscripts. The text that he proposed to print was radical for its time in departing often from the readings of the oldest manuscripts and in adopting conjectures, both his own and those of previous scholars, Heinsius in particular. Had it appeared as an OCT it would have had a profound impact on the textual study of the Met. Unfortunately, Slater's material was too abundant to fit into the confines of an OCT apparatus and he did not have the will or inclination to abridge it. The unique solution adopted was to publish the apparatus alone, with a lengthy Latin preface. Although that format, and the rarity of the book, has limited its circulation, Slater's apparatus has been an indispensable resource for all subsequent editors, myself included; it is in fact still useful for any scholar who wants to see a more generous citation of manuscript evidence than I was able to accommodate in the apparatus of my edition'.

²⁶ That text is the Oxford Classical Text of Tarrant (2004). In fact Slater, while at Liverpool and during his retirement after 1932, planned to complete a text of the *Metamorphoses* for the same OCT series; but it was not to be. See Garrod (1939) for the story.

Sir James Mountford

In his retirement, Slater continued to live at Hoylake on the Wirrall.²⁷ Meanwhile, a successor had been appointed: James Mountford, Professor of Latin 1932–1945, knighted in 1953. Mountford came to Liverpool after a stint as Professor of Latin at University College Aberystwyth (1928–32) and before that at Cornell in the United States (1924–7).²⁸ His early career saw him publish on Greek music and on the ancient commentary traditions which surround Terence and Vergil. He also revised, in 1930, the standard Latin grammatical textbook (still in use) known as *Kennedy's Revised Latin Primer*. Postgate, albeit dead only four years previously, would hardly have been pleased with this aspect of his successor's work, since it contributed to the further eclipse of his own *New Latin Primer* (of 1888), despite the fact that Postgate's book was perhaps the better volume.²⁹

However, unlike Postgate and Slater, we cannot fit Mountford into a narrative of growing specialization and the growth of Latin as a subject for teaching and research. And for one reason: in the words of the entry on Mountford in the *Dictionary of British Classicists*, 'Mountford was one of those classicists whose scholarly output was cut short by a move into other fields'. Mountford, after a stint as Dean of the Arts Faculty (1941–5), became Vice Chancellor of Liverpool, immediately after the war, between 1945 and 1963. In a volume published in 1996 to commemorate the centenary of the Faculty of Arts at Liverpool, Richard Lawton — Professor of Geography between 1970 and 1983 and Dean of the Faculty of Social and Environmental Studies (1977–80) — calls Mountford 'arguably the most able of the University's Vice-Chancellors to date'.³⁰ Mountford was certainly fortunate to guide the University for just under two decades immediately after the war, and to retire in the year in which the Robbins report came out: the moment that marked the acceptance of plans for decisive increase in the number of students and of universities in the UK from 1967 onwards. In the words of the official

²⁷ Garrod (1939) 351 adds 'Hoylake, as he first knew it, was an unpretending fishing village; the Mersey tunnel had not yet let in the world, but sea-scape and landscape could be seen as Turner saw them. But now old things were giving place to new.'

²⁸ For these and other career details, see the entry for Mountford by C.A. Stray in R. Todd (ed.), *The Dictionary of British Classicists* (2004).

²⁹ See Stray (fcoming). For Mountford's involvement in the revision of another textbook of this kind (*Bradley's Arnold*) — on which Frank Walbank also collaborated — see Walbank (1992) 156–7: it is still in print. To understand this aspect of a scholar's publishing activity, we must not forget the vast schools market, where Latin remained a compulsory subject for many until 1958.

³⁰ Hair (1996) 113.

historian of the University up to 1981, '[l]ooking back from the stressful years that followed, the Mountford era seems one of peaceful and untroubled progress, a 'honeymoon period' as Mountford himself once called it, in which money flowed freely from the coffers of the state to finance university development'.³¹

Frank Walbank

A very warm portrait of Mountford emerges from the various memoirs left by his successor in the Chair of Latin: Frank Walbank.³² Walbank (the first of the holders of the Chair of Latin that I actually met) shares with Mountford the quality of being hard to fit into a narrative about the development of Latin as a subject. But for somewhat different reasons from Mountford. For Professor Walbank was no Latinist — as he himself cheerfully admitted. Rather, as his obituarist Peter Garnsey put it in the *Independent* in 2008:

Frank Walbank ... was one of the greatest ancient historians of the 20th century. For around half a century he defined and dominated the field of Hellenistic history. Above all he was the unchallenged expert on the Greek politician and historian Polybius, who composed his history of Rome around the middle of the second century BC. Walbank's magnum opus is the monumental three-volume Historical Commentary on Polybius — a project launched in 1944 and completed in 1979 — which is widely regarded as the finest commentary ever composed on a historical author from antiquity.³³

Walbank would go on to hold the Rathbone Chair of Ancient History from 1951 to 1977. Yet, as he himself records it in his memoir *Hypomnemata* (1992), being elected to the Chair of Latin in 1946 was 'one of the great moments of my life'.³⁴

³¹ Kelly (1981) 291.

³² Walbank in Hair (1996) 101–5, and Walbank (1992). Extensive archival material on Walbank is held at the Sydney Jones library at the University of Liverpool, including his inaugural lecture as Professor of Latin, 'The Roman Historians on the Roman Republic' (1946); see Zucchetti (2021). See also the British Academy obituary by Davies (2011).

³³ *Independent*, 28.10.08. On the Polybius commentaries, see Henderson (2013).

³⁴ His exemplary handling of a tricky question at the interview for the chair — as he records it himself — is also worth quoting: 'The interview went reasonably well, but I was a little disturbed when Mountford, who was in the chair as Vice-Chancellor (somewhat anomalously, since it was his chair that was being filled), asked me what

Walbank was not quite not a Latinist. Not only did he nearly end up working on the Roman historian Tacitus rather than the Hellenistic Greek historian Polybius;³⁵ he was also the author of a publication on Latin poetry. He relates how, soon after his arrival in the Department of Latin at Liverpool in 1934:

Mountford started a regular staff seminar group to read Virgil's *Eclogues* ... Later we went on to the *Georgics*, and as a result I wrote an article, later published in the *Classical Quarterly*, in which I was given considerable help by Mary [Walbank]. It was entitled 'Licia telae addere' and dealt with a passage in the *Georgics* describing the setting up of a loom; most editors had shown a deplorable ignorance of what the words meant and how a loom actually worked. This article was subsequently to be of quite unforeseen importance in my career for when, many years later, I was a candidate for the Chair of Latin, it was quoted to my advantage as evidence that I was a genuine Latinist and not simply a historian in disguise (which of course I really was).³⁶

After relinquishing his Chair of Ancient History and the post of Dean of Faculty of the Arts in 1977, Prof. Walbank retired to Cambridge, where he had been a student in the late 20s and early 30s. (It was in Cambridge that I met Professor Walbank, while myself still a graduate student, in perhaps 1990 or so.)

C.O. Brink

The next incumbent of the Chair was one of the century's most formidable Latinists, Charles Oscar [Karl Levy] Brink, who held the post for three years in the early 1950s. Brink was of German Jewish descent, and liked to style himself an émigré, although 'refugee' might be nearer the mark, given the relatively late date (1938) at which he left Germany (where, of course, his employment had been terminated). At that date, Germany led the world in terms of the rigour and professionalism of its research and research methodology, and Brink is part of that generation of German-

my reaction would be if I were appointed now, and later a chair were to come vacant in the near future in, for example, Ancient History. This was no hypothetical situation, since Ormerod was due to retire in about five years' time. Apparently my non-committal answer to this question was thought to be satisfactory' (Walbank (1992) 203).

³⁵ For the story of the miscommunication with Syme — then in Turkey — that led to work on Polybius rather than Tacitus, see Walbank (1992) 194–5.

³⁶ Walbank (1992) 154–5.

Jewish scholars who immeasurably enriched and even transformed the study of humanities, including Latin, in this country with the new standards and expectations which they brought with them.³⁷ Other members of this elite band include Otto Skutsch, who found employment first in Manchester, and then as Professor of Latin at UCL from 1951; and Eduard Fraenkel, Professor of Latin at Oxford from 1934.³⁸

Thanks in part to these giants of the field, the post-war decades began to witness a remarkable efflorescence of Latin studies. We find above all a new seriousness and self-confidence about the study of Latin poetry as literature — alongside more the traditional interests in language and textual criticism found so abundantly in the work of previous incumbents of the Liverpool Latin chair. Indeed in his inaugural lecture delivered at Liverpool, Brink ‘argued that a professor of Latin ought to concern himself not only with the Latin language and the culture from which it sprang, but also with the question of what made a particular “great” Latin poem “great”’.³⁹

After some time spent in Oxford and St Andrews, Brink came to Liverpool in 1951 — although he may already have passed through in June 1940 on his way to internment on the Isle of Man as an ‘enemy alien’ (from which he was released in October 1940). Brink’s main interests for much of his career were in ancient literary criticism, and the series of prolegomena and commentaries that he would produce on Horace’s poems on the art of poetry — the second book of *Epistles* and the *Ars Poetica* — are those on which his reputation rests today. Brink’s work on the *Ars Poetica* is a case of the unfathomable commentary meeting the inexplicable text; but what keeps readers coming back for more is the fact that it does indeed take the *Ars Poetica* seriously as a poem, and not as a thesis that has been made to scan as a bunch of hexameters.

In the early 1950s, all this was still in front of Brink, and the first volume in the Horace series would not appear until 1963 (and the third and last in 1982). However, Brink’s time in Liverpool did produce one notable piece, which was the outcome of collaboration with his predecessor in the Chair of Latin. For Walbank appears to have inspired

³⁷ See the essays in Crawford, Ulmschneider and Elsner (2017).

³⁸ Otto Skutsch (Manchester University 1939–51) was in fact offered the Liverpool Chair in 1951 before he rejected it in favour of UCL. The Chair was then offered to Brink; see Jocelyn (1996) 332.

³⁹ Jocelyn (1996) 333: the title of the inaugural was *Imagination and Imitation* (publ. 1953). For Brink’s inaugural lecture at Liverpool as, in fact, taking issue with Housman — the Elephant in the Room, here — and the latter’s notorious rejection of literary criticism in favour of more purely textual studies, see Jocelyn (1996) 333 (cf. op. cit. 334–5 for the similar tenor of Brink’s Cambridge inaugural).

Brink to work on Polybius, and together they produced an important article which demonstrates the ‘basic unity of Polybius’ treatment of the Roman constitution’⁴⁰ in the sixth book of his history.

R.G. Austin

Brink left Liverpool in 1954 to travel in the opposite direction from Postgate, since in that year he had been elected to the Cambridge Chair of Latin. The next incumbent of the Liverpool Chair — R.G. Austin (1954–68) — is apt to seem a figure from a much earlier age, before even that of Brink.⁴¹ This is partly the product of training, partly of age. Brink was in his early 40s when he accepted the Liverpool chair, while Austin was nearly a decade older (after an earlier career which partially replicated that of Slater, with a post at Glasgow and the Chair of Latin at Cardiff).⁴² Training and method also play their part: Brink was part of the introduction of German research methods into British classics, while Austin was a product of a 1920s education which still valued prose and verse composition as the height of scholarly achievement.

Austin shared one vital thing with Brink, and in his own way his scholarship — although less rigorous and profound than Brink’s — has been in its own way just as successful. Austin’s reputation rests, above all, on four commentaries on Vergil’s *Aeneid* (Books 1, 2, 4 and 6), two of which were published while in post at Liverpool (and two just after).⁴³ In his preface to his commentary on Book 4 of the *Aeneid*, Austin asserts:⁴⁴

I felt that there was room for a commentary which should try to show something of Virgil’s method, thought, and art to a type of student for which the existing editions were not designed. ... [Such students] need to be reminded that Latin literature is not something hermetically

⁴⁰ R. Todd (ed.), *Dictionary of British Classicists* (2004) 106; cf. the account of Jocelyn (1996) 333–4.

⁴¹ The official historian of the University of Liverpool says as much — from an institutional viewpoint — when he writes: ‘Austin more than anyone typified the old tradition [in terms of teaching and research]. “This has been a tranquil year,” he wrote in his report for 1966–7. “Student numbers continue to be satisfactory, and there was sound quality in the new entry”. We can imagine him sitting back contentedly, and reaching for his Virgil. But already change was in the air’ (Kelly (1981) 352).

⁴² For Austin’s career, see Henderson (2006) 11–13, R. Todd, *Dictionary of British Classicists* (2004) s.v. Austin, R.G. (by C.A. Stray).

⁴³ Although the work on the first (*Aeneid* 4) was completed in Cardiff; see Austin (1955) v, Henderson (2006) 48.

⁴⁴ Austin (1955) v. For context and commentary, see Henderson (2006) 22–3.

sealed, but it is related to other literatures that form part of many degree courses. They need to be shown Virgil as a poet, with a poet's mind, not as a mere quarry for examiners.

This is what he shares with Brink: a confident determination to treat Latin poetry as literature. Here we must not forget the long shadow cast over the study of Latin by A.E. Housman, who dealt only with textual criticism and had notoriously refused to discuss poetry as literature (despite himself being a published poet).

It is perhaps true that Austin could take his enthusiasm for all things Latin too far at times. It is said that as Head of Department he was rather too fond of reminding his Hellenist colleagues of 146 BCE — the catastrophe that marked the Roman conquest of Greece.⁴⁵ But this in itself nicely encapsulates the buoyant confidence that Latinists could now feel about their subject. A darker aspect to this new confidence was the situation in the schools: the increasing rarity of Greek at secondary level since the 1920s meant that most classical students in Britain were now taking degrees in single honours Latin.⁴⁶ The reinvention of British classics — where students could routinely learn Greek and Latin from scratch at tertiary level — was thirty years away.

At any rate, it is the motivation and design of Austin's commentaries — as outlined in that preface — which has ensured their longevity. In some respects they are beginning to show their age; but they have not yet been superseded and are still in print and in use to this day wherever Classics are taught in the Anglophone world.⁴⁷ Austin's commentaries on Vergil (and Cicero) are in fact the subject of separate study in a monograph published in 2006 by John Henderson entitled *Oxford Reds* (an

⁴⁵ Henderson (2006) 13 n. 16.

⁴⁶ For the full story, see Stray (1998) 271–97 ('The Realm of Latin, 1920–1960'). Cf. Henderson (2006) 27–8, 'A truth borne on post-war "teachers", however uncongenial to "scholars", for the majority of students outside Loxbridge now took degrees in Latin only (chizz) and British universities only abolished bloody "Compulsory Latin" in 1958 — the "last remaining institutional prop for the study of Classics in school" (Stray (1998) 277).

⁴⁷ And not just in the UK: a colleague at a university in Germany tells me they are his preferred Vergil commentary for his graduate seminar (although he much prefers the days when a German classicist could safely ignore anything written in English — long gone, of course). For Austin's commentaries in the context of subsequent research into Vergil, see Henderson (2006) 68–9.

allusion to the maroon boards in which these OUP volumes, and others like them, were originally bound).⁴⁸ In the judgement of Henderson:⁴⁹

Roland Austin set the standard for the ‘practical’ commentary in English on texts from the Latin canon. ... ‘R.G. Austin’ really did name for me what ‘Latin’ means, his Virgil commentaries *were* (it so happens) my teachers in Latin scholarship as ... school student and ... undergraduate through the 60s.

Austin may have published all four of his Vergil commentaries while in post at Liverpool or in retirement immediately after. But why was only one both begun *and* published while in post? The answer is found in a letter written to his editor at OUP, dated 10 March 1957:⁵⁰

I fancy that my [commentary on Book] II will have to wait till I retire. I have never found a place like this for continuous hard work, and heaven knows when I can squeeze proper time again — but I shall do my best.

And when Austin finally came to retire in 1968, there was considerable debate within the institution as to whether another Professor of Latin should be appointed. It was only when an unfriendly voice from Geography pointed out — as an argument for discontinuing the post — that “There is no Professor of Latin at the University of Salford”, that the matter was settled. The post was advertised immediately.⁵¹ Yet there was a warning here that Latin would have to justify its existence in the modern university.

Niall Rudd

Austin was succeeded by Niall Rudd in 1968: something of a coup for the University. Horace’s *Satires* are a mainstay of the classical curriculum today, and indeed remain a rather fashionable area for research. This was

⁴⁸ In his review of Henderson (2006) in the *TLS* for 9.02.07 (p. 8), Oswyn Murray asserts ‘All the four authors he investigates [Austin, Fordyce, Nisbet senior and junior] belong to a notorious cabal, the Balliol–Glasgow mafia, whose origin deserves explanation’.

⁴⁹ Henderson (2006) 9, 13 (continuing: ‘And they all parade, where it cannot be missed, a dedicated mission to teach the lesson that Roman culture meant to teach ‘Latinity’ as its lesson. Austin explains how his authors teach the formation of the responsible person by education’); cf. op. cit. 38.

⁵⁰ Henderson (2006) 54.

⁵¹ Niall Rudd, *per litteras*.

arguably *not* the case in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when Rudd began to publish on the *Satires*. In 1966, while he was in Toronto, CUP brought out a substantial book which gathered his thinking on Horace's *Satires* together under one cover, and it is no understatement to say that it created something of a sensation when it was published. It is still in print today with Bristol Classical Press.⁵² In particular, Rudd represented a new way of thinking quite different from that evident in the work of Austin and Brink, although sharing their confidence in Latin as a literature. Spending the years 1958–68 (at Toronto) in North America were crucial here.⁵³ For Rudd was part of a new wave of thinking sweeping into Classics in the 1960s from nearby subjects such as English, a wave that demanded the application of fresh critical approaches to provide insights into classical texts. If Austin had been open to the idea of pointing out connections with other literatures, Rudd was determined to import the *methods* used to study those other literatures.

The line to be drawn with the past was well summed up in the introduction which Rudd wrote in 1972 (the year before his move to Bristol) for a collection of essays from the Classical journal *Arion*, where he looked back on the strengths and (more usefully) the weaknesses of the old-fashioned classical student:⁵⁴

They will tend to assume that in a given context a word or phrase has a single meaning which can be discovered and demonstrated by logical argument; for them ambiguity is a sign of sloppy thinking if not of actual deceit.

This was heresy in some quarters in the early 1970s, although such ideas had been around in the humanities since at least the 1920s.⁵⁵ Rudd's break with the past would be evident in other ways too. His subsequent book publications would take in further collections of essays on a range of subjects, especially satire and (at least a decade ahead of its time) the later classical tradition; but there would be no major commentary before his 1989 CUP edition of Horace's *Epistles* Book 2 (including the *Ars Poetica*) — a return visit to the vineyard in which Charles Brink laboured so long⁵⁶ — and his magisterial edition of Horace's *Odes* 3 for OUP with

⁵² Rudd (1966) and later reprints.

⁵³ For an account of his time there, see Rudd (2003).

⁵⁴ Rudd (1972).

⁵⁵ See Eagleton (2022) on Eliot, Richards, Empson and others.

⁵⁶ In the preface to the commentary — which belongs to the CUP 'green and yellow' series, which happily caters for both students and critics alike — Rudd explains the need for a return visit to these texts with a new commentary: 'The virtues of that

Prof. Robin Nisbet. The writing of commentaries characterized the work of Postgate, Walbank, and Austin as well as Brink. In the 1960s the commentary format was perhaps beginning to feel too much like the past: not open enough to the influences coming from other fields, where commentaries were more rarely written (except, for example, in New Testament studies and related Biblical areas). In due course, the format would undergo re-invigoration, above all from the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics ('green and yellow') series.⁵⁷

Francis Cairns

Rudd's successor Francis Cairns — another Liverpool chair of Latin with Glaswegian connections (having obtained his first degree there in 1961)⁵⁸ — represented a different direction in terms of critical thinking, from the moment of his appointment in 1974. Cairns' research achievement is unassailable: author of over 180 articles on an extraordinary range of subjects, from classical Greek epigraphy to Renaissance Italy and beyond, editor of 19 volumes of the *PLLS* series, and writer of five authoritative monographs (but, so far, no commentaries). The core of his work has always concerned the Augustan poets, especially Propertius, Tibullus, Ovid, and Vergil. His first monograph — *Generic Composition* — of 1972, love it or loathe it, has influenced even those who have not read it.⁵⁹ But

massive and meticulous work are well known. It remains and will long remain, the standard study ... But these same virtues entail certain drawbacks. [Price being one of them. Another one is ...] ... some readers (including the present editor) occasionally find the sophistication and subtlety of Brink's exposition rather daunting' (Rudd (1989) vii).

⁵⁷ Gibson (2021).

⁵⁸ Cairns belongs to the 'Glasgow–Balliol' mafia identified by Osywn Murray (2007: above n. 48), having obtained B.A. Lit. Hum. at Balliol in 1963 after leaving Glasgow. Subsequent posts include: Lecturer in Humanity, Edinburgh (1966–73); Chair of Latin, Liverpool (1974–88); Chair of Latin, Leeds (1989–99: Research Professor, 1999–2001); Professor of Classical Languages, The Florida State University (2000–). Perhaps I can be permitted one personal memory of Cairns (who was very kind to me at the very start of my career, at Manchester in the early 1990s). Arriving at Cairns' Birkenhead house to discuss revision of an article, I suddenly spotted — to my momentary horror — the severed head of a large doll at a window on the first floor. I cried out 'What in the name of God is *that*?'. '*That*,' said Francis, looking upwards, 'is much cheaper than a burglar alarm'.

⁵⁹ This book argues that ancient poets composed by reference, whether negative or positive, to a series of conventions, later formalized in ancient rhetorical theory, which applied to the subject matter they chose to handle. *Generic Composition* went on to create an entire climate of opinion within the field in the 1970s and 1980s.

just as important as any of this was the Liverpool Latin Seminar, which ran for ten years between 1975 and 1985.⁶⁰

Following the expansion of Universities in the 1960s, a lot of new, young staff had been appointed to departments of Classics all over Britain. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, many of the young appointees to Latin posts were beginning to achieve a reputation for their research, both nationally and internationally. There appears to have been a feeling abroad that ‘redbrick’ universities — a term invented at Liverpool — could improve matters for themselves, and that a seminar culture would help things along.⁶¹ Oxbridge had the numbers to sustain naturally self-reinforcing seminars; but was not notably welcoming to outsiders. London had (among other things) the Roman Society, which served much of the south-east of the country. Outside London and Oxbridge, numbers of staff with Latin interests were high in the aggregate, but relatively low within individual institutions: a whole generation of bright, ambitious Latinists found themselves (apparently) with no one to talk to.

Someone had the bright idea of running a series of peripatetic seminars for Latinists outside Oxbridge and London. No one I have spoken to can quite remember when it started; but what is clear is that the seminar was named *Boreas* — the Greek name for the north wind — and that it began in Newcastle with David West and others, met at least once in Leeds, and seems to have fizzled out, perhaps after a proposed meeting in Scotland never came to fruition.⁶² It was now that Cairns seized the initiative: just one year after his appointment to Liverpool in 1974, he started up the Liverpool Latin seminar. Liverpool was in many ways ideal, geographically, since it could draw on a greater density of nearby classicists than could (for example) Newcastle. And there were of course the social events on Friday evenings after the seminar at Cairns’ roomy house in Birkenhead, where participants could stay over, and — when they had recovered from the home-made wine the next day — could continue informal discussions on the Saturday and beyond. It is clear from those who attended the events — which happened roughly five or six times a year and were funded throughout by the University of Liverpool

⁶⁰ The history of *Boreas* / LLS cries out for out for a separate account of its own. For a short outline history of LLS, see *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar* (1985) 5.491–502, also *Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar* (1998) 10.391.

⁶¹ For a history of Britain’s great civic or ‘redbrick’ universities, see Whyte (2015).

⁶² Francis Cairns, *per e-litteras* adds: ‘perhaps David West deserve[s] more credit for Seminar *Boreas* than [is] given to him [here]. Unfortunately I cannot recollect whether he initiated Seminar *Boreas* or simply continued it when it was liable to lapse. I do know that at least one Seminar *Boreas* meeting was held after the Liverpool Latin Seminar was in action’.

— that there was tremendous intellectual excitement generated by these occasions.

Cairns left Liverpool in 1988, just as the long-term effects of the Thatcher-era cuts to university budgets were beginning to become clear. The University made no attempt to fill the established chair, and preferred to leave it vacant. The view represented by the assertion that ‘There is no Professor of Latin at the University of Salford’ appears to have prevailed. Latin was apt to appear a thing of the past in the late 1980s. Nevertheless, it was around this time that Classics began to reinvent itself in the UK, by acknowledging the fact that fewer and fewer students were studying Latin or Greek at school, and by embracing the highly successful American model for the subject. In other words, make provision for your students to learn the ancient languages *ab initio* upon arrival at University, and — while they are learning the languages — introduce them to the literature and history of the ancient world by teaching them through translations of the classical texts. The success of the venture can be measured by the eventual promotion of Bruce Gibson to the established Chair of Latin in Liverpool.⁶³

Envoi

The history of the Chair of Latin at the University of Liverpool has much to tell us about the emergence of Latin as a distinct field of study and its professionalization in the UK over the course of the twentieth century. The lack of women is depressingly characteristic, of course. That history also contains the usual deviation: the Professor who became a Senior Administrator (Mountford), not to mention an anomaly no longer current in the UK: the brilliant academic awarded an established Chair in a field not their own (Walbank), in an age of a scarcity of professorships. Professors are hardly the whole story of any Department, much less of the profession as a whole. But they can tell us much about what senior administrators in universities of the day valued in the intellectual leadership of their Departments of Classics. The story of the Chair of Latin at Liverpool charts a clear professional course, as Latin moves out of the shadows of philology and Hellenism, and towards the embrace of its own texts and literature as objects worthy of independent study at the highest levels. The parallel between the rise of Latin and the growing stature of England’s great civic universities is only too clear — at least until the 1980s and the arrival of Thatcher. On the more purely intellectual level, Postgate marks the break from the late Victorian philology of Strong,

⁶³ With whom I am often confused (we have not made differentiation easy).

while Postgate's own concern with the textual criticism of Latin texts is carried forward by Slater. The arrival of Brink emphatically underlines the new standards set by German-Jewish refugee scholars for the study of Latin literature in the postwar era. Brink hardly lacked an interest in textual criticism, but his most enduring contributions have been to the comprehension of the text rather than its establishment. Austin represented an older insular tradition of the literary study of texts, but shared with Brink a preference for the format of the commentary: their commentaries on Vergil and Horace remain landmarks in the field. Rudd brought with him the new thinking of North America and a serious interest in literary criticism, expressed in articles and monographs, that would emphatically be continued by the enormously productive and equally influential Cairns. Thereafter the story of the Chair of Latin at Liverpool would falter, only to rise again.

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*DIE HELLENISCHE GESCHICHTSSCHREIBUNG IST
ZEITGESCHICHTE:*
EDUARD SCHWARTZ ON GREEK HISTORIOGRAPHY IN A
1939 LETTER TO J. ENOCH POWELL¹

— IVAN MATIJAŠIĆ —

ABSTRACT

In early 1939, the British classical scholar, and later notorious politician, J. Enoch Powell (1912–1998) sent a letter in German to Eduard Schwartz (1858–1940) alongside a copy of his newly published book The History of Herodotus (Cambridge 1939). This interesting letter was published by Eckart Mensching in 1999, while Schwartz's reply lay unpublished among Powell's papers at the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge. Both letters are here published with an English translation, displaying not only their value for the biographies of both scholars, but also for Schwartz's concise yet significant reflections on Greek historiography, the relationship between history and poetry, and the role of historians in ancient societies.

KEYWORDS

*Eduard Schwartz, J. Enoch Powell, Herodotus,
Thucydides, Greek Historiography*

1. Eduard Schwartz: biography, bibliography, and political engagement

Eduard Schwartz was born in Kiel in 1858, but the family soon moved to Göttingen, where his father Hermann Schwartz (1821–1890) was a

¹ Most of this paper was written in Edinburgh in October 2024 where I was a Visiting Fellow sponsored by Ca' Foscari University of Venice and hosted by the School of History, Classics and Archaeology. My thanks go to Mirko Canevaro, Edward Harris, and David Lewis for the engaging discussions we had during and after a seminar I gave while in Edinburgh. I would also like to express my gratitude to Peter von Möllendorff (Gießen), Tim Rood (Oxford), Jeffrey S. Rusten (Cornell), Federico Santangelo (Newcastle), Eckhard Wirbelauer (Strasbourg), and Giorgio Ziffer (Udine) for their invaluable assistance at different stages in the writing of the present article. Finally, I am grateful to the anonymous peer reviewers of *HCS* whose feedback has significantly improved this text. Unless otherwise reported, all translations of German texts into English are my own.

Professor of Gynecology at the prestigious local university.² Related to the philologist Otto Jahn and the archaeologist Adolf Michaelis, and linked by family ties to the historian Johann Gustav Droysen, Schwartz was part of the German professorial bourgeoisie. He attended the *Gymnasium* in Göttingen and then enrolled in Classical Philology in 1875, attending courses by Hermann Sauppe and Curt Wachsmuth. His academic journey led him to study with Hermann Usener and Franz Bücheler in Bonn, with Theodor Mommsen in Berlin, and finally with Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff in Greifswald, who, along with Usener, greatly influenced Schwartz.³ He graduated at the University of Bonn in 1880 with a thesis on Dionysius Skytobrachion (*De Dionysio Scytobrachione*), an author with uncertain chronology and identity, on whom he later wrote the entry for Pauly-Wissowa.⁴

In 1881, he received a scholarship from the German Archaeological Institute in Rome, where he stayed for two years and learned Italian. In 1884, he obtained his Habilitation in Bonn and taught there as a Privatdozent until his appointment to the Chair of Classical Philology in Rostock in 1887. From Rostock, he moved to various university positions: Gießen in 1893, Strasbourg in 1897, Göttingen in 1902, Freiburg im Breisgau in 1909, and then back to Strasbourg in 1914. In 1918, after Germany's defeat in the war and the transfer of Strasbourg to France, he was forced to leave the city and lost his possessions. The war also brought personal losses to the Schwartz family: Gerhard, the eldest son, died in November 1914, while Ivo succumbed to his injuries in late 1918 in Frankfurt am Main.

It was in Strasbourg that Eduard Schwartz decided to put in writing his thoughts on the history of the composition of Thucydides' work. The book *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides* was finished in 1917 and published in 1919: it was, as Schwartz himself claimed, 'a product of the war'.⁵ In the same year, Schwartz was appointed to the Chair of Classical

² Schwartz's own scientific autobiography ('Wissenschaftlicher Lebenslauf') written in 1932 was eventually published in the second posthumous volume of his collected essays: Schwartz (1956). His son Gustav printed privately an autobiographical book: Schwartz (1964) (used extensively by Möllendorff [2000]). For Schwartz's biography see Rehm (1942); Momigliano (1979); Baumgarten (2012); Rebenich (2014); (2021), 207–24.

³ The letters from Wilamowitz to Schwartz were published in Calder / Fowler (1986) while those from Schwartz to Wilamowitz have not survived: see Calder / Fowler (1986), 19.

⁴ Schwartz (1903a). Cf. Rusten (1982), esp. 16.

⁵ In the letter to Powell, Schwartz wrote: 'Mein Thukydidesbuch ist eine Frucht des Krieges' (see below § 3). Schwartz (1929), 364 already noted in the afterword of the book itself: 'Das Manuskript dieses Buches wurde im September 1917 abgeschlossen

Philology in Munich, succeeding Otto Crusius. He remained in Munich until his death on 13 February 1940, after witnessing the crisis of the Weimar Republic, the rise of Nazism, and the start of the Second World War.

Eduard Schwartz is remembered both as a classical philologist and a historian of the Church.⁶ In the field of Greek historiography, besides the aforementioned book on Thucydides, between 1894 and 1907 he published over two hundred entries dedicated to Greek historians for Pauly-Wissowa.⁷ As an editor of texts, he published the scholia to Euripides (in 2 vols., 1887–1891), the *Oratio ad Graecos* of Tatian (1888), the *Libellus pro Christianis Oratio de resurrectione cadaverum* of Athenagoras (1891), as well as the critical edition of the Church history of Eusebius of Caesarea (3 vols., 1903–1909) and the *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* from 431 to 553 (4 vols., 1914–1940). Church historians also remember him for the multi-volume work *Zur Geschichte des Athanasios* (1904–1911).⁸

From this brief list of Schwartz's most relevant works, one can immediately grasp the breadth of his interests which spanned from Greek historiography to New Testament studies, from Greek epic poetry to the history of the Church in Late Antiquity.⁹

Despite not featuring in some reference works on the history of classical scholarship,¹⁰ Schwartz remains a figure of great interest that transcends the boundaries of classical philology, not only for his studies on the history of the Church, but also for his role in the society and politics

und ist im wesentlichen unverändert abgedruckt' ('The manuscript of this book was completed in September 1917 and is printed essentially unchanged'). Further autobiographical considerations on the *Thukydidesbuch* in Schwartz (1956), 17–18.

⁶ Parente (1979); Meier (2011).

⁷ The most important entries are collected in Schwartz (1957).

⁸ See several chapters in Heil / Stockhausen (2015). For Schwartz's bibliography see Rehm (1942), 67–75, with additions and corrections in Schwartz (1960), 329–44 and Schwartz (1963), 362.

⁹ Cf. Momigliano (1979), 1001–3.

¹⁰ E.g. no mention of Schwartz in W.W. Briggs and W.M. Calder's *Classical Scholarship. A Biographical Encyclopedia* (1990), the 'heavyweight encyclopedia of the pantheon of classical scholarship' (Beard (2000), 13), nor in its online continuation: Rutgers' Database of Classical Scholars (<https://dbcs.rutgers.edu>). Hugh Lloyd-Jones, in his introduction to the English translation of Wilamowitz's *History of Classical Scholarship*, does give a shoutout to Eduard Schwartz, alongside other contemporaries of Wilamowitz: Herman Diels, Friedrich Leo, Eduard Meyer, Richard Reitzenstein, Eduard Norden, Jacob Wackernagel, and Wilhelm Schulze: see Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1982), xvi.

of his time. Schwartz was appointed Rektor in Strasbourg for the academic year 1915/1916, right in the middle of the war, and published several political pieces between 1914 and 1919, mostly reissued in his *Gesammelte Schriften*. Like Wilamowitz and Eduard Meyer, Schwartz was in favour of the war effort in 1914.¹¹ However, unlike his older peers, he did not sign the infamous open letter *An die Kulturwelt!* of 4 October 1914. The letter — signed by ninety-three German intellectuals including Max Planck, Adolf von Harnack, Wilhelm Dörpfeld, as well as Wilamowitz and Meyer — defended German militarism and the annexation of Belgium. It provoked formal responses from several countries and created a rift that would last well beyond the end of the conflict.¹²

Even though Schwartz was not aligned with the more extremist and warmongering section of the German academic elite, he still used his position in Strasbourg to praise German culture and education in 1916 and defend the Germanness of Strasbourg and Alsace in 1919, when the region had already been handed over to the French.¹³ He was a staunch nationalist and had conservative political views, as did most of his peers. With the rise of National Socialism in Germany and the election of Hitler as chancellor in 1933, the political situation became tenser, and many German academics started to think about emigration. Schwartz aided Kurt von Fritz and Rudolf Pfeiffer to emigrate to Oxford.¹⁴ In *Der Krieg als nationales Erlebnis*, a speech delivered in the Saal der Aubette in Strassbourg on 24 October 1914, Schwartz rejected racism as an analytical category: ‘We are not intoxicated by the phrase of the battle of the races, because we know that civilised people are not bred like racehorses and hunting dogs’ (‘Wir berauschen uns nicht an der Phrase vom Kampf der Rassen, weil wir wissen, daß Kulturvölker nicht gezüchtet werden wie Rennpferde und Hühnerhunde’).¹⁵ Reprinted in 1938, this phrase might

¹¹ Schwartz (1938), 139–54 (‘Der Krieg als nationales Erlebnis’ [1914]).

¹² Cf. Ungern-Sternberg / Ungern-Sternberg (1996). It must be noted that the first shot in this intellectual war was fired by Gilbert Murray and other British writers with an open letter published in *The Times* on 18 September 1914 condemning the war and the invasion of Belgium and claiming that the militaristic spirit was ‘inculcated upon the present generation of Germans by many celebrated historians and teachers’ (see Murray [2024], 265–6).

¹³ Schwartz (1938), 195–220 (‘Gymnasium und Weltkultur’ [1916]), 259–65 (‘Das Ende der Straßburger Universität’ [1919]).

¹⁴ See Rebenich (2014), 426–7, where extracts from the letters by Schwartz in support of von Fritz and Pfeiffer are published; these letters are preserved at Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

¹⁵ Schwartz (1938), 147 (‘Der Krieg als nationales Erlebnis’ [1914]). Cf. Canfora (1977b), 182.

have raised some eyebrows with right-wing readers and was openly at odds with the pseudoscientific eugenics policies of the Nazis.

In his letter to Powell, he even expressed contempt for a war that was all but inevitable in early 1939: ‘May heaven protect us from a war that can only bring destruction, of which we have enough and more than enough here’ (‘Bewahre uns der Himmel vor einem Krieg, der nur Zerstörung bringen kann, an der wie hier im Land genug und übergenuß haben’: see below § 3). Besides representing a critique of the aggressive foreign policy of National Socialism, this phrase and the use of the present tense related to the destruction also show that Schwartz was highly critical of the political situation in Germany under the Nazis.¹⁶

2. John Enoch Powell and his intellectual debt to Eduard Schwartz

At the beginning of 1939, John Enoch Powell’s short but dense book *The History of Herodotus* was published by Cambridge University Press.¹⁷ It was the third book by this 26-year-old Professor of Greek at the University of Sydney and former Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge: he had already published an edition of Greek papyri from the Rendel Harris collection at Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, as well as *A Lexicon to Herodotus*, a collection of all the Greek words in Herodotus’ *Histories* that is still an indispensable tool for any serious research on that author. In the same year, 1939, Powell’s edition of Book VIII of Herodotus appeared.¹⁸

In the preface to *The History of Herodotus*, after narrowing his investigation specifically to the problem of the composition of the *Histories*, Powell acknowledged his intellectual debt to Schwartz: ‘That in spite of this restriction of my subject I have chosen to entitle this study ‘The History of Herodotus’ arises from a wish to indicate that I am here trying to do for Herodotus what Eduard Schwartz did for another Greek historian in his brilliant *Geschichtswerk des Thukydides*’.¹⁹

¹⁶ On German classical scholars and politics in the early twentieth century, see Losemann (1977); (2009); Canfora (1977a); (1979); (2004). Specifically on Schwartz’s politics: Canfora (1980), 31–8, 133–59; Rebenich (2014), 424–7; (2021), *passim*.

¹⁷ Powell (1939a). For Powell’s biography: Heffer (1998); for his career as a classicist: Matijašić (2020), 219–2 with further bibliography.

¹⁸ Powell (1936), (1938), (1939b).

¹⁹ Powell (1939a), vii. Engagement with Schwartz’s book and praise of it can also be found in Powell’s unpublished 1934 dissertation *The Moral and Historical Principles of Thucydides and Their Influence in Later Antiquity* as well as his 1936 paper titled *The War and its Aftermath in their Influence upon Thucydidean Studies*: the latter is

Powell's debt to Schwartz's book was not confined to the preface, but runs throughout *The History of Herodotus*. He employed the same philological methods to analyze and attempt — though not always convincingly — to identify and date the layers of composition of Herodotus' work. He claimed that the Peloponnesian war represented an impulse to write history not only for Thucydides, but also for Herodotus:

The external impulse for both Herodotus and Thucydides had come from the Peloponnesian war; but a deeper resemblance lies in this, that the source of their inspiration was for both men Athens. Both were her apologists. Thucydides after her downfall took up his pen once more to illuminate and justify rationally her imperial policy; Herodotus in a time of bitterness and suspicion was determined that the immortal merit of Athens as the champion of Greek freedom should not be forgotten.²⁰

These remarks left a strong impression on Schwartz, who stated in the letter printed below (§ 3) that Powell's conclusions have brought Herodotus closer to him ('Herodot mir näher gerückt').

Others were toying with these ideas even before the outbreak of World War I. It is reported that the British historian, diplomat, and international relations theorist E.W. Carr (1892–1982), who gained a double first in classics at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1916, acquired his first understanding of history from an unnamed tutor in Ancient History. This 'rather undistinguished' specialist in the Persian Wars suggested that Herodotus' account was influenced by his perspective on the Peloponnesian war, which was ongoing as he wrote. This revelation greatly impacted Carr's later views on history and historians.²¹

For Schwartz, the Great War was the impulse to collect his thoughts on Thucydides which he had developed in earlier lectures. In this book, he aimed to demonstrate how the long Peloponnesian war affected the historian. Simultaneously, the book itself benefitted from those challenging times:

Um eine dauernde, scharf anspannende Arbeit zu haben, machte ich mich nach Ablauf meines Rektorats daran, meine schon durch viele Vorlesungen hindurchgeschleppten Gedanken über Thukydides' Geschichtswerk zu einem Buche zusammenzufassen, das darstellen

published in Matijašić (2022a), 114–24, while the dissertation will appear in a forthcoming book by Ivan Matijašić, Tim Rood, and Daniel Sutton.

²⁰ Powell (1939a), 86.

²¹ Davies (1983), 476 also quoted in Pitcher (2025), 263 n. 12.

sollte, wie der lange Peloponnesische Krieg auf den Geschichtsschreiber gewirkt hatte. Das entsprach der schweren Zeit und ist der Form des Buches zustatten gekommen; im übrigen wäre es wohl besser gewesen, ich wäre mit meinen Gedanken früher hervorgetreten.²²

In order to have a permanent, sharply challenging work, after the end of my rectorate I set about summarising my thoughts on Thucydides' historical work, which I had already dragged through many lectures, into a book that was to show how the long Peloponnesian War had affected the historian. This was in keeping with the difficult times and benefited the form of the book; otherwise it would probably have been better if I had come forward with my thoughts earlier.

Peloponnesian War and World War I, ancient history and contemporary history intertwine in both Powell's and Schwartz's approaches and ideas even before their exchange of letters.

3. The correspondence between J. Enoch Powell and Eduard Schwartz

After the publication of the book on Herodotus on 17 February 1939,²³ Powell sent a copy to numerous scholars, including Eduard Schwartz. Schwartz's Munich address was provided by Bruno Snell, whom Powell had met in person in December 1938 during his one and only visit to Germany before the outbreak of the war.²⁴ The accompanying letter to the book, typewritten in German, was published and commented on by Eckart Mensching in 1999, the year following Powell's death: it is reproduced here for convenience, alongside an English translation.²⁵

²² Schwartz (1956), 17–18.

²³ The exact date of publication can be inferred from the letters and documents preserved in Cambridge: Churchill Archives Centre, POLL 1/6/18 (Part 1). See Matijašić (2023), 116–19.

²⁴ The letter of 23 January 1939 where Bruno Snell provides Powell with Schwartz's address is preserved at the Churchill Archives Centre, POLL 1/6/13 (Part 2).

²⁵ Mensching (1999). There are two copies of the letter: one was retained among Powell's papers and is currently housed in the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge (POLL 1/6/18, Part 1); the other is the one sent to Schwartz and is preserved in his Nachlass in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich (Schartziana IIA: Powell, Enoch).

Trinity College,
Cambridge, England
am 'März 1939' [added by pen in the copy in Munich]

Sehr geehrter Herr Kollege,

Ich sende Ihnen in diesem Augenblick ein Exemplar meines soeben erschienenen Herodotbuchs mit der Bitte, die Nennung Ihres Namens in der Vorrede als eine Art Widmung aufzufassen. Bei unserem persönlichem Unbekanntsein glaubt ich zu einer eigentlichen Widmung nicht vorschreiten zu dürfen. Ich kenne in der Tat kein zweites Buch auf dem [*lege* die] Gebiete der klassischen Philologie, dem ich so viel verdanke wie Ihrem [*lege* Ihre] Geschichtswerke des Thukydides, obwohl ich den allermeisten seiner Ergebnisse ablehnend gegenüberstehe; worin sich wie in einem Kleinbilde meine ganze Haltung dem deutschen Volke und der deutschen Kultur gegenüber widerspiegelt, ein seltsames Gemisch von Liebe und Hass. Ich, bitte, dieses vielleicht unverschämt offene Zugeständnis, wie es sich wohl nur unter Unbekannten geziemt, zu entschuldigen.

Ich habe vor, wenn ich nach meiner zweiten Abwesenheit in Australien von jetzt bis November zurück sein werde, deutschen Boden, den ich vor einigen Wochen eine kurze Zeitlang zum ersten Male betrat, wieder zu besuchen, falls der Krieg worauf ich hoffe nicht dazwischenkommt. Dann würde es die Reise über München lohnen, wenn Sie mir die Gelegenheit zu einem persönlichem [*lege* persönlichen] Zusammentreffen mit Ihnen gestatteten.

Mit Verehrung,

Ihr Ergebener,

J. Enoch Powell [signature by pen in the copy in Munich]

English translation:

Dear colleague,

At this moment, I am sending you a copy of my recently published book on Herodotus, with the request that you regard the mention of your name in the preface as a kind of dedication. Given that we are not personally acquainted, I felt I could not proceed with a formal dedication. In fact, I know of no other book in the field of classical philology to which I owe as much as your *Geschichtswerk des Thukydides*, even though I stand opposed to most of its conclusions. In this, as a small reflection, my entire attitude towards the German people and German culture is mirrored — a strange mixture of love and hate. I ask you to excuse this perhaps brazenly candid admission, which befits only strangers.

I plan to visit German soil again — where I set foot for the first time only a few weeks ago — after returning from my second absence in Australia, from now until November, provided the war, which I hope will not intervene, does not disrupt these plans. In that case, the journey would be worth passing through Munich if you would allow me the opportunity for a personal meeting with you.

With admiration,
Yours faithfully,
J. Enoch Powell

The content of the letter is rather odd. Powell, while admitting an enormous debt towards Schwartz and his book on Thucydides, acknowledges that he disagrees with his conclusions. At the same time, he confesses to a mixture of love and hate ('ein seltsames Gemisch von Liebe und Hass') for the German people and German culture. Finally, despite recognizing the irreverence and candor of his message, he asks Schwartz for a meeting in November 1939.

We have a testimony of Schwartz's amused reaction to Powell's letter. As reported by Rehm in his 1942-biography,

Schwartz erzählte im Sommer 1939 lächelnd von einem Brief, in dem ihm ein Engländer (es dürfte Powell gewesen sein) seinen Besuch ankündigte, falls nicht etwa der Krieg dazwischen käme; er wünsche dringend seine Bekanntschaft zu machen, da er ihm zwar nichts von dem glaube, was in dem Thukydidesbuche vorgetragen sei, es aber für das weitaus Beste halte, was jemals über den Autor geschrieben sei.²⁶

In the summer of 1939, Schwartz smilingly told of a letter in which an Englishman (it was probably Powell) announced his visit, if the war did not intervene; he urgently wished to make his acquaintance, as he did not believe anything of what was presented in the Thucydides book, but considered it to be by far the best thing ever written about the author.

From this personal recollection, it can be inferred that Schwartz did not take offence at Powell's unconventional letter. On the contrary, he seized the opportunity and replied in the same frank vein. His handwritten letter is preserved solely among Enoch Powell's papers at the Churchill Archive Centre and is published here for the first time:²⁷

²⁶ Rehm (1942), 56.

²⁷ Churchill Archive Centre: POLL 1/6/18, Part 1. Schwartz's *Nachlass* in Munich contains the letters sent to Schwartz, not those he sent out.

München, Georgenstr. 4
18. ii. 39²⁸

Hochverehrter Herr College!

Ihr Buch und Ihren Brief habe ich erhalten und sage Ihnen dafür meinen herzlichen Dank. Nach den Regeln internationaler Höflichkeit müsste ich Ihnen in einem Englisch antworten, das an Trefflichkeit einigermaßen Ihrem Deutsch gleichkommt, aber ultra posse nemo obligatur. Englische Schriftsteller sind zwar, ganz abgesehen von der Fachliteratur, seit früher Jugend die Gefährten meiner Musse gewesen von Walter Scott Bulwer²⁹ Thackeray an bis zu Galsworthy und Priestley, aber zum freien schriftlichen und mündlichen Gebrauch hab ich es nicht gebracht. So muss ich es mit Ihnen ebenso halten wie mit meinem verstorbenen Freunde C. H. Turner in Oxford und Deutsch schreiben.

Mein Thukydidesbuch ist eine Frucht des Krieges; dessen Druck, doppelt stark in der Grenzfestung (Strassburg) hat es mir abgezwungen. Die Grundgedanken waren erheblich älter; es wäre besser gewesen, ich hätte sie gleich als sie entstanden, formuliert & hinausgeworfen. 1918 war es zu spät; von einer analytischen Philologie wollte man in Deutschland schon damals nicht viel mehr wissen und jetzt prangt die Kunst alle Incongruenzen, Widersprüche, Unmöglichkeiten mit breitem Gerede zu übermalen in üppiger Blüte. So bin ich freudig überrascht dass mir die Rolle des Propheten der draussen mehr gilt als im Vaterlande, zu Teil geworden ist, und dass auch von meiner *ταπεινότης* abgesehen, es überhaupt noch Philologen giebt, die eine Analyse grossen Stils für nötig halten und sich dadurch nicht abschrecken lassen dass sie insofern eine unendliche Aufgabe ist, als

²⁸ Schwartz's handwritten letter is dated 18 February 1939, but this must be a slip for 18 March 1939: 'ii' should be corrected with 'iii'. The main reason is that Powell's book was published on 17 February 1939 (see above) and it is materially impossible that the book reached Schwartz so soon. Powell's own letter is dated generically 'März 1939', but we also know, from his correspondence with his parents, that on 26 February 1939 he was flying over Crete on his route to Australia (POLL 1/1/3), which means that he probably prepared the letter and arranged for the Press to send it alongside the book to Schwartz. In fact, Powell wrote to Schwartz: 'Ich habe vor, wenn ich nach meiner zweiten Abwesenheit in Australien von jetzt bis November zurück sein werde, deutschen Boden (...) wieder zu besuchen'. *Von jetzt bis November*, 'from now until November': which means that he was already in Australia when the letter reached Schwartz. See also the letter sent to Powell by Jacoby from Finkenkrug near Berlin after reading his book, which is dated 16 March 1939: Matijašić 2023, 117 (unfortunately in this case, we don't have Powell's initial letter to Jacoby). Hence, it is reasonable to assume that Schwartz penned his reply on 18 March 1939.

²⁹ Writer and politician Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873).

ihre reinliche, restlose Lösung unmöglich ist. Die echte, classische hellenische Historiographie, die mit Herodot anfängt und mit Thukydides aufhört, ist auch darin eine Tochter des Epos, dass sie wie dieses ohne Analyse nicht verstanden werden kann — Das Epos ist das Werk einer Dichterschaft, die Geschichtsschreibung ist von Individualitäten, starken Individualitäten geschaffen, aber von Individualitäten, die mit und durch ihr Werk geworden sind und nicht als eine starre Einheit genommen werden dürfen; ihr Leben war ihr Werk und dies Leben war ein echtes, fließendes, nicht ein Tümpel stehenden | Wassers. Die hellenische Geschichtsschreibung ist Zeitgeschichte, und dadurch gross, dass sie unter dem Druck eines Geschehens steht und mit diesem fertig werden, ihn gewissermassen bezwingen, sich von ihm befreien will. Darin, denke ich, stimmen wir überein, und darauf kommt es an; ob wir uns in Einzelnen ablehnen, macht nichts aus. *βραχὺς ὁ βίος, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρή*,³⁰ man könnte auch sagen *ἄπειρος*.

Herodot ist aus der ionischen Cultur erwachsen, aber er war kein Ionier, und wollte es nicht sein. Er übernimmt die *ἱστορίη*,³¹ aber er reist um das ionische Erdbild als eine den Erfahrungstatsachen widersprechende Speculation zu erweisen. Weil er kein Ionier ist, beschwert ihn die attische Herrschaft nicht, empfindet er es immer noch als eine grosse Tat dass Athen die Perser von der asiatischen Küste vertrieben hat. Das Problem ist meines Erachtens, wie und wodurch die beiden Elemente, die ionische *ἱστορίη* mit ihrem antiionischen Zweck und die Erzählung von dem Sieg über die persische Macht zu einer Einheit zusammengewachsen sind. Ich habe Ihr Buch, da ich mit dringenden Arbeiten überlastet bin, nur blättern anlesen können, so dass ich weiss worauf Sie hinauswollen. Manches leuchtet mir nicht ein, das Bild das Sie am Schluss entwerfen, hat mir sehr zu denken gegeben, Herodot mir näher gerückt.

Schade dass Sie erst im November kommen können. Bewahre uns der Himmel vor einem Krieg, der nur Zerstörung bringen kann, an der wie hier im Land genug und übergenuß haben. Ferner liebt ein 80jähriger, auch wenns ihm leiblich so gut geht wie mir, lange Fristen nicht, da er jeden Tag, den er noch arbeiten kann, als eine Gunst

³⁰ Hippocratic aphorism often quoted in ancient sources, especially in Galen, usually as *ὁ βίος βραχὺς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρά*. The Latin version is also famous: *ars longa vita brevis*.

³¹ In a rather pedantic way, Schwartz uses the Ionic form of *ἱστορία* with *-ιη* ending and smooth breathing (*spiritus lenis*) on the initial *iota* (i.e. psilosis). Neither Schwartz nor Powell, in their published works, use psilosis to render East Ionic, even though the latter, in his introduction to the commented edition of Herodotus' Book VIII, criticizes the appearance of rough breathings in texts of Herodotus as 'but a venerable absurdity, not practised in the writing of Aeolic' (Powell [1939b], xviii).

empfindet. Hoffen wir also das Beste; wenn Sie den Weg zu einem alten Manne finden, dem die Gegenwart im Ganzen nichts mehr ist, so wird mir Ihre Gegenwart, die nicht zu kurz dauern darf, eine grosse Freude bereiten.

Nochmals herzlichen Dank und alles Gute für Ihre Fahrt zu den Antipoden.

Ihr aufrichtig ergebener

ESchwartz

English translation:

Esteemed colleague,

I have received your book and your letter, and I extend my heartfelt thanks to you for them. According to the rules of international courtesy, I should respond to you in English that somewhat matches the excellence of your German, but *ultra posse nemo obligatur* [no one is obliged beyond their abilities]. Apart from the scholarly literature, English authors have indeed been my companions in leisure since my youth, from Walter Scott, Bulwer[-Lytton], and Thackeray to Galsworthy and Priestley, but I have not mastered the free written and spoken use of the language. So, I must address you in the same way as I did my late friend C. H. Turner in Oxford, by writing in German.

My book on Thucydides is a product of the war; the pressure, doubly strong in the border fortress (Strasbourg), forced it upon me. The fundamental ideas were significantly older; it would have been better if I had formulated and published them as soon as they came to fruition. By 1918, it was too late; even back then, there was little interest in Germany in analytical philology, and now the art of glossing over all incongruities, contradictions, and impossibilities with elaborate rhetoric is flourishing. Hence, I am pleasantly surprised that my role as a prophet is more valued abroad than in the homeland, and that, aside from my *ταπεινότης* [lowness, vileness], there are still philologists who consider analysis on a grand scale necessary and are not deterred by the fact that it is an infinite task, in the sense that a clean, complete solution is impossible. Genuine, classical Hellenic historiography, which begins with Herodotus and ends with Thucydides, is also a daughter of the epic in that it cannot be understood without analysis. The epic is the work of a guild of poets, whereas historiography is crafted by individualities, strong individualities, but individualities that have grown with and through their work and should not be taken as a rigid unity; their life was their work, and this life was a true, flowing one, not a stagnant pool of water. Hellenic historiography is contemporary history and thus great in that it stands under the pressure of events and seeks to come to terms with it, to conquer it, and to free itself

from it. In this, I think we agree, and that is what matters; whether we disagree on specifics does not matter. *βραχὺς ὁ βίος, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρὴ* [life is short, and craft is long], one could also say *ἄπειρος* [boundless].

Herodotus grew from Ionian culture, but he was not an Ionian and did not want to be one. He adopts the *ἱστορίη* [*sic*], but he travels to demonstrate that the Ionian worldview contradicts empirical facts. Because he is not an Ionian, the Athenian dominion does not burden him; he still feels it a great deed that Athens drove the Persians from the Asian coast. The problem, in my opinion, is how and by what means the two elements — the Ionian *ἱστορίη* with its anti-Ionian purpose and the narrative of the victory over Persian power — merged into a unity. Your book, which I have only been able to skim due to pressing work, has given me insight into your aims. Some aspects are not clear to me, yet the picture you paint at the end has given me much to ponder and brought Herodotus closer to me.

It's a pity that you can only come in November. May heaven protect us from a war that can only bring destruction, of which we have enough and more than enough here. Furthermore, an 80-year-old, even if physically well as I am, does not have long to wait, as each working day is perceived as a favour. Let us hope for the best; if you find your way to an old man to whom the present as a whole means nothing, your presence, which must not be too brief, will bring me great joy.

Once again, many thanks and all the best for your journey to the Antipodes.

Yours sincerely,
E. Schwartz

These two letters represent the only surviving correspondence between Schwartz and Powell that I am aware of. The meeting that both wished for never took place for the one reason that could have prevented it: the outbreak of war in Europe. Powell, having returned hastily from Australia in the early days of September, spent the following months at the Royal Warwickshire Regiment's recruitment camp.³² Another event finally precluded a personal meeting between Powell and Schwartz: on 13 February 1940, Schwartz died aged 81.

³² The most exhaustive account of Powell's military career is in Heffer (1998), 56–98.

4. Schwartz's letter to Powell and Thucydidean studies in the interwar period

The letter that Schwartz sent to Powell in 1939 is fascinating for several reasons. In the first place, it offers a vivid glimpse of the *respublica litterarum* in Europe on the eve of World War II. Despite the significant setback to international scholarly collaboration caused by World War I,³³ Powell's letter points to the enduring relationship between British and German classicists. Another notable example is the historian and archaeologist Ernst Fabricius who travelled to England and Scotland in the 1920s, entertained collaborations with eminent British scholars, namely R.G. Collingwood, F.G. Simpson, George Macdonald, and Eric Birley, and even received an honorary doctorate from the University of Durham in 1928.³⁴

Schwartz's taste in English novels, which he evidently read in the original, is quite telling. Except for J. B. Priestley (whose grandfather was an illiterate mill worker),³⁵ Walter Scott, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, William Makepeace Thackeray, and John Galsworthy are all upper-middle class novelists who explored major social issues from a historical perspective. Walter Scott, who started publishing his historical novels in 1814, had a profound impact on historical writing, influencing professional historians in Britain and across Europe.³⁶ Bulwer-Lytton was not only the author of the memorable opening phrase 'It was a dark and stormy night...'³⁷ but also of a lesser-known yet intriguing history of Athens.³⁸ Thackeray, Galsworthy, and Priestley published several historical novels as well as plays: they were quite popular in their time and some of their works are still adapted and revived. Galsworthy, whose star has waned a bit, was also the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1932. It is unsurprising that Schwartz appreciated these authors; and yet having direct evidence of his literary tastes is invaluable.

Furthermore, the letter reveals Schwartz's perceived place within the German scholarly tradition. He complained that analytical philology in Germany was no longer practised ('von einer analytischen Philologie wollte man in Deutschland schon damals nicht viel mehr wissen') and that his role as a prophet ('die Rolle des Propheten') was more valued

³³ See Murray (2024), 263–72, who is a little too radical on the crisis caused by the war to the Republic of Letters.

³⁴ On Fabricius' scholarly network: Wirbelauer (2016), 262–4.

³⁵ For Priestley's biography, see Cook (2004).

³⁶ Murray (2024), 124–6.

³⁷ Bulwer-Lytton, *Paul Clifford*, 1830, ch. 1.

³⁸ On Bulwer-Lytton and the history of ancient Athens: Murray (2024), 127–47.

abroad than in Germany, an allusion to the Gospel of Matthew: ‘And Jesus said unto them: A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house’.³⁹ Overemphasising the lack of analytical approaches to classical texts after World War I and claiming that his own work was more valued abroad than in Germany was a way of being nice about his correspondent.⁴⁰ He was genuinely surprised at receiving Powell’s book with the attached letter and finding out that he had been indirectly a mentor to a young British scholar, especially since he did not found a school, according to Schwartz’s own admission.⁴¹

Only a few lines after complaining about his prophetic role outside of Germany, he added that ‘there are still philologists who consider analysis on a grand scale necessary’ (‘es überhaupt noch Philologen giebt, die eine Analyse grossen Stils für nötig halten’). This was probably a reference to the works of analytical philology applied to Thucydides by Max Pohlenz and Wolfgang Schadewaldt. Pohlenz took issues with several of Schwartz’s claims, especially with his considerations on the speeches at Sparta in Thucydides’ Book I, while Schadewaldt used a similar approach to argue for the artistic unity of the whole work, which was completely at odds with Schwartz’s conclusions on the stratification of Thucydides’ *History*.⁴²

Although Schwartz’s *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides* became a classic for the analytical study of Thucydides,⁴³ its initial reception among his German colleagues left him somewhat disheartened. In fact, it was not appreciated by his teacher Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, who expressed — publicly and privately — his negative views of Schwartz’s *Thukydides*.

Immediately after its publication, Wilamowitz published a review-discussion of Schwartz’s book, challenging his belief that the alliance between Sparta and Athens described in Thuc. 5.23 could not have

³⁹ *Matthew* 13.57: ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ. The English translation is from the King James Version.

⁴⁰ It is unlikely that Schwartz was here referring to Momigliano (1930), one of the very few examples of such an approach outside of Germany. It is notable that Momigliano’s study is discussed in Pohlenz (1936).

⁴¹ Schwartz (1956), 8; Calder / Fowler (1986), 17–18; Möllendorff (2000), 471–3; Rebenich (2014), 407.

⁴² Pohlenz (1919), (1920), (1936); Schadewaldt (1929). Powell was well acquainted with these publications: cf. Matijašić (2022a), 116–17. On Thucydides in Germany in the interwar period: Schelske (2017).

⁴³ For the reception of *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides*: Momigliano (1979), 1009; Calder / Fowler (1986), 9; Bleckmann (2010); Rusten (2015), 65–6; Schelske (2017) 175–8.

occurred and that all references to it must be interpolations.⁴⁴ Wilamowitz ended his long and sharp discussion with the quip: ‘One should untie the knots rather than cut them’ (‘Man soll die Knoten lösen, nicht zerhauen’).⁴⁵

In a letter to Max Pohlenz of 3 March 1919, Wilamowitz wrote:

Schwartz Thuk. ist gewiß geistreich, und wie sollte er nicht, und er ist als ἐνστατικός⁴⁶ höchst verdienstlich. Aber wo ich die Conjecturen geprüft habe, waren sie falsch (...). Zwei Probleme sind: die Chronologie von I und das athen. spartanische Bündnis. Für das zweite gibt Schw. eine *mögliche* Lösung. Für I ist die Behandlung der Reden für mich noch nicht befriedigend.⁴⁷

Schwartz’s Thucydides is certainly ingenious, and how could he not be, for he is highly meritorious as an ἐνστατικός. But where I have examined the conjectures, they were wrong [...]. Two problems are: the chronology of Book I and the Athenian-Spartan alliance. Schwartz gives a *possible* solution to the second. For Book I, the treatment of the speeches is not yet satisfactory to me.

Similarly, Wilamowitz also complained about the book in a letter to Eduard Norden on 19 March 1919:

Er [*scil.* Schwartz] will sich auch mit Macht in seine Conzilien stürzen. Das ist auch besser als daß er im Thukydides conjicirt. Er muß als Herakles in einem Chaos Ordnung machen.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1919). On Wilamowitz and Thucydides: Chambers (2000).

⁴⁵ Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1919), 957 (404 in Wilamowitz’s *Kleine Schriften*). Hornblower (2008), 55 is appreciative of this final apophthegm.

⁴⁶ Ancient grammarians who found difficulties and started controversies in Homer were termed ἐνστατικοί by Eustathius of Thessalonica (*Comm. Il.* 4.270.11 van der Valk); cf. LSJ, 574, s.v. ἐνστατικός III. The same reference to Homeric scholarship is used in Wilamowitz’s review-discussion of Schwartz’s book: Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1919) 934 (380 in Wilamowitz’s *Kleine Schriften*).

⁴⁷ The letter is published in Calder / Ehlers (1991), 113–14.

⁴⁸ See Möllendorff (2000), 466–7 n. 2 for further references to Wilamowitz’s disagreements with Schwartz’s edition of Euripides’ scholia and his book on the *Odyssey*. Cf. Kurt von Fritz’s judgement on Schwartz’s book on Thucydides: ‘So ist das geniale Buch von Eduard Schwartz nicht nur immer noch bei weitem das Beste, was innerhalb der Versuche, die von Ullrich zuerst gestellte sogenannte thukydideische Frage zu beantworten, geschrieben worden ist, sondern es hat auch das Verdienst, zum erstenmal auf die wirklich zentralen Probleme, die das Werk stellt, energisch hingewiesen zu haben. Wenn sein Resultat trotzdem nicht angenommen werden kann, so

Schwartz also wants to throw himself with might into his Councils. That is also better than his conjecturing on Thucydides. As Heracles, he must bring order to chaos.

Criticisms from the leading German classicist of the era, along with the reception of his work on Thucydides by the younger generation of German classical philologists, may have caused some bitterness that later surfaced in Schwartz's letter to Powell. In 1932, reflecting on his Thucydides book, Schwartz acknowledged its greatest merit: that it reignited debate about the ancient historian.⁴⁹ This is certainly something to be proud of, even if others have tackled the problems in different manners and found different solutions.

5. Schwartz's considerations on Greek historiography

Since Powell sent his book on Herodotus and mentioned *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides* both in the preface and in his letter, in his reply Schwartz decided to take up one last time his professorial mantle and offer a short lecture on Greek historiography. The views expressed in his letter were already expounded in previously published articles and books.⁵⁰ For instance, the connection between early Greek historiography and epic poetry ('Die echte, classische hellenische Historiographie, die mit Herodot anfängt und mit Thukydides aufhört, ist auch darin eine Tochter des Epos') resembles word-for-word Schwartz's judgement in *Charakterköpfe aus der antiken Literatur*: 'Die hellenische Geschichtsschreibung und damit die Geschichtsschreibung überhaupt ist eine Tochter des Epos'.⁵¹ Moreover, Schwartz's remark on the distinction between epic poetry as a guild of poets and historiography as essentially

liegt dies an etwas anderem' ('Thus Eduard Schwartz's ingenious book is not only still by far the best that has been written in the attempts to answer the so-called Thucydidean question first posed by Ullrich, but it also has the merit of having for the first time vigorously pointed out the truly central problems posed by the work. If its result can nevertheless not be accepted, this is due to something else': von Fritz [1967], 574). See also Momigliano (1979), 1000.

⁴⁹ Schwartz (1956), 18.

⁵⁰ For a thorough analysis of Schwartz's approach to Greek historiography: Bleckmann (2015).

⁵¹ Schwartz (1903b), 27. Further considerations on epic poetry and historiography in Schwartz (1928), 69–70 (here and below, the page numbers refer to the *Gesammelte Schriften*, 1938); for a more general context on the relationship between epic poetry and early Greek historiography, see Matijašić (2022b), 16–17.

individual ('Das Epos ist das Werk einer Dichterschaft, die Geschichtsschreibung ist von Individualitäten') displays his awareness that 'analysis' was not the same thing when applied to Homer or Thucydides.⁵²

According to Schwartz, Herodotus grew out of Ionian culture, without being himself an Ionian ('Herodot ist aus der ionischen Cultur erwachsen, aber er war kein Ionier, und wollte es nicht sein'): this allowed him to see the flaws in the worldview of Ionian thinkers⁵³ and, simultaneously, to grasp the significance of the Athenian victory and the expulsion of the Persians from the west coast of Asia Minor ('empfindet er es immer noch als eine grosse Tat dass Athen die Perser von der asiatischen Küste vertrieben hat'). For Schwartz, the challenge was to explain how the two parts of Herodotus' *Histories* — the first four books, with their ethnographic and geographic focus, and Books 5–9, which recount the main narrative of the Persian Wars — merged into a single narrative. In his book *The History of Herodotus*, Powell sought to achieve this through an analytical approach, and it is precisely this effort that earned Schwartz's appreciation.

When Schwartz claimed that true classical Greek historiography began with Herodotus and ended with Thucydides, he was articulating in a sharp and somewhat narrow way a judgement on the development of Greek historiography that he articulated in the essay *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichte bei den Hellenen* published in *Die Antike* in 1928 and reprinted in the *Gesammelte Schriften* in 1938. There he also recognized the principle ('Gesetz'), followed by ancient historians, that the content of historiography is contemporary history ('der Stoff der Geschichtsschreibung die Zeitgeschichte ist') and that Greek historiography of the imperial age was impaired ('verkümmerte').⁵⁴ These are the same concepts he illustrated to Powell: 'Die hellenische Geschichtsschreibung ist Zeitgeschichte' ('Hellenic historiography is contemporary history'), by which he meant that only those actively engaged in the politics of their time could subsequently write a proper work of history.

Schwartz's perspective on the importance of contemporaneity in the works of ancient historians was not unique and, most importantly, was not without followers. Felix Jacoby's use of *Zeitgeschichte* for the

⁵² Cf. Rusten (2015), 61: 'For almost a century (1846–1936), the study of Thucydides by scholars (especially in Germany) descended down a rabbit hole of reconstructing the phases of the composition of his history, and identifying the layer of each different section. By a misleading analogy with Homeric studies, this movement came to be called "analysis"'.

⁵³ I.e. the Ionian school of Presocratic philosophy: Diog. Laert. 1.13–15, cf. Laks (2018), 17.

⁵⁴ Schwartz (1928), 68.

structure of the collection of Greek fragmentary historians, formulated for the first time at the historical congress in Berlin in August 1908 and published in *Klio* the subsequent year,⁵⁵ was due to Eduard Schwartz (and Wilamowitz). Concerning the structure of the *Fragmente* and the plan laid out in the 1909 article, several years later Jacoby admitted being ‘too much under the influence of Wilamowitz and Schwartz’.⁵⁶ He clearly took inspiration for *Zeitgeschichte* from Schwartz, even though he bent the meaning of the composite German word from ‘contemporary history’ to ‘contemporary historiography’, which gave an intrinsic ambiguity to the concept.⁵⁷

The prominence that Schwartz assigned to contemporary historiography goes hand in hand with an extremely positive evaluation of Thucydides, the ancient writer of contemporary history *par excellence*. This view was again taken up by Felix Jacoby, who stated that the development of Greek historiography reached its natural culmination with Thucydides:

Erst mit Thukydides hat die griechische Historiographie τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν erreicht, indem sie die Gattung erzeugt, die nun dauernd die vornehmste und wichtigste bleibt, ja die eigentlich allein als ‘Geschichtsschreibung’ gilt, die Zeitgeschichte.

[...] only with Thucydides did Greek historiography reach τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν [‘its true nature’, a phrase taken from Aristotle’s *Poetics* 1449 a 15], in that it creates the genre that now permanently remains the noblest and most significant, which actually alone truly ranks as “historiography”, namely contemporary history.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Jacoby (1909). Cf. also Jacoby (1926), 24.

⁵⁶ Jacoby (1949), 382 n. 10.

⁵⁷ The issues with Jacoby’s structure of the *FGrHist*, based on his changing ideas of the development of Greek historiography, have been discussed in several articles by Guido Schepens: see Schepens (2009); (2010); and especially (2022) with further bibliography.

⁵⁸ Jacoby (1909), 98. For the English translation by Chambers and Schorn: <https://histos.org/index.php/histos/issue/view/13>, 31. See Schepens (2022), 42–3. On the importance of *Zeitgeschichte* in Greek historiography, cf. Canfora (1999), 90; (2000), 9 (‘Il centro, concettuale ed emotivo, di un’opera di storia era quasi sempre l’epoca contemporanea dell’autore: il che dava ai testimoni diretti degli eventi il massimo ruolo’. My English translation: ‘The conceptual and emotional centre of a work of history was almost always the author’s contemporary era: this gave direct witnesses of events the greatest role’).

The same view on the significance of contemporaneity for history-writing was also developed in 1912–1913 by the philosopher Benedetto Croce, though from a viewpoint that is no longer political but rather idealistic: ‘If contemporary history springs straight from life, so too does that history which is called non-contemporary, for it is evident that only an interest in the life of the present can move one to investigate past life. Therefore this past fact does not answer to a past interest, but to a present interest, in so far as it is unified with an interest of the present life’.⁵⁹ The immediacy of present life is precisely what compelled Thucydides to write the history of the Peloponnesian War, and similarly, the events of World War I prompted Schwartz to get out his ideas on the composition of Thucydides’ *History*. Benedetto Croce’s assertion that ‘every true history is contemporary history’, which might initially seem paradoxical, becomes, in this context, compelling.⁶⁰

As we have previously noted, in his letter to Powell Schwartz also discusses the significance of ‘individualities’, by which he means those who write historiography: the historians. He defines their life as part of their work, a life that was a flowing one, ‘not a stagnant pool of water’ (‘ihr Leben war ihr Werk und dies Leben war ein echtes, fliessendes, nicht ein Tümpel stehenden Wassers’). It is interesting to compare these words with the closing sentence of the essay *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichte bei den Hellenen*:

Denn — das Gesetz gilt für alle Zeiten — echte Geschichtsschreibung ist nur möglich in einem Volke, das den Willen hat, sein Schicksal selbst in die Hand zu nehmen, und allen Stürmen und Widrigkeiten zum

⁵⁹ Croce (1921), 12. Croce’s book was initially published in German in 1915, followed by the first Italian edition in 1916; the English translation was made on the second Italian edition (1942). See the Italian text in Croce (1989), 14: ‘E se la storia contemporanea balza direttamente dalla vita, anche direttamente dalla vita sorge quella che si suol chiamare non contemporanea, perché è evidente che solo un interesse della vita presente ci può muovere a indagare un fatto passato; il quale, dunque, in quanto si unifica con un interesse della vita presente, non risponde a un interesse passato, ma presente’.

⁶⁰ Croce’s famous phrase — ‘ogni vera storia è storia contemporanea’ — appears immediately after the passage quoted above (see Croce [1921], 12). Croce developed the same ideas in subsequent years especially in the collection of essays *History as the Story of Liberty*: ‘The practical requirements which underlie every historical judgment give to all history the character of “contemporary history” because, however remote in time events there recounted may seem to be, the history in reality refers to present needs and present situations wherein those events vibrate’ (Croce [1941], 19). For an approach to the modern practitioners of Greek history that is based on Croce’s premises, see Murray (2024), with explicit citations of both Crocean passages at 5 and 303.

Trotz nicht aufhört, sich für seine Ehre, seine Größe und seine Freiheit verantwortlich zu fühlen.⁶¹

For — the law applies at all times — genuine historiography is only possible in a people that has the will to take its fate into its own hands and, despite all storms and adversities, does not cease to feel responsible for its honour, its greatness, and its freedom.

These words also shed light on Schwartz's disdain for Greek historians of the Roman imperial era: they composed their histories in a time when such works could not exert any political influence, rendering them useless, 'a product of rhetoric'.⁶²

6. Conclusions

Schwartz's scholarly views crystallized over a long and prolific career and his perspective on the evolution of ancient Greek historiography developed with the changing political climate of the early twentieth century. As previously noted, Schwartz was a politically active member of the academic community, committed to supporting the war effort and upholding the greatness and liberty of German culture following the defeat of 1918. The events of World War I prompted Schwartz to publish his thoughts on composition of Thucydides' *History*.

The correspondence between J. Enoch Powell and Eduard Schwartz in early 1939 offers a glimpse into their intellectual biographies and insights on the background of some of their published works. Moreover, Schwartz's letter displays his interests in English literature, his considerations on World War I and on the impending conflict in Europe, and his disdain for National Socialism. Schwartz also addressed significant issues regarding the genesis and objectives of his book on Thucydides and

⁶¹ Schwartz (1928), 87.

⁶² Schwartz (1928), 68: 'ein Produkt der Rhetorik', referred to the works of history of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Arrian. See also his *Wissenschaftlicher Lebenslauf*, where he recounts the work for Pauly-Wissowa and his encounter with Greek historians of the imperial age: '... so mußte ich Appian, der interessant war, Cassius Dio, der schon weniger anzog, und den unausstehlichen Dionys von Halikarnaß mit verarbeiten und, was ja nicht schadete, mit der Problematik der römischen Geschichte vertraut werden' ('So I had to work through Appian, who was interesting, Cassius Dio, who was less attractive, and the obnoxious Dionysus of Halicarnassus and, what did not hurt, become familiar with the problems of Roman history': Schwartz [1956], 4). On Schwartz and Greek historiography of the Roman imperial era: Gabba (1979), with a synthesis in Gabba (1991), 6–9; Bleckmann (2015), 80–1.

the state of analytical philology in Germany, contributing to the broader history of classical philology. Finally, Schwartz's views on Greek historiography highlight his belief in the unique roles of Herodotus and Thucydides as the only true representatives of historiography, with a preference for the latter as the author of *Zeitgeschichte* ('contemporary history'). For Schwartz, political historiography focused on contemporary history stands as the sole legitimate form of historiography, underscoring his perception of historical writing as inherently linked to the political discourse of its time.

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SULLA SUPERIORITÀ DEI GRECI O DEGLI EBREI: UNA POLEMICA DI FINE SETTECENTO*

— ALESSANDRA COPPOLA —

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the main features of the ancient dispute concerning the cultural role of the Greeks in comparison with the Jews, with particular attention to the Greek responses on the eve of the revolution of 1821. The debate reveals a strong awareness of the Greeks' past and a sense of continuity with the present, while also highlighting the circulation of contemporary knowledge, texts, and ideas.

KEYWORDS

Giuseppe Compagnoni, Melchiorre Cesarotti, Giovanni Donà, Greeks, Jews, cultural history, Greek independence

1. Una cena, una provocazione

Qualche decennio prima che Jacob Fallmerayer sostenesse che i Greci moderni non erano più gli Elleni del tempo antico ma un popolo balcanizzato, sollevando le note discussioni sulla continuità o discontinuità della storia ellenica, il giurista e letterato romagnolo Giuseppe Compagnoni pubblicò un saggio che riduceva, e persino negava, i meriti della cultura e della civiltà greca, non solo nel presente ma anche nel passato¹. L'occasione fu una sua battuta espressa a tavola durante una

* Un grazie particolare, per le proficue discussioni e i preziosi consigli, ai colleghi Olga Katziardi-Hering, Amalia Colonia e Gerasimos Pagrati.

¹ G. COMPAGNONI, *Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci*, in *Lettere piacevoli se piaceranno, dell'abate Compagnoni e di Francesco Albergati Capacelli*, Tomo primo e forse ultimo, Modena, Società tipografica, 1791, pp. 189–223. Il nostro Saggio corrisponde alla lettera XIV, che fu però qui pubblicata con errori e interventi del «Censor Ducale», tanto che l'anno seguente l'opera fu ripubblicata integra a Venezia, presso Giacomo Storti: vd. V. COLONI, *La polemica intorno al «Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci» di Giuseppe*, in *Studi sull'ebraismo italiano*, Roma 1974, pp. 65–91, part. 74–75. Su Compagnoni vd. G. GULLINO, in «Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani», 27, Roma 1982, pp. 654–661. Anche J. Fallmerayer ridurrà l'ellenicità dei Greci per indebolire le tesi dei filelleni, temendo quella Russia contro cui scrisse poi anche in seguito: vd. G. VELOUDIS, *Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer und die Entstehung des neugriechischen Historismus*, «Südostforschungen» 29, 1970, 43–90; E. SCOPETEA, Φαλμεράνερ.

cena, che suscitò tale scalpore da stimolarlo a mettere per iscritto le sue idee sui Greci, la loro storia e il loro ruolo in Europa. La tesi è semplice: posti a confronto con un'altra nazione sfortunata, quella ebraica, era evidente che i Greci valevano molto meno: «Se qualche superiorità uno di essi ha rispetto all'altro, questa certamente non è a vantaggio dei Greci»². La scelta del confronto era sicuramente originale e piuttosto curiosa, tanto da far pensare a motivazioni che superavano l'ambito meramente culturale. Paragoni con il destino della nazione ebraica erano stati espressi anche in ambito greco, a partire da una collezione di profezie attribuite a un monaco del XIII sec., Agatangelo, che fu pubblicata nel 1751; anche in seguito, intorno al 1821, si ripropose il confronto, senza alcuna traccia di polemiche, da parte di personaggi politici come Stourdza (nel 1823) e Trikoupis (nel 1829), ma semplicemente per porre i Greci al livello di un popolo destinato da Dio alla liberazione³.

Un breve cenno di Compagnoni sulle simpatie greche verso la Russia va valorizzato per la piena comprensione di questo testo, per meglio capire quale fosse il reale motivo di così decisa ostilità: non tanto la polemica anticlassicistica, come pur si è ritenuto,⁴ quanto piuttosto il problema della pressione politica da parte russa, che era evidentemente motivo di preoccupazione. Le recenti guerre russo-turche avevano sicuramente creato preoccupazioni per le possibili conseguenze in relazione alla Grecia; dopo cenni a Inghilterra e Francia, proprio un riferimento ai «maneggi del Re di Prussia, del Turco, della Svezia, dei Moscoviti» da parte dei commensali di Compagnoni, ben informati sulle

Τεχνάσματα του αντιπάλου δέους, Athina 1977; A. BLIOUMI - J. BUTCHER (eds.), *Ein Südtiroler zwischen dem Peloponnes und Trapezunt*, Sesto San Giovanni 2004.

² COMPAGNONI, *Saggio*, p. 191.

³ Vd. ZANOU, *Dopo la Serenissima. Balbettare la nazione nell'Adriatico 1800–1850*, trad. it., Roma 2021 (= *Transnational Patriotism in the Mediterranean 1800–1850: Stammering The Nation*, New York 2018), pp. 112, 156–157.

⁴ Così D. LUCCI, *Ebraismo e grecità nell'Italia tardo-moderna. Studio sul Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci di Compagnoni*, «Studi Veneziani» 52, 2006, pp. 473–533, part. 491, 507. COLORNI, *La polemica*, ritiene che il saggio «serva più a esaltare gli Ebrei che a deprimere i Greci» (p. 73), ma il carattere antiellenico è decisamente quello prevalente, tanto che la difesa degli ebrei appare solo strumentale, essendo l'unica nazione oppressa con cui tornava utile un confronto. D. ARVANITAKIS, *Giuseppe Compagnoni. Σκηνές από τον βίο ενός «κατήγορου του γένους»*, in *Λόγος και χρόνος στη Νεοελληνική Γραμματεία (18ος–19ος αιώνας)*, Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου Προς Τιμήν Του Αλέξη Πολίτη, Rethymno 12–14 aprile 2013, Heraklion 2015, pp. 373–428, part. 391, e ZANOU, *Dopo la Serenissima*, p. 109, scorgono influenze riconducibili a Gibbon e Voltaire.

vicende contemporanee, diede l'avvio alla polemica⁵. Scrive poi Compagnoni: «Non si fosse mai parlato dei Moscoviti! A cagion di essi si è dovuto anche parlare de' Greci. È noto che la Czara è pei Greci quello, che per gli Ebrei è il Messia. I Greci credono fermamente che sia scritto nel Cielo dovere appunto per mano de' Russi ristabilirsi l'imperio Greco»⁶.

2. Una prima reazione: Antonio Rubbi

La sua provocazione, se condivisa da alcuni in Italia⁷, ebbe una risposta ragionata, in italiano, da parte di Antonio Rubbi, letterato di una certa rinomanza, che pubblicò a Torino, nel 1793, un saggio dal titolo *I Greci antichi e moderni*⁸. Compagnoni lo accusò poi di avere scritto il testo su commissione della Comunità greca di Venezia, e anche in seguito rimase tenacemente attaccato al suo punto di vista, talvolta con una certa vivacità di toni⁹. Rubbi era un timido polemista, mosso più dalla volontà di ristabilire un equilibrio che di scegliere una parte («io amo chi scrive in favor degli uni senza abbassare e deprimere gli altri»)¹⁰: per questo si limitava a descrivere la “teocrazia” e la legislazione degli Ebrei elencando poi con entusiasmo le grandi conquiste culturali dei Greci in tutti i campi del sapere. Dopo l'esame dell'antichità, Rubbi non esita a elogiare i Greci sottomessi alla turcocrazia e a evidenziare l'importanza dell'arrivo in Italia dei dotti ellenici durante l'Umanesimo e il Rinascimento: «noi accogliamo sempre di buon viso i figli d'una madre, che fu la nostra maestra».

⁵ COMPAGNONI, *Saggio*, p. 190.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ Si diceva «perfettamente d'accordo» Francesco Albergati Capacelli, *Lettere piacevoli se piaceranno*, p. 225; cfr. G. MELZI, *Dizionario di opere anonime e pseudonime di scrittori italiani: o come che sia aventi relazione all'Italia*, vol. 1, Milano, L. di Giacomo Pirola, 1848, p. 26, il quale usava l'avverbio “ottimamente” per definire modo in cui Compagnoni condusse la sua argomentazione (vd. oltre, n. 19). Compagnoni racconta di minacce da parte dell'inquisitore di Stato Giuseppe Gradenigo: vd. G. COMPAGNONI, *Memorie autobiografiche. Per la prima volta edite a cura di Angelo Ottolini*, Milano, Fratelli Treves Editori, 1927, pp. 126–131, e *Vita letteraria del Cavaliere Giuseppe Compagnoni scritta da lui medesimo*, Milano, Presso Antonio Fortunato Stella e Figli, 1834, p. 24.

⁸ A. RUBBI, *I Greci antichi e moderni*, Torino, Stamperia di Giacomo Fea, 1793. L'occasione della pubblicazione in questa sede fu la nomina a socio onorario dell'Accademia degli Unanimi, come scrive nella lettera dedicatoria al fondatore dell'Accademia, datata 18 novembre 1792.

⁹ Come dimostra quello che scrisse nella *Vita letteraria*, p. 24, e nelle *Memorie autobiografiche*, pp. 126–131.

¹⁰ RUBBI, *I Greci antichi e moderni*, p. 174.

Scriveva Compagnoni:

Viaggiatori, filosofi, voi che godete del brillante prospetto, che v'offre l'antica Storia, v'affrettate curiosi verso le terre, nelle quali un giorno Atene, Sparta, e Corinto figurarono con sì fausti auspizj. Fermatevi. Che pensate mai di trovare oggi colà? Un mucchio di deplorabili ruine, e un popolo oppresso dalla più lurida decrepitezza, un popolo degradato dalla classe de' popoli. Se mai approdate a quei lidi, voi accuserete senza fallo il Pilota, quasi egli v'abbia traditi. Potrete voi persuadervi d'essere fra i nipoti di Demostene, di Alcibiade, e di Epaminonda?¹¹

Era questa infatti, per così dire, un'età di svolta nel tema del viaggio in Grecia, condotto non solo per motivi di commercio o di relazioni politiche, ma per curiosità scientifiche o intellettuali¹². Alla tirata ostile di Compagnoni replicava pacato il Rubbi, immaginando la risposta dei viaggiatori e filosofi:

I codici, le pergamene e le manifatture e i vestimenti e il lusso medesimo e i ruderi greci ne occupano lo spirito in guisa, che siamo beati allor quando possiamo nei nostri scritti aver detto ai posteri: noi vedemmo le Greche reliquie, noi baciaammo i vestigi dei Greci monumenti, noi fummo in Tenedo coll'armata di Achille, noi toccammo Itaca patria di Ulisse¹³.

Rubbi era ben consapevole del sottofondo politico del libello di Compagnoni. Infatti, alla fine del saggio contestava l'idea che i Greci si aspettassero aiuto dalla Russia: «Pensate poi se i Greci credono fondamentale, che sia scritto nel cielo dovere appunto per mano dei Russi ristabilirsi l'impero Greco... I Greci liberamente vivono sotto qualunque dominio. Rispettano le leggi dei vari stati, si comunicano coll'istessa urbanità all'Inglese, al Russo, allo Svevo, al tedesco, all'Italiano...»¹⁴. L'argomento russo era appunto la molla che aveva spinto Compagnoni a confrontare Greci ed Ebrei, e quindi Rubbi lo elimina radicalmente dalla

¹¹ *Saggio*, p. 215.

¹² Cfr. F. CICOIRA, *Il silenzio dell'antico. La Grecia fra passato e presente nelle relazioni di viaggiatori italiani del tardo Settecento*, «Studi settecenteschi» 3-4, 1982-1983, pp. 267-285, part. 270-271. Cfr. A. DI BENEDETTO, *Rovine d'Atene. Letteratura filellenica in Italia tra Sette e Ottocento*, «Italica» 6, 3, 1999, pp. 335-354.

¹³ RUBBI, *I Greci antichi, e moderni*, p. 134. Cfr. A.G. NOTO, *La ricezione del Risorgimento greco in Italia (1770-1884): tra idealità filelleniche, stereotipi e Realpolitik*, Roma 2015, p. 91; CICOIRA, *Il silenzio dell'antico*, pp. 280-281.

¹⁴ RUBBI, *I Greci antichi e moderni*, pp. 172-173.

discussione. Nel 1773 era stato pubblicato a Livorno, in italiano, il resoconto di viaggio di Enrico Leonardo Pasch di Krienen, un olandese che, al servizio dei Russi, aveva esplorato l'Egeo, ricavandone, oltre alle antichità poi finite in parte a San Pietroburgo, una serie di osservazioni sullo stato della Grecia moderna, notando la decadenza presente rispetto al grande passato¹⁵. I toni sono piuttosto comprensivi nei confronti del decadimento dei Greci, comunque evidenziato nel testo¹⁶; accenti più delusi si troveranno nella relazione del viaggio compiuto nel 1788–89 (pubblicato nel 1802) da Giovanbattista Casti, il noto librettista, che accompagnò il bailo Foscarini diretto a Costantinopoli e il bailo uscente Zulian al ritorno dalla città. Compagnoni potrebbe aver sentito direttamente dalle sue parole indicazioni sullo stato della Grecia, nella negativa impressione che ne ebbe Casti, così come altre informazioni possono essergli giunte oralmente da altri viaggiatori nel Levante¹⁷. Forse in questo modo Compagnoni (che non visitò mai la Grecia) si creò quell'impressione di una terra costellata di «deplorabili ruine» e popolata da genti rozze.

¹⁵ Vd. *Breve descrizione dell'Arcipelago e particolarmente delle 18 isole sottomesse l'anno 1771 al dominio russo, dal conte Pasch di Krienen con un ragguaglio esatto di tutte le antichità da esso scoperte ed acquistate e specialmente del sepolcro d'Omero e d'altri celebri personaggi*, Livorno, Tommaso Masi e Comp., 1773: sul rapporto dei Russi con l'Egeo in questi anni, compresi gli interessi archeologici, vd. E. SMILYANSKAYA, *The Cultural and Scientific Side. From Ancient Greek Marbles to Mapping the Aegean* (si legge in www.archipelagos-historia.gr/research/orlofika/16). Come lui si esprimeva un altro italiano, Giovanni Maria Del Turco, che viaggiò con l'ammiraglio Orlov dal 1771 e visitò, oltre che San Pietroburgo e Costantinopoli, anche Smirne, Chio e le Cicladi, scrivendo una lettera resoconto inviata «a un amico in Toscana»: vd. CICOIRA, *Il silenzio dell'antico*.

¹⁶ Vd. per es. a p. 6: «Anche i popoli che oggidì abitano quelle isole, sono d'indole affatto diversa da quella de' Greci antichi. In quegli, si venerano dei maestri in ogni scienza, e in ogni arte; in questi si compiangere una generale ignoranza. Né ciò dee far maraviglia imperocché perduta fra questi l'idea della loro antica grandezza, abbattuto, ed avvilito l'animo in ciascuno individuo, e combattendo contro l'indigenza, e la miseria, doveano necessariamente vedersi cambiati ancora gli antichi costumi».

¹⁷ G. CASTI, *Relazione di un viaggio a Costantinopoli*, Milano, P. Agnelli, 1802, scrive, per esempio, che la nazione greca era diventata «vile, ignorante, falsa, ingannatrice, cattiva» (p. 20 dell'ed. di Milano, Batelli e Ranieri, 1822); e poi: «Che enorme differenza fra l'antica e la moderna Atene! Quella era il seminario e la miniera de' grandi uomini, e la sede delle scienze e delle arti: questa è un miserabile ammasso di casupole che contengono quindicimila Greci, poveri, oppressi, ignoranti, che d'altro non tiran la loro sussistenza che dal prodotto de' loro ulivi» (p. 42). I monumenti erano «o affatto distrutti, o vicini alla distruzione» (p. 20): CICOIRA, *Il silenzio dell'antico*, pp. 278–279.

3. La polemica continua: Giovanni Donà

È in questo contesto polemico che si inserisce un lavoro pubblicato sotto il nome di «Marchese Francesco Albergati Capacelli», con indicazione editoriale «Lipsia 1793»: *Lettera di un Marchese Francesco Albergati Capacelli in apologia alla lettera del sig. Ab. Compagnoni, quella che verte sulla conformità da lui ultimamente scoperta infra Ebrei e Greci*. Come da tempo chiarito dalla critica¹⁸, il nome è appunto lo pseudonimo di Giovanni Donà; anche il luogo di pubblicazione è falso (ma inseribile in una prassi non inusuale). Il libro sarà tradotto in neogreco nel 1802.

Il personaggio non è del tutto ignoto, e qualche dato sulla sua vita di medico a Corfù, isola dove era nato, emerge qua e là nella bibliografia¹⁹. Nell'archivio dell'Università di Padova, nel ms. 554 (*Quaderno terzarie, artisti e giuristi, e dottorati*), parte II, c. 22v, risulta iscritto per l'anno accademico 1784–1785 Giovanni Donà di Pasquale, proveniente da Corfù²⁰. Alcune notizie vaghe lo davano studente a Bologna, e questo può essere ora confermato grazie a due notizie d'archivio: «Donà Giovanni di Corfù, studia medicina sotto il sig. dottore Gaetano Uttini»; «sig. Donà Giovanni da Corfù abita in Miola [attuale via Farini] annesso al sig. avvocato Pignoni, 11 gennaio 1786»²¹.

Donà si inserì dunque nel dibattito più o meno contemporaneamente a Rubbi, che pubblicò la sua replica a Compagnoni nello stesso anno. Quel che rende questo testo particolarmente interessante è l'ampiezza della risposta, che prende molto seriamente la provocazione di Compagnoni, rivelandosi particolarmente significativa nella temperie politica che portò poi al 1821 e alla rivoluzione greca, restituendoci la conoscenza di un patrimonio culturale solido che viene ampiamente utilizzato per la definizione dell'identità nazionale greca. Il testo è infatti un'ampia e

¹⁸ Vd. oltre, n. 65.

¹⁹ Nacque a Corfù nel 1761 e vi morì nel 1839: fu sepolto nella chiesa di San Charalampos nel quartiere Mandoukio, a Corcira, dove era nato: vd. S. ASDRACHÀS, *Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης* (1761–1839). *Δύο άγνωστες νεκρολογίες του*, «Ο Έρανιστής» 1, 1963, pp. 117–127, part. 123.

²⁰ Vd. G. PLOUMIDIS, *Αί πράξεις έγγραφής των Ἑλλήνων σπουδαστῶν τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου τῆς Παδούης*, vol. II, 1591–1809, Athina 1971, p. 198, nr. 1667, anni 1784/89: «Donà Giovanni di Pascale di Corfù n. 22».

²¹ Vd. ASBo, Studio, 398: Registro contenente la Matricola degli scolari artisti 1769–1786, lettera D, 30 aprile 1785; ASBo, Assunteria di Studio, 83: Registro de' signori scolari artisti 1781 e segg., lettera D: ringrazio la dott.ssa Candida Carrino, direttrice *ad interim* dell'Archivio di Stato di Bologna, per il prezioso aiuto fornitomi nel rintracciare queste notizie su Donà. P. Lazaràs, autore di uno dei due necrologi di Donà pubblicati da ASDRACHÀS, *Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης*, p. 125, scriveva che studiò a Bologna e a Padova, mentre G. ZAVIRAS, *Νέα Εστία*, Athina 1872, p. 368, parlava di Bologna e Firenze.

articolata analisi della letteratura greca e dei meriti culturali dei Greci nella storia antica e moderna.

Va notato l'uso dello pseudonimo, Francesco Albergati Capacelli. Tale nome coincide con quello del personaggio a cui è rivolta la lunga invettiva, come lo stesso Donà spiega nell'Introduzione, rivelando un certo spirito ironico e polemico insieme. Il marchese Albergati Capacelli era proprio il corrispondente di Compagnoni a cui fu inviato il *Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci*²². Attraverso l'uso di tale pseudonimo Donà voleva, in un certo senso, inserirsi nell'epistolario per rispondere adeguatamente a Compagnoni, ponendosi sul suo stesso piano²³.

In Italia il primo a citare l'*Apologia* attribuendola a Donà pare essere, nel 1837, Emilio De Tipaldo, che era di Corfù come Donà e ugualmente scolaro a Padova. Dice di riportare informazioni avute da un altro famoso dotto corcirese, Andrea Mustoxidi. Questa la sua sintesi: «Un Corcirese sotto mentito nome s'è presa la briga di rispondere al Compagnoni. È questi il dottor Giovanni Donà Pasquali» A proposito del testo, così lo definisce: «È opera dotta e scritta non senza vivacità. Contiene prima il compendio storico degli Ebrei e dei Greci. A questi due quadri comparativi segue l'esame di quanto i Greci contribuirono collo spirito dell'invenzione alla diffusione delle cognizioni. Un paragone sul carattere dei due popoli e sulla loro letteratura. Parla degli illustri nostri moderni, della loro lingua confrontata coll'italiana»²⁴.

De Tipaldo aggiungeva poi che il testo conteneva anche saggi di traduzione, dal Tasso e dal Petrarca, e commenti all'*Omero* di Cesarotti.

²² Vd. n. 4.

²³ Con puntiglio afferma di essere appunto «un tale Albergati, che non mi manca un'acca dai nomi soprannomi, e titoli d'ogni maniera, onde si fregia il corrispondente di Tachirolli, il quale sarà come dite vostro amico, mentre io non vi conosco» (p. 7). Tachirolli sta per Zacchioli, nome che rimanda all'epistolario del vero Albergati Capacelli: *Raccolta delle Lettere capricciose di Francesco Albergati Capacelli e di Francesco Zacchioli dai medesimi capricciosamente stampate* (Venezia, Giambattista Pasquali, 1786). Sembra non comprendere il motivo della scelta del nome LUCCI, *Ebraismo e grecità*, p. 519.

²⁴ E. DE TIPALDO, *Biografie degli italiani illustri nelle scienze lettere e arti nel secolo XVIII e de' contemporanei compilata da letterati italiani di ogni provincia*, vol. 2., Venezia, Tipografia di Alvisopoli, 1835, p. 503. Cfr. G. MELZI, *Dizionario di opere anonime e pseudonime*, a p. 26 scriveva «Albergati Capacelli (marc.e Francesco) (Giovanni Donà Pasquali, corcirese). Lettera in apologia alla lettera del sig. ab. Compagnoni, quella che verte sulla conformità da lui ottimamente scoperta fra gli Ebrei e i Greci, Lipsia 1793, in 8°. Si consulti Tipaldo, Biogr. degli illustri italiani, tom. II, sup. p. 503». Tipaldo stesso fu scolaro a Padova: vd. G. PLOUMIDIS, *Gli scolari greci nello Studio di Padova*, «Quaderni per la Storia dell'Università di Padova» 4, 1971, pp. 127-141, part. 140. Su Mustoxidi cfr. K. ZANOÙ, *Dopo la Serenissima*, pp. 227-255.

Questa, dunque, la sua sintesi della *Lettera* di Donà, che dimostra l'ampiezza della materia trattata e delle conoscenze dell'autore.

Donà procedeva tenendo presenti le accuse di Compagnoni e prendendo a cuore tutte quelle che riteneva essere false affermazioni, con reazione infastidita e molto orgogliosa²⁵. Per esempio, se Compagnoni sosteneva che i Greci moderni erano ben lontani da Epaminonda, Demostene e Alcibiade, Donà rispondeva impiegando più volte le parole di Choiseul-Gouffier, l'ambasciatore francese presso la Sublime Porta, noto filelleno e autore di un resoconto di viaggi che era stato pubblicato di recente²⁶: «Diciamolo con coraggio: esistono ancora nella Grecia degli uomini capaci di richiamar la memoria dei loro antenati». Donà aggiungeva anche la sua personale testimonianza in relazione ad atti di bellicosità ed eroismo greco aventi come protagonisti soprattutto greci di Acarnania e d'Epiro, «compagni delle gesta d'Alessandro»²⁷.

Il lavoro procede in ordine cronologico. Inizialmente presenta una storia degli ebrei che vuol fare da contraltare a quella partigiana di Compagnoni. La citazione di una frase famosa di Voltaire sulla negatività degli ebrei, collocata all'inizio e alla fine del testo, sembrerebbe spingere in direzione di un tono antisemita da parte di Donà²⁸; ma in realtà, più che di vero antisemitismo si tratta solo di una reazione alla provocazione di Compagnoni: per recuperare i meriti dei Greci era utile ridurre i meriti del popolo contrapposto ed evidenziare le esagerazioni del suo apologeta²⁹.

²⁵ Proprio per la sua accorata difesa dei Greci, anche il noto dotto greco K. Asopios ne elogiò poi il patriottismo (vd. F.M. PONTANI, *In margine alla fortuna neogreca del Petrarca e del Tasso*, «Lettere italiane» 20, 3, 1968, pp. 351–365, part. 353 n. 11); e infatti Donà è anche uno dei possibili candidati per l'attribuzione della paternità della *Hellenikè Nomarchia*, il noto testo anonimo del 1806 che incitava i Greci alla ribellione (vd. G. VALETA, *Ανωνύμου του έλληνοσ Ελληνική Νομαρχία*, a cura di N.A. BEES, M. SIGOUROS, Athina 1982⁴, pp. νθ–νη).

²⁶ DONÀ, *Lettera*, p. 87. La frase di Marie-Gabriel Choiseul-Gouffier si legge nel *Voyage pittoresque de la Grèce*, vol. 1, Paris, J.J. Blaise, 1782, p. VIII.

²⁷ DONÀ, *Lettera*, pp. 93–96.

²⁸ «Vous ne trouverez dans les Juifs qu'un peuple ignorant et barbare, qui joint depuis long-tems la plus sordide avarice à la plus détestable superstition et à la plus invincible haine pour tous les peuples qui les tolerant (sic) ou qui les enrichissent. Il ne faut pourtant pas les brouler» (sic): cfr. VOLTAIRE, *Des Juifs*, in *Suites des mélanges de littérature, d'histoire et de philosophie*, Genève, Cramer, 1756, p. 18.

²⁹ I due necrologi redatti alla morte di Donà evitano di parlare di questa sua *Lettera*, forse appunto per non irritare la comunità ebraica di Corfù, come pensa ASDRACHÀS, Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης; quando Donà morì, i tempi erano ormai più favorevoli alla nazione greca e la stessa polemica era terminata nel 1818 con un altro libello, quello di Sottiri (vd. oltre), senza creare un ulteriore dibattito intellettuale di più ampio respiro.

La storia ebraica narrata brevemente da Donà è significativamente seguita da una sintesi di quella dei Greci, a tutto vantaggio di questi ultimi. Donà si dimostra piuttosto colto, informato e capace di citazioni dotte riguardanti la letteratura e la storiografia antiche. Usa persino Giuseppe Flavio, l'apologeta ebreo di I secolo d.C., per sostenere con le sue parole che «gli Ebrei non sapevano nulla e non insegnavano niente a nessuno», contestando l'assunto di Compagnoni secondo cui i Greci avevano appreso molto da loro. Forse aveva notato che anche in Compagnoni si può rilevare una traccia dell'uso del medesimo autore antico, noto difensore della sua nazione, almeno là dove scrive che «gli Ebrei sono il popolo, che prima di ogni altro ha posseduto la Storia, e che l'ha conservata intatta da ogni esagerazione, e favola», frase che ricorda appunto un ampio passo dell'*Apologia degli Ebrei* che rimprovera ai Greci troppe libertà nei racconti storici, contrapponendo loro la maggior cura rivolta dagli Ebrei alle registrazioni storiche³⁰.

Il testo di Donà ci offre molte indicazioni sulla sua cultura, non solo in campo antico ma anche a proposito delle pubblicazioni moderne. Presenta infatti una lunga sezione dedicata ai grandi meriti dei Greci e soprattutto alle anticipazioni in campo scientifico da parte della cultura greca antica rispetto a molte presunte scoperte moderne: «Ognun s'accorge che tali idee, le più illustri dei fisici del giorno d'oggi, sono affatto idee greche»³¹. La parte relativa alla scienza vera e propria, a dire il vero, attinge largamente all'opera del contemporaneo Louis Dutens (1730–1812)³², editore di Leibniz e autore di *Origines des découvertes attribuées aux modernes*, del 1776; ma questo mostra almeno la conoscenza, da parte di Donà, di un noto lavoro contemporaneo e la sua capacità di studio e aggiornamento. Altre citazioni sono però svincolate da questo testo: ricorda D'Alembert, Condillac, Diderot; per dire che gli ebrei usavano le scoperte altrui si serve del matematico Giovanni Cassini, dello scienziato Jean Jacques Dortous de Marain, e di Buffon³³.

Evidenziano i toni antisemiti del testo di Donà LUCCI, *Ebraismo e grecità*, e COLORNI, *La polemica*.

³⁰ COMPAGNONI, *Saggio*, p. 18; cfr. Giuseppe Flavio, *Apologia degli Ebrei (Contro Apione)*, 1, 2–7.

³¹ DONÀ, *Lettera*, p. 195. La questione risente anche della *Querelle des anciens et des modernes* (anzitutto francese, anche un po' inglese), che a quest'epoca non si era ancora spenta.

³² *Origines des découvertes attribuées aux modernes*, 2 voll., Paris, Chez la Veuve Duchesne, 1776: vd. in particolare vol. 1, pp. IX–X. PONTANI, *In margine alla fortuna neogreca*, p. 353, attribuisce ad Asopios l'identificazione della fonte a cui Donà si ispirò.

³³ DONÀ, *Lettera*, rispettivamente pp. 221, 227, 105, 218.

Una significativa e ampia sezione concerne infine la lingua e la letteratura greca. Compagnoni sosteneva che se si fosse conosciuta la lingua ebraica la cultura occidentale avrebbe preso un altro corso, e allora Donà gli ricorda i libri stampati in Italia in ebraico a partire dal XV secolo per ribattere che tale lingua era ben conosciuta ma non ebbe nessuna influenza, a differenza di quella greca; a tale proposito si ispira anche a un altro dotto moderno, il veneziano Francesco Algarotti (1712–1764), là dove elogiava i Greci nel suo *Saggio sopra la quistione se le qualità dei popoli originate sieno dal clima overamente dalla virtù della legislazione*³⁴.

Donà impegna tutte le sue forze e conoscenze per difendere e celebrare la lingua greca antica e moderna, sostenendo con vigore che il neogreco è più bello dell'italiano. Compagnoni, infatti, scriveva che «i Greci in questi ultimi tre secoli hanno terminato di corrompere la più bella lingua, che il genio avesse creato; essi sono giunti a non intenderla più»³⁵. L'abate italiano aggiungeva anche che i Romani strapparono ai Greci la gloria delle lettere, e che i Greci furono per loro solo «i loro manuali e i loro buffoni»³⁶. Donà si serve di Condillac per ribadire invece che i Romani presero proprio tutto dai Greci e a questo proposito cita anche Eugenio Bulgari, il famoso e dotto sacerdote originario di Corfù, anch'egli studente a Padova e all'epoca residente a San Pietroburgo, per dichiarare che, anzi, la letteratura romana non era che debole copia di quella greca, come risultava appunto dalle osservazioni di Bulgari in merito alla sua traduzione in lingua greca delle *Opere* di Virgilio³⁷.

Non mancano ovviamente le esagerazioni. Là dove Compagnoni scrive «che senza i Greci il nostro rinascimento sarebbe stato migliore, e che furono anzi un ostacolo a quel corso che le lettere aveano preso dopo Petrarca» dimostrando di conoscere l'Abate Bettinelli, il gesuita contemporaneo che si distinse per un atteggiamento critico verso Dante e teso invece a recuperare appunto Petrarca: per rispondere degnamente Donà arriva a esaltare un presunto debito di Petrarca verso Platone, ripristinando la superiorità ellenica³⁸.

Donà fornisce poi alcune prove di traduzione dal greco antico e ampi confronti linguistici, cimentandosi in esercizi di commento e confronto che lo portano a volte forse un po' troppo lontano. Una parte notevole del

³⁴ DONÀ, *Lettera*, p. 266, dove cita «p. 246, t. 3 delle di lui opere»: si riferisce all'edizione stampata a Livorno, presso Marco Coltellini, nel 1764.

³⁵ COMPAGNONI, *Saggio*, p. 211.

³⁶ Ivi, p. 222.

³⁷ DONÀ, *Lettera*, p. 227. Cfr. PLOUMIDIS, *Gli scolari greci*, p. 138.

³⁸ DONÀ, *Lettera*, p. 252.

testo è data dall'ampia disamina della contemporanea "traduzion rumorosa" dell'*Iliade* realizzata dal noto letterato Melchiorre Cesarotti, docente di greco ed ebraico a Padova³⁹; si trattava di un lavoro imponente, svolto tanto in prosa quanto in poesia, dove Cesarotti applicava una meditata teoria della traduzione, ampiamente illustrata nei suoi stessi commenti, che miravano a far capire quanto intendesse volutamente allontanarsi dalla lettera del testo per migliorare l'espressività generale. Donà, che indica il lavoro di Cesarotti con perifrasi quali «l'*Iliade* di Padova» o «la traduzione fatta a Padova», non apprezza decisamente tali intenti e discetta di lessico e *pathos* poetico criticando ampiamente molti passi significativi⁴⁰. Tale recensione non è entrata nella bibliografia su Cesarotti, pur essendo interessante, anche se non sempre condivisibile: le competenze di Donà che rendono tutto il suo testo un lavoro meritevole di essere letto anche al di là della polemica generale contro Compagnoni.

Molto si potrebbe dire su questi interventi critici su Cesarotti, ma è sufficiente evidenziare il contatto costruttivo e aggiornato, sebbene distaccato, con la cultura italiana⁴¹ e con quella di Padova in particolare, città dove Donà poté avere varie frequentazioni anche con i Greci. Parole di ammirazione sono rivolte al sacerdote greco Johannes Litinos, «ch'io conosco assaissimo, autore di un'opera di etica ch'ei compose in greco e fu stampata recentemente a Venezia»⁴². L'edizione in neogreco del lavoro di Donà correggerà l'informazione del luogo di stampa precisando che in realtà quel libro era stato pubblicato a Padova, e aggiungendo altri testi alla bibliografia di Litinos⁴³. Questo ricordo serve a contestare la

³⁹ Ivi, p. 311.

⁴⁰ DONÀ, *Lettera*, pp. 311 ss. Vd. *L'Iliade di Omero volgarizzata letteralmente in prosa e recata poeticamente in verso sciolto italiano dall'Ab. Melchior Cesarotti*, 10 voll., Padova, Penada, 1786–1794. Sugli intenti di Cesarotti traduttore di Omero vd. T. MATARRESE, *Su Cesarotti traduttore dell'Iliade*, in A. DANIELE (a cura di), *Melchiorre Cesarotti*, Atti del Convegno, Padova 4–5 novembre 2008, Padova 2011, pp. 107–116. Molto critico verso la versione poetica si dimostrava C. OSTI, *Melchior Cesarotti e la sua versione poetica dell'Iliade*, Trieste 1913, in termini non dissimili da quelli dal Donà. Ma Donà è ignoto a entrambi.

⁴¹ PONTANI, *In margine alla fortuna neogreca*, si è brevemente occupato della sua resa in neogreco di Petrarca e Tasso, i poeti italiani più noti e amati nella Grecia ottomana. Donà sosteneva che in neogreco i due poeti rendevano molto di più.

⁴² DONÀ, *Lettera*, p. 249.

⁴³ In effetti il libro fu edito nella città universitaria a cura del Collegio per studenti greci fondato da Giovanni Cottunio: vd. ora A. COPPOLA, F. SCALORA (a cura di), *Cottunio e l'aristotelismo neoellenico a Padova nel XVII secolo*, Convegno internazionale di studio, Padova 13 maggio 2025, in corso di stampa. La correzione è a p. 111, come notava già ASDRACHÀS, Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης. Il riferimento è a Ἀσφαλὴς ὁδηγία τῆς κατὰ Χριστόν ἠθικῆς ζωῆς. Litinos fu direttore del collegio fondato da Cottunio: vd. T. BOVO, *Giovanni Cottunio e gli intellettuali greci a Padova nel XVII*

dichiarazione del Compagnoni sull'ignoranza dei preti greci: a questo fine Donà presenta anche Arsenio Caludi, di Zacinto, anch'egli scolaro a Padova, registrato come *pupillus* per il 1662 e poi *magister* del collegio Cottunio, nonché docente di greco ed ebraico⁴⁴. Donà ricorda che Caludi era citato nel famoso lavoro di Jacob Spon, la relazione del viaggio in Grecia da lui fatto con George Wheler, perché i due viaggiatori ebbero modo di incontrare Caludi, ormai vecchio, proprio a Corfù, testimoniandone per iscritto la grande cultura⁴⁵. Oltre a difendere il clero, Donà dimostra così di conoscere un testo molto importante per la riscoperta moderna della Grecia. Altrove cita anche il dotto grecista Montfaucon⁴⁶.

Altri ancora sono i personaggi illustri delle Isole Ionie ricordati, a partire da Spiridione Teotochi (che sarà primo presidente della Repubblica delle isole Ionie, dal 1800 al 1807); i due Zulati di Cefalonia (padre e figlio), anch'essi medici laureati nell'Ateneo di Padova⁴⁷. Un altro religioso chiamato in causa da Donà è Pietro (Policarpo) Bulgari: Donà lo cita per la lettura e interpretazione di un testo epigrafico rinvenuto a Corfù, di difficile lettura; ricorda anche che la sua ricostruzione fu confortata dall'approvazione dell'autorevole Frederick North, 5° conte di Guilford, il noto filelleno, il che ci apre uno squarcio sui suoi contatti. Dopo il riepilogo delle peculiarità grafiche dell'iscrizione, Donà presenta la resa in italiano offerta da Bulgari. Dice anche che il testo epigrafico fu mandato a dotti italiani e stranieri «che questa lapide mise in soggezione», mostrando così una rete di contatti internazionali, sebbene non precisati. L'iscrizione è nota: essa fu pubblicata la prima volta da August Boeckh nel *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, nel 1843; venne registrata

secolo: dalla matrice accademica alla prospettiva panellenica, Tesi di Dottorato di Ricerca XXVI Ciclo, Università Ca' Foscari - Venezia, 2015, p. 127. Nella stessa edizione in neogreco, alle pp. 49–50, è citato un altro lavoro di Litinos, quello su Locke, senza il nome dell'autore ma con luogo di edizione corretto, Venezia, con i tipi dello stampatore Νικόλαος Γλυκός. Su Litinos vd. D.S. MICHALAGA, *Ζακύνθιοι ελάσσονες εκπρόσωποι του Διαφωτισμού: Ιωάννης Κοντόνης, Ιωάννης Λίτινος*, in G. MATSOPOULOS (ed.), *Νεοελληνικός διαφωτισμός: όψεις, τομείς, διερεύνσεις διεθνής ημερίδα*, Athina 22 maggio 2017, Athina 2020, pp. 181–260.

⁴⁴ PLOUMIDIS, *Αί πράξεις έγγραφής*, II, pp. 270–271, 273–275 (fra il 1665 e il 1669).

⁴⁵ J. SPON, *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce faits aux années 1675 et 1676...*, voll. I, Lyon, Antoine Cellier, 1678, pp. 96–97.

⁴⁶ DONÀ, *Lettera*, pp. 349 ss.

⁴⁷ Ivi, p. 177. Per gli Zulati vd. PLOUMIDIS, *Gli scolari greci*, p. 139. Per altri medici laureati a Padova vd. P. TZIVARA, *Studenti greci presso il Collego Flangini e Padova, professionisti in patria. tracce di un lungo percorso*, in *Collegio Flangini 350 anni*, Atene-Venezia 2016, pp. 359–426, part. 379–385.

nei successivi repertori epigrafici ed è stata poi oggetto di studi specifici⁴⁸. La testimonianza di Donà, però, non è stata considerata se non indirettamente, attraverso la citazione che ne fa Andrea Mustoxidi, che tuttavia rileva giustamente nella trascrizione di Bulgari i numerosi limiti, non senza un pizzico di ostilità. Scrive Mustoxidi:

Giovanni Donato Pascali medico corcirese, celandosi non so per quale sua bizzarria sotto il nome d'un marchese Francesco Albergati Capacelli, diede in luce (Lipsia 1793, in 8^{vo}) un libro col titolo: Lettera in Apologia etc.

Precisando poi che l'epigrafe in questione era stata scoperta nel 1791 e che Donà trascrisse, appunto, la traduzione di Bulgari, passa a citarla e a emendarla notevolmente⁴⁹. Solo nell'edizione in neogreco del lavoro di Donà viene presentato anche il testo in greco antico, secondo la lettura di Bulgari, la cui traduzione italiana viene qui anch'essa tradotta in neogreco. Mustoxidi riconosceva comunque a Donà un'ampia dottrina, anche se non sempre — dice — capace di arrivare a conclusioni costruttive. Ci testimonia infine che l'interesse del medico corcirese per le tematiche di storia greca antica, anche locale, spiccava in un altro suo scritto, *Dell'antica città dei Feaci. Dissertazioni III inedite*⁵⁰.

Nello stesso anno in cui apparve il testo in italiano di Donà, il 1793, secondo una nota erudita anche un tale Stefano Nikolaïdis, di Joannina, avrebbe scritto una replica a Compagnoni; il testimone precisa anche che Nikolaïdis morì proprio in quell'anno⁵¹. Di tale personaggio non si sa nulla, e sulla base della coincidenza della data di pubblicazione si è pensato a una confusione fra Nikolaïdis e Donà⁵². In effetti va notato che Donà esercitò per un periodo la sua professione di medico a Joannina, il

⁴⁸ Ivi, pp. 349 ss. Cfr. *CIG* II 1907; *IG* IX 1, 880; *IG* IX² 1036. Sul testo vd. da ultimo D. MARCOTTE, *Géomorphe, histoire d'un mot*, in G. ARGOUD (ed.), *Science et vie intellectuelle à Alexandrie (I^{er}–III^e siècles après J.-C.)*, Saint-Étienne 1994, pp. 150–161.

⁴⁹ *CIG* II 1907 ricorda le *Illustrazioni Corciresi*, Milano 1811–1814; *IG* IX² 1036 cita A. MUSTOXIDI, *Delle cose corciresi*, Corfù, Tipografia del Governo, vol. I, 1848, pp. 294–297.

⁵⁰ MUSTOXIDI, ivi. Sappiamo poi che Donà scrisse anche un *Discorso della commissione agraria diretto a quei abitanti che si interessan per la prosperità della campagna di Corfù*, pubblicato nell'isola nel 1811: ASDRACHÀS, *Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης*, p. 122, e E. LEGRAND, *Bibliographie ionienne*, I, Parigi, Ernest Leroux, 1910, p. 838.

⁵¹ ZAVIRÀS, *Nea Estia*, p. 536.

⁵² ASDRACHÀS, *Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης*, p. 118.

che può aver facilitato la sovrapposizione⁵³. La versione neogreca della sua *Apologia* fu stampata per la precisione a Venezia, nel 1802, presso la stamperia di Panos Theodosios, appartenente a una dinastia di stampatori originari proprio di Joannina⁵⁴. Nikolaïdis potrebbe essere stato il nome del traduttore in neogreco che forse fu anche curatore del testo, colui che per esempio rettificò il luogo di pubblicazione del lavoro di Litinos e fornì altri chiarimenti. Spesso, infatti, si può notare in questa versione neogreca lo sforzo di far intendere al lettore greco certe peculiarità, come a proposito del nome stesso dei Greci: «*Hellenes* sono quelli della nostra stirpe — si spiega nell'Introduzione — mentre *Romaioi* sono quelli che chiamiamo *Romanes*»⁵⁵. Un ruolo del curatore, come vedremo, apparirà con rilievo anche a proposito di un altro scrittore che si inserì nella polemica con Compagnoni.

4. Un ultimo protagonista: Luigi Sottiri

Le risposte critiche di Donà e Rubbi vennero infatti seguite da quelle di un terzo polemista, Luigi Sottiri, un greco di Leucade laureato in Medicina a Napoli, ma a lungo al servizio dell'esercito russo e impegnato a combattere i Turchi in Epiro. Questi trascorse qualche anno a Livorno e si stabilì infine a Trieste, dove fu console della Repubblica Settin-sulare⁵⁶. Anch'egli ripercorre la storia culturale greca ricordando i meriti

⁵³ Ivi, pp. 126–127, sulla base del necrologio di Lazaràs.

⁵⁴ Vd. LEGRAND, *Bibliographie ionienne*, nr. 520 e 601. ASDRACHÀS, p. 1, afferma di notare solo qualche errore. Pontani, *In margine alla fortuna*, n. 9. Sullo stampatore, originario di Ioannina, e il suo ruolo nella diffusione di testi in greco e in cirillico, vd. G. PLOUMIDIS, *Tò Βενετικὸν τυπογραφεῖον τοῦ Δημητρίου καὶ τοῦ Πάνου Θεοδοσίου*, 1755–1824, Athina 1969; cfr. M. FIN, *Kiev — Buda — Venezia: i centri di sviluppo della cultura serba nel Settecento. Il ruolo mediatore di Dionisje Novakovic*, Tesi di Dottorato di Ricerca XXV Ciclo, Università di Padova, 2013, pp. 133–153.

⁵⁵ Ἐπιστολή ἀπολογητική ἐνὸς Μαρκίωνος Φραγκίσκου Ἀλβεργάτου Καπακέλλου κατὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τοῦ Κυρ. Ἀββά Κομπαγνώνου ἀναστρεφομένης περὶ τὴν ὁμοιότητα νεωστὶ παρ'ἐκείνου ἀνακαλυφθεῖσαν ἀναμέσον Ἑβραίων καὶ Ἑλλήνων. Μεταπεφρασμένη ἐκ τῆς Ἰταλικῆς γλώσσης εἰς τὸ ἀπλο-ελληνικόν. Altre volte, nel testo, spiegano per es. la traduzione di «nave da guerra, o di linea» con *karavi empoleon* (p. 43); di «evoluzione» con *anèlixis* (p. 31); di *disénia* (scritto in greco) con *apeikonismata*. Precisa, inoltre, che Compagnoni usava il titolo di Abate senza averne diritto, non avendo gradi ecclesiastici né la veste (vd. Introduzione, p. ε). Sul problema dei nomi dei Greci vd. ora gli atti del Convegno O. KATSIARDÌ-HERING, A. PAPADIA-LALA, K. NIKOLAOU, B. KARAMANOLAKIS (eds.), ἑλλην, Ρωμηός, Γραικός. Συλλογικοί προσδιορισμοί και ταυτότητες, σειρά Ιστορήματα, αρ. 7, Τμήμα Ιστορίας και Αρχαιολογίας, Ε.Κ.Π.Α., Athina, 2018.

⁵⁶ Notizie su Sottiri si leggono in E.G. PROTOPSALTI, ἡ ἐπαναστατικὴ κίνησις των Ἑλλήνων κατὰ τον δεύτερον ἐπὶ Αικατερίνης Β' ρωσοτουρκικόν πόλεμον (1787/1792).

dell'ampia produzione letteraria antica e soffermandosi maggiormente, rispetto a Donà, sulla produzione post-classica. La sua opera fu scritta originariamente in greco antico e fu pubblicata in neogreco nel 1814, a Trieste, presso Weiss, e poi in italiano, presso il medesimo editore, nel 1818, con il titolo di *Apologia storico-critica composta in greco litterale dal Sig. Luigi Sottiri, maggiore imperiale russo e dottore in medicina, e tradotta nell'italiano dal Sig. Spiridione Prevetto, maestro dello scolastico greco istituto in Trieste*⁵⁷.

Non sappiamo nulla, invece, della prima versione, quella scritta in greco antico⁵⁸. Nelle *Memorie autobiografiche*, che furono pubblicate postume, Compagnoni precisò che un saggio di replica al suo trattato fu stampato a Trieste «presso Vagher e Weiss», ed era opera di un greco di Zante: capitato egli stesso a Trieste nel 1794, Compagnoni aveva appreso dagli editori che avevano anche ricavato una buona cifra dalle vendite di questo libro⁵⁹. Ma di quale libro si trattava? È probabile che Compagnoni, confondendo Corfù con Zante, si riferisse al libro di Donà, il quale sarebbe stato stampato dunque a Trieste l'anno prima (si sapeva che l'indicazione “Lipsia” era fittizia)⁶⁰. Infatti, anche altrove Compagnoni se la prende con

Λουδοβίκος Σωτήρης, «Δελτίον τῆς Ἱστορικής καὶ Ἐθνολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας τῆς Ἑλλάδος» 14, 1960, pp. 30–154. È documentato che Sottiri si stabilì con la famiglia a Trieste nel 1794: vd. il ricco lavoro di O. KATSIARDI-HERING, *La presenza dei Greci a Trieste. La comunità e l'attività economica (1751–1830)*, Trieste 2018 (trad. it. dell'ed. di Atene 1986), p. 320: nel 1801 divenne primo console dell'Eptaneso a Trieste, fino al 1803; sembra sia rimasto a Trieste fino al 1820, quando morì, l'11 agosto, a 97 anni: vd anche G. PAGRATIS, *Rete consolare e ideologia rivoluzionaria: i consolati della Repubblica Settinsulare a Trieste (1803–1807)*, in F. SCALORA (a cura di), *Il risorgimento greco e l'Italia. Forme e livelli di ricezione durante il XIX secolo*, Atti del Convegno, Palermo 14–15 Ottobre 2021, Palermo 2021, pp. 59–66.

⁵⁷ Le due traduzioni furono pubblicate presso Gasparo Weiss. Il titolo greco, del 1814, è Ἀπολογία ἱστοριοκριτική, συντεθείσα μὲν Ἑλληνιστὶ ὑπὸ τινος φιλογενοῦς Ἑλλήνου, ἐπεξεργασθεῖσα δὲ εἰς τὴν κοινὴν διάλεκτον τῶν Ἑλλήνων, μετὰ τινων σημειωμάτων ὑπὸ Ἀναστασίου ἱερέως καὶ οἰκονόμου τῶν Ἀμπελακίων, τῶν ἐπὶ τῶν Θετταλικῶν Τεμπῶν κειμένων παρ' οὗ καὶ ἰδίᾳ δαπάνη ἐξεδόθη χάριν τῶν ὁμογενῶν, δι' ἐπιστάσις Σπυρίδωνος Πρεβέτου, Ζακυνθίου. Cfr. T. SKLAVENTIS, Οι κατήγοροι του Ελληνικού γένους καὶ η “Απολογία ιστοριοκριτική” του Λουδοβίκου Σωτήρη (1727–1820), «Λευκαδίτικη Πνοή», 24, nov. – dic. 2000, p. 5, secondo cui il lavoro di Sottiri ebbe grande risalto e diffusione, e così LUCCI, *Ebraismo e Grecità*, p. 527, mentre ne dubita, in assenza di prove, D. ARVANITAKIS, *Giuseppe Compagnoni*, p. 404 n. 80.

⁵⁸ Infatti, ASDRACHÀS, Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης, p. 117 n. 1, riteneva che fosse rimasta inedita.

⁵⁹ G. COMPAGNONI, *Memorie autobiografiche*, p. 128.

⁶⁰ Così, pur notando la scorretta attribuzione a un greco di Zante, LUCCI, *Ebraismo e grecità*, p. 519; ARVANITAKIS, *Giuseppe Compagnoni*, pp. 401–402, n. 78, ritiene invece molto probabile che il testo italiano di Donà sia stato stampato a Venezia,

i Greci di Venezia, che avrebbero commissionato a Rubbi la replica al suo *Saggio* — come abbiamo visto — e che, in più, «spesero un migliaio di talleri in un altro più grosso libro stampato a Trieste»⁶¹. L'indicazione relativa a Zante può in realtà ricondurci anche a Sottiri, considerando che la traduzione in italiano del suo originale in greco antico, pubblicata a Trieste proprio presso Weiss, venne redatta da Giovanni Prevetto, che era proprio un greco di Zante; nella versione in neogreco, che era stata realizzata dal monaco Anastasio Ambelakiotis pochi anni prima, manca del tutto il nome di Sottiri (sotto il titolo è scritto solo che l'opera era di un φιλογενής, patriota, greco) mentre è esplicitato il nome del “curatore”, Prevetto, con l'indicazione «Zacinzio»⁶². Tale origine da Zante era dunque in bella vista. Raccontando la sua visita a Trieste a distanza di tempo, probabilmente Compagnoni confuse i dati su queste opere scritte in risposta al suo *Saggio*, sovrapponendo le informazioni. A meno che il libro di cui parla Compagnoni non sia proprio il lavoro originario di Sottiri, quello in greco antico, di cui però non sappiamo nulla. Troppo vaga per essere utile è la frase che si trova nella prefazione alla quarta edizione del *Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci*, del 1806, dove si faceva riferimento a “libercoli” scritti contro Compagnoni e «stampati in Torino, in Trieste ed altrove per contraddire»⁶³.

L'edizione neogreca di Sottiri cita l'opera di Francesco Albergati (*alias* Giovanni Donà), dicendola pubblicata a Venezia nel 1802⁶⁴, e dunque si riferisce alla traduzione in neogreco. Poi, in un elenco bibliografico che compare in fondo al volume, si dice che «Giovanni Donà, di Corcira, pubblicò a Venezia nel 1823 (*sic*) una replica all'abate

citando Mustoxidi là dove parla della traduzione in neogreco come stampata, appunto, a Venezia.

⁶¹ Nella *Vita letteraria del Cavaliere Giuseppe Compagnoni*, p. 24.

⁶² Per il titolo, con il nome di Spiridione Prevetto, Zacinzio, vd. n. 57.

⁶³ *Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci. Edizione quarta. Fatta in occasione del Sinodo Ebraico convocato in Parigi e dalla quale ognuno può conoscere il carattere vero delle Nazione ebraica*, Milano, Agnello Nobile, 1806, p. 3. Nella versione italiana, a p. 210, nell'elenco della produzione ellenica più recente, è inserito anche un elenco di altri lavori di Sottiri: «un'Elegia *De Ecclesia militante*, dello stesso stampata in Trieste nel 1798. Un lungo discorso ridotto in opuscolo sopra l'agricoltura, le arti liberali, e le professioni, sulla base di un buon Governo dello stesso stampato pur in Trieste net (*sic*) 1807. e di molti altri ecc.ecc. che io tralascio di qui notare, bramoso di dar fine a questo Trattato». Tale parte manca nella versione greca. Il trattato sull'agricoltura di cui si parla è *Il sostegno delle Arti, e dell'agricoltura favorito da Alessandro I. Paulowick Imperatore e Autocrate di tutte le Russie*, anch'esso pubblicato a Trieste presso Gasparo Weiss.

⁶⁴ Vd. p. 74.

Compagnoni che aveva scritto con astio contro i Greci antichi e moderni»⁶⁵. Questa nota è la dimostrazione che fu Donà a scrivere la *Lettera* contro Compagnoni, e che si sapeva già almeno nel 1814 in ambito greco⁶⁶. Nessuna delle due note relative ad Albergati-Donà è presente invece nella versione italiana del 1818, anzi, tutto l'aggiornamento bibliografico elencato nel testo in neogreco non compare affatto nell'edizione italiana. Resta dubbio se Sottiri (che non sappiamo quando compose l'originale) conoscesse il lavoro di Donà.

Il giudizio di Mustoxidi su Sottiri è totalmente stroncante: «Siccome nessun greco di vaglia si era degnato di confutare l'epistola del Compagnoni, così non poteva che riuscire meschinissima la difesa scritta da un militare oscuro nella repubblica delle lettere»⁶⁷. Il testo è in realtà complesso e molto dotto. Secondo alcuni Sottiri trasse molto materiale da Donà, ma alcune coincidenze potrebbero venire da fonti comuni; l'impostazione è diversa, perché Sottiri non presenta la storia ebraica, anzi, non si occupa affatto degli ebrei, e offre lunghi elenchi di dotti greci dall'antichità al Cristianesimo (l'edizione greca dopo la citazione di Eugenio Bulgari è diversa da quella italiana, non mette l'elenco degli imperatori ma continua con quello degli autori, pur non inserendo gli ultimi minori presenti nella versione italiana). Anche in Sottiri è comunque presente, per esempio, la citazione della frase di Choiseul-Gouffier che esalta le qualità dei Greci moderni, più volte citata da Donà, ed è anche più completa, presentando l'aggiunta di una parte: essa viene così commentata:

Così rispondono questi signori viaggiatori filosofi, che godono del brillante aspetto, che offre ad essi l'antica storia, alle insussistenti proposizioni e false affermative dei due Compagnoni e Bertoldi; e l'invitano a portarsi seco in Grecia, per ivi osservare, se i di lei abitanti siano figli legittimi, oppure degenerati dai loro Padri⁶⁸.

Tale frase di Sottiri sembra proprio la rielaborazione di quello che scriveva Rubbi nel suo saggio di risposta a Compagnoni, sempre a proposito dei viaggiatori diretti in Grecia. Sembrerebbe dunque che anche Rubbi sia stato tenuto presente da Sottiri, ma è forse più probabile che si tratti di un intervento del curatore, perché nella versione greca del testo di Sottiri il soggetto che replica (fino alla parola «storia») non sono

⁶⁵ Ἀπολογία ἱστοριοκριτική, p. 217. 1823 è errore evidente per 1802.

⁶⁶ S. ASDRACHÀS, Ἰωάννης Δονάς Πασχάλης, p. 117.

⁶⁷ MUSTOXIDI, *Delle cose corciresi*, p. 182.

⁶⁸ Vd. pp. 65–66 della versione italiana e 58–59 di quella greca.

i viaggiatori filosofi ma «il grande uomo», cioè Choiseul-Gouffier stesso (per il resto la menzione di Compagnoni e Bartholdy è presente in entrambe le versioni).

In questi testi Compagnoni non è l'unico bersaglio — dicevamo — perché compaiono riferimenti a un altro lavoro che molto offese i Greci e che viene qui attaccato esplicitamente. Si tratta della corrispondenza di viaggio in Grecia del diplomatico berlinese Jacob Bartholdy, che nella prima parte metteva in evidenza i disagi di un viaggio impegnativo, come le cattive strade, la difficoltà dell'approvvigionamento e qualche difetto organizzativo, e nella seconda faceva emergere anche i limiti dei Greci moderni in ambito culturale e religioso, venendo preso, naturalmente, come un nemico del popolo greco⁶⁹. La trascrizione del suo nome in italiano ha condotto fuori strada qualche esegeta⁷⁰. Scrive Sottiri nella versione italiana: «Ci faremo coraggio in questa seconda parte dell'Apologia di citare con ordine cronologico li migliori soggetti Greci dell'una e dell'altra età, che più degli altri risplendano in scienze, ed arti consedenti nel Senato dell'alma Republica Letteraria, acciò declamando essi contro il procedere dei due oltraggiatori della Nazione Greca»⁷¹.

Rivolgendosi a Compagnoni, scrive:

E qual clerico si è il sig. Abbate Compagnoni, quanti santi Vescovi lo deponerebbero dal catalogo del sacro ordine, che gli impone pietà, umiltà, mansuetudine, ed esemplarità, giammai vendetta, giammai alterigia, ne ostilità, contro una Nazione piantata dalla Madre Natura nei climi dell'Attica, ove Marte pretogli (*sic*) il valore, Atlante la fermezza, Pallade la Sapienza, e Mercurio l'eloquenza⁷².

Sottiri non sembra tenere conto del dotto francese, Aimé Guillon, che nel 1806 aveva replicato a Compagnoni con due brevi articoli critici

⁶⁹ J.S.L. BARTHOLDY, *Bruchstücke zur nähern Kenntniss des heutigen Griechenlands, gesammelt auf einer Reise ... im Jahre 1803–1804*, Berlin, Realschulbuchhandlung, 1805.

⁷⁰ Nella versione greca Bartholdy è citato insieme a Compagnoni nell'introduzione, alle pp. 59, 62, 70 e nell'epilogo; è citato da solo nella nota a p. 71 e a p. 72. Nella versione italiana, Compagnoni è citato da solo a p. 214; il nome di Bartholdy è italianizzato in Bertoldi ed è citato con Compagnoni nell'introduzione e alle pp. 17, 62, 69 e 78 (qui l'epilogo manca): forse per questa modifica del nome sia COLONI, *La polemica*, p. 90, sia LUCCI, *Ebraismo e grecità*, p. 530, affermano di ignorare chi sia.

⁷¹ *Apologia storico-critica*, p. 80. Nella versione greca manca l'introduzione alla seconda parte, in qualche modo anticipata alla fine della prima, dove è anche collocata una dura tirata contro Bartholdy, assente invece nella resa italiana.

⁷² Ivi, pp. 214–215.

apparso nel «Giornale Italiano»⁷³. Scriveva Guillon all'inizio del primo articolo, a proposito della superiorità degli Ebrei sostenuta da Compagnoni, che «ritrovandosi nella repubblica letteraria molti partigiani più fervidi, e numerosi pei Greci che per gli Ebrei, quest'asserzione è sembrata scandalosa; alcuni ne furono indignati, gli altri n'ebbero pietà, e la disprezzarono». Per Guillon, in realtà, tale paradosso non era troppo temerario, ma era privo di reali sostegni culturali e dunque restava solo un paradosso; riprese poi, in altro articolo, i toni polemici già impiegati da Donà per sminuire i meriti degli Ebrei, a tutto vantaggio dei Greci, dicendosi per nulla convinto della superiorità degli Ebrei sui Greci. Per l'età moderna, per esempio, scriveva che «i genj più rari divennero allorché la lingua ebraica ottenne la sua più grande voga, e che le stampe fecero in gran numero rivivere le sue antiche produzioni»⁷⁴.

In conclusione, l'assunto di Compagnoni non poteva che suscitare la reazione dei Greci residenti in Italia, trovandosi la loro patria nel momento delicato delle concrete aspirazioni alla libertà, quando la costruzione di un'immagine positiva era parte integrante del percorso necessario per il formarsi della nazione⁷⁵. La sensibilità greca era pronta ad accendersi a tutela della propria storia, passata e presente: recentemente, nel 1785 a Venezia era stata rappresentata un'opera di Pindemonte, *I coloni di Candia*, che ricordava episodi del XIV secolo in cui i Greci risultavano perfidi e traditori, tanto che un autore anonimo scrisse su tale opera una *Dissertazione critica* in cui replicava fornendo

⁷³ *Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci: edizione quarta. Milano 1806, Dalla Tipografia di Agnello Nobile. Primo estratto, «Giornale Italiano» 310, 6 nov. 1806, pp. 1243–1244; Saggio sugli Ebrei e sui Greci: edizione quarta. Milano 1806, Dalla Tipografia di Agnello Nobile. Secondo estratto 323, 19 nov. 1806, pp. 1296–1297: vd. Lucci, *Ebraismo e Grecità*, pp. 524–527. Compagnoni aveva fatto uscire la quarta edizione del *Saggio* in occasione di un sinodo ebraico a Parigi. Su Guillon, noto soprattutto per la polemica con Foscolo sui *Sepolcri*, vd., ma senza riferimenti a Compagnoni, R. RUGGIERO, *Le polemiche italiane dell'Abbé Guillon. Riso e parodia nella Milano della Restaurazione*, «Testo» 49, 2005, pp. 29–46; E. BACCINI, *Une «bête française» au service du vice-roi: Aimé Guillon, monarchiste et contre-révolutionnaire dans le royaume d'Italie napoléonien*, «Annales historiques de la Révolution française» 408, 2022, pp. 131–155.*

⁷⁴ «Giornale Italiano» 323, 19 nov. 1806, p. 1298.

⁷⁵ P. KITROMILIDES, *From Republican Patriotism to National Sentiment: A Reading of Hellenic Nomarchy*, «European Journal of Political Theory» 5, 1, 2011, pp. 50–60; D.P. SOTIROPOULOS, *Elliniki Nomarchia [Greek Republic]: Discourse on the Radical Enlightenment. The Birth of Modern Greek Political Thought in the Early 19th Century*, in P. PIZANIAS (ed.), *The Greek Revolution of 1821: A European Event*, Istanbul 2011, pp. 1–16.

un'accurata analisi politica e letteraria⁷⁶. Anche per Compagnoni, come abbiamo visto, le repliche furono pronte e molto decise, indicandoci la vivacità del filellenismo e un certo orgoglio da parte di una nazione in formazione, ma anche, da ogni parte, l'uso consapevole della storia per finalità di politica contemporanea.

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⁷⁶ Vd. C. MALTEZOU, *Οι Έλληνες της Βενετίας υπερασπίζονται τα δίκαιά τους: με αφορμή μια θεατρική παράσταση*, in Στέφανος: τμηματική προσφορά στον Βάλτερ Πούχνερ, Athina, Ergo, 2007, pp. 717–725.

UNPUBLISHED STUDIES ON PHILODEMUS' *ON GODS*, BOOK 1*

— MARZIA D'ANGELO —

ABSTRACT

*The article presents some unpublished studies on Philodemus' On Gods, Book 1 (PHerc. 26) which I discovered while preparing a new edition of the Herculaneum papyrus, last edited by Hermann Diels in 1916. These materials include two copies of Diels' edition annotated by Peter von der Mühl and Samson Eitrem; the drafts of a new edition of the papyrus by Knut Kleve and Pål Tidemandsen; a draft of a monograph on Epicurean theology, titled *Physis Theon*, by Knut Kleve; and an English translation by David Armstrong.*

KEYWORDS

Philodemus' On Gods Book 1, Hermann Diels, unpublished studies, Knut Kleve, Epicurean theology

The extensive philosophical work of the Epicurean Philodemus of Gadara, preserved solely in the charred scrolls of the Villa of the Papyri's library at Herculaneum, included the treatise *On Gods*, organised into multiple books. Among the unrolled scrolls from the collection, only the first book, transmitted by *PHerc. 26*, has survived.¹ This book serves as a primary source for reconstructing Epicurean thought on divinity, addressing one of the Garden's fundamental doctrines: how to remove the fear of the gods, which, along with the fear of death, is the greatest obstacle to achieving Epicurean pleasure, understood as the absence of pain.

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¹ In the *subscriptio* of *PHerc. 26* the title Περὶ θεῶν Α can be read (DEL MASTRO 2014, 42–45); the presence of the numeral confirms that the entire work must have contained at least another book.

The last complete edition of the text remains the «superb and brilliant»² one published by Hermann Diels in 1916.³ The following year, Diels released an edition of what was then considered the third book of the same work (*PHerc.* 152/157).⁴ Both editions lack a full translation; partial translations of the best-preserved columns are housed in the commentary. With these publications, Diels provided the scholarly community with a primary source for the advancement of the studies of Epicurean theology. However, as Diels explicitly states in the preface, neither edition was based on direct examination of the originals.⁵ The outbreak of World War I prevented him from travelling to examine the material firsthand. Consequently, he never saw the papyrus housed at the Officina dei Papiri Ercolanesi in the National Library of Naples, nor could he consult the original drawings made by the English Reverend John Hayter during his stay in Naples (1802–1806) and later transferred to the Bodleian Library in Oxford. As for the first book, which is the focus of my discussion, Diels was only able to publish the text thanks to a collation of the copies of Hayter's drawings⁶ made by Reverend Cohen,⁷ the columns transcribed by Neapolitan academics published in the *Collectio Altera* in 1862,⁸ and previous readings published by Walter Scott in the *Fragmenta Herculansia*.⁹

The scholarly community unanimously welcomed Diels' publication with enthusiasm and praised his expertise in textual reconstruction and exegesis. However, scholars also pointed out the limitations due to the

² GIGANTE 1990, 51.

³ DIELS 1916.

⁴ DIELS 1917. The title in the *subscriptio* of this scroll is *Περὶ τῆς τῶν θεῶν διαγωγῆς*. The long-standing idea that this was the third book of the work *Περὶ θεῶν* was based on the reading in the *subscriptio* of the numeral *gamma*, the presence of which is not actually confirmed by the re-examination of the original: see ESSLER 2007, 130 n. 41, and DEL MASTRO 2014, 64–67. A new edition of the work is currently being prepared by Holger Essler.

⁵ DIELS 1916, 3–6; DIELS 1917, 5.

⁶ O I 33–58.

⁷ The copies of these drawings had been made by Reverend J.J. Cohen for Theodor Gomperz. After his death in 1912, Gomperz's Herculaneum material was put up for sale. Thanks to Diels' mediation with Heinrich Gomperz, Theodor's son, it was purchased by the University of Vienna's library, where Diels was able to consult the copies of the drawings. These copies have been missing since 1982. See JANKO–BLANK 1998, 173. See also DORANDI 1999, 248 n. 105. On the letters between Diels and Heinrich Gomperz, see BRAUN–CALDER–EHLERS 1995, 183 s.

⁸ *VH*² V 153–175.

⁹ SCOTT 1885, 205–251.

lack of direct comparison with the original manuscripts.¹⁰ In 1973, Knut Kleve, who approached *PHerc.* 26 with the aim of producing a new edition, noted that many of Diels' conjectures either altered the readings found in the drawings or were incompatible with the extent of the gaps in the text. Kleve also discovered groups of unpublished columns that Diels had overlooked in his edition.¹¹ As a result of Kleve's questioning of the reliability of Diels' reference edition, scholarly interest in the text declined. It became clear that a new, comprehensive edition, rigorously based on direct examination of the original, was necessary. A century later, such an edition is yet to be produced. There have been publications offering textual contributions and new readings of the papyrus, but they remain relatively few in number, despite the book's unique significance.¹²

During my research in preparation for a new edition, I was surprised to discover that, despite the limited published contributions, there is a considerable amount of unpublished material on *PHerc.* 26. To the best of my knowledge, this consists of:

- a copy of Diels' edition annotated by Peter von der Mühl;
- a copy of the same edition annotated by Samson Eitrem;
- the drafts of a new, unpublished edition of the papyrus by Knut Kleve and Pål Tidemandsen, as well as the draft of a monograph on Epicurean theology entitled *Physis theon. Die epikureische Lehre von der körperlichen Beschaffenheit der Götter. Eine Studie mit Ausgangspunkt in Ciceros De natura deorum I*;
- an English translation of Philodemus, *On Gods* Book 1 with personal notes by David Armstrong.

Each of these contributions, to varying degrees, constitutes an advance on Diels' text and attests to the hermeneutic effort of scholars that

¹⁰ Among the earliest reactions, see CRÖNERT 1930, 144: «Es ist schade, daß die schönste und gediegenste Textausgabe auf unserm Gebiete, Philodems 1. und 3. Buch Über die Götter, von Diels (AbhBerl. 1916, 1917) ohne Nachprüfung geschaffen werden mußte». Crönert criticised above all the unreliability of the text, which dragged with it the errors in the drawings («viel Unrat»). Marcello Gigante too, while noting that «le lezioni e integrazioni del Diels non sempre sono comprovabili o accettabili», pointed out (GIGANTE 1953, 15, n. 1) that «il Diels portò nella sua ricostruzione un acuto senso storico sì che essa resta un importante contributo all'intelligenza della teologia epicurea da lui definita 'Aufklärungstheologie' e alla storia della religione greca». On the criticism of Diels' edition, see in general DORANDI 1999, 248–250.

¹¹ KLEVE 1973 and 1996. Correspondences between P (*PHerc.* 26), DIELS 1916 and KLEVE 1996 are now recorded in D'ANGELO 2024, 113–114.

¹² For a complete list of the textual contributions on *PHerc.* 26, see D'ANGELO 2024, 111 n. 1.

engaged with it. In this article, I aim to bring these contributions to light, in the attempt of ensuring that these scholars receive the recognition they deserve in the history of Philodemus studies.

1. The Copy of Diels' Edition Annotated by Peter von der Mühl

Among the extensive *Nachlass*¹³ of Peter von der Mühl (1885–1970), acquired by the Universitätsbibliothek Basel in 1971 and preserved there, is his annotated copy of Diels' edition of Philodemus' two theological books.¹⁴ The Swiss philologist, a professor of Greek language and literature at the University of Basel, was a distinguished expert on Epicurus. In 1922, he published Epicurus' writings as transmitted in the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius,¹⁵ updating Hermann Usener's *Epicurea*¹⁶ by incorporating the *Gnomologium Epicureum Vaticanum*, which had been discovered only a few months after the publication of Usener's collection in 1887. Notably, von der Mühl's *Kleine Schriften*, published posthumously, contain no works on Philodemus or theology. His interest in Diels' edition can be attributed to his broad philological expertise as well as to his deep engagement with Epicureanism.

Von der Mühl's copy of Diels' edition contains undated handwritten annotations in pencil. However, some dates can be inferred from the bibliography he noted on the page preceding the title page, just below his ownership signature. For the first book, he mentions two works by Philippson dated 1916 and 1918, respectively;¹⁷ for the so-called third book, he cites a contribution by Arrighetti from 1955 and one by Grilli from 1957.¹⁸ Von der Mühl, however, may not have annotated the editions of both books simultaneously, nor do we know if his interventions date back to the same time or were made in several stages. The fact that Marcello Gigante's 1953 re-readings¹⁹ are not mentioned in the

¹³ For a full description of the *Nachlass* I refer to DORANDI 2006.

¹⁴ I was able to consult it through scans sent to me by the Universitätsbibliothek Basel.

¹⁵ *Epicuri Epistulae tres et ratae sententiae a Laertio Diogene servatae. Accedit gnomologium epicureum Vaticanum*, «Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Latinorum Teubneriana» (Leipzig 1922). See DORANDI 2006, 2. Von der Mühl entertained the idea of publishing the entire work of Laertius; the project, left unfinished, was later taken up by DORANDI 2013.

¹⁶ USENER 1887.

¹⁷ PHILIPPSON 1916 and 1918.

¹⁸ ARRIGHETTI 1955 and GRILLI 1957.

¹⁹ GIGANTE 1953.

bibliographic notes on the first book is not enough to say that the interventions on this edition were prior to this date.

From the nature of the notes, it is clear that the scholar's intent was not to produce a new edition of the text but rather to conduct a meticulous study of the existing edition. Most of the annotations consist of a collation between Diels' 1916 text and Robert Philippson's re-readings, which were published the following year.²⁰ In very few cases there are original conjectures. Significantly, in one of these (col. I 9 Diels) von der Mühl proposes *καθρ[ό]ως καὶ φιλοτίμως* instead of Diels' conjecture *καθ' ἑ[ω]λόν φιλοτ[υμίαν]* and Philippson's *καθρ[ό]ως ἢ φιλοτ[όμως*. Von der Mühl's conjecture *φιλοτίμως* is indeed very apposite, as the adverb has been recovered from the autopsy of the papyrus.²¹ The Swiss philologist's annotations extend beyond the text itself to the commentary, where he adds parallels and bibliographic references (e.g., pp. 52, 54) or corrects typographical errors (pp. 92, 100). He also marks the final index of cited names, with numerous checkmarks next to the entry «Epicurus». This underscores his interest in this work in connection to the founder of the Garden, a figure he had previously studied in 1922 for his publication of the writings transmitted by Diogenes Laertius. It seems plausible that the scholar was examining Philodemus' text for possible quotations from the Master that could be incorporated into Usener's *Epicurea*.

2. The Copy of Diels' Edition Annotated by Samson Eitrem

Another annotated edition of the first book *On Gods* by Diels belonged to Samson Eitrem (1872–1966).²² Eitrem was professor of Classical philology at the University of Oslo from 1914 to 1945 and an expert in ancient magic and religion.²³ As one of the founders of Papyrology in Norway, he

²⁰ PHILIPPSON 1916.

²¹ D'ANGELO 2024, 117–118.

²² I owe the news of the existence of this volume to Pål Tidemandsen, who kindly sent me a scan of it. The volume, which belonged to Kleve and was also consulted by Tidemandsen, is currently not present in the Kleve archive held at the Nasjonalbiblioteket in Oslo, which I personally consulted in 2018, nor in the library of the University of Oslo (I thank Tidemandsen and his wife Lisa, librarian at the University of Oslo, for checking this on my behalf); it is possible that it is located in Kleve's private collection owned by his heirs and not donated to the library.

²³ On the Eitrem's figure, see AMUNDSEN 1967 and KLEVE 2007. On his works, see AMUNDSEN 1968. See also the entry dedicated to him in the *Norsk Biographic Lexicon* available online (https://nbl.snl.no/Sam_Eitrem, last access 29.11.24).

established the original core of the Oslo papyrus collection, which he edited alongside his student Leiv Amundsen.²⁴

Eitrem's copy of Diels' edition was a gift from Diels himself as the latter was touring Scandinavia, as indicated by the undated dedication: «Prof. Dr. S. Eitrem m(it) fr(eundlichen) Grüßen d(es) Verf(assers)». This copy eventually found its way into the hands of Knut Kleve, who was Eitrem's student at Oslo. Although Eitrem had already retired when Kleve began his classical studies at the University, he continued to mentor him in the back-ground, guiding Kleve's doctoral research along with his supervisors, Henning Mørland and Eiliv Skard.²⁵ This culminated in 1963 with the publication of the dissertation *Gnosis theon*, an analysis of Epicurean theology based on the first book of Cicero's *De natura deorum*.²⁶ Kleve fondly recalls their discussions on various subjects, including Epicureanism, noting that «Eitrem was well informed on all topics»:²⁷

I took also the opportunity to discuss my own scholarly problems, at the time within the Epicureanism, as Eitrem was well informed on all topics. I have in my possession Hermann Diel's (*sic*) edition of one of the Herculaneum papyri with a personal dedication to Eitrem. The pages are filled with Eitrem's pencilled comments. I remember we had a lengthy discussion on how the Epicurean gods, being atomic compounds, could still be regarded as eternal, a problem on the scale of the quadrature of the circle. But Eitrem never got tired, he followed the conversation with a boyish fervour, a *nonagenarius* who had forgotten to grow old.

Eitrem's pencil annotations reveal meticulous philological work on the Greek text established by Diels. Although he lacked access to the original papyrus, in some instances Eitrem suggested conjectures that deserve consideration in the next edition. For example, at col. XX 19 he suggested

²⁴ The collection created by Eitrem in Oslo was formed through the acquisition of papyri during several trips to Egypt (1910, 1920, and 1936), and was later enriched by further acquisitions made by Amundsen during his participation in the excavations at Karanis led by Professor Francis Kelsey (University of Michigan) during the 1927/28 and 1928/29 seasons. Part of the collection, which now holds more than 2,000 inventory numbers, was published in the series *Papyri Osloenses* (P. Oslo), with Eitrem publishing volume I in 1925, followed by volumes II (1931) and III (1936), co-edited with Leiv Amundsen, as well as in the journal «Symbolae Osloenses».

²⁵ See KUBBINGA 2018, 322, and INDELLI 2023, 115.

²⁶ KLEVE 1963.

²⁷ KLEVE 2007, 190.

θαυμ]άζοντες in place of Diels']άζοντες. This conjecture is particularly apt, as θαυ[μ]άζοντες can indeed be confirmed upon direct examination of the papyrus. On the other hand, many of Eitrem's suggestions, being based solely on Diels' edition rather than the papyrus itself, do not align with the actual spacing or traces found in the papyrus. For example, at col. IV 12 Eitrem proposed θεοφο[ρονμένοις instead of Diels' θεοφό[ροι, yet the papyrus clearly reveals part of the name Theophrastus (Θεοφρ[).

3. The Norwegian Contribution: Knut Kleve and Pål Tidemandsen

Kleve's Archive and Methodology

A special place in the history of the study of Philodemus' *On Gods* Book 1 is held by the Norwegian philologist Knut Kleve and his pupil Pål Tidemandsen. Kleve's work spanned from the 1970s to the 1990s, while Tidemandsen continued the research from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s.

Knut Kleve, who served as Professor of Classical Philology from 1963 at the University of Bergen and from 1974 to 1996 at the University of Oslo, devoted almost his entire academic life to Epicureanism.²⁸ This is evident not only from his extensive list of publications on the Herculaneum papyri and the Epicurean texts they preserve,²⁹ but also from his vast private archive, which has been housed at the National Library of Norway since his death in 2017.³⁰ The archive consists of hundreds of photographs, transcriptions, and notes related to various Herculaneum papyri that have been layered over the years.

Of the 13 folders in the archive, four pertain to *PHerc.* 26, which contains Philodemus' *On Gods* Book 1. Kleve worked on this papyrus for more than 20 years with the aim of producing a new edition, a project which unfortunately never came to fruition. Without his archive, our knowledge of his work on this book would be limited to the partial results published in 1973 and 1996, which present new readings of Diels' text. However, the unpublished documents of the archive reveal a much richer picture. Kleve had meticulously gathered all existing archival materials on *PHerc.* 26, including 19th-century drawings of the fragments in both

²⁸ See the commemoration read by ANDERSEN 2017, 94 s.

²⁹ A list of Kleve's bibliography updated up to 1996 is provided by HAALAND 1996. On his commitment to Herculaneum papyrology see also LONGO AURICCHIO–INDELLI–DEL MASTRO 2017, KUBBINGA 2018, and INDELLI 2023.

³⁰ A complete catalogue of the archive has been published by D'ANGELO 2020.

the Neapolitan and Oxonian series as well as the 1862 *editio princeps* in the fifth volume of *Herculansium voluminum quae supersunt. Collectio altera*.³¹ He personally photographed all the fragments during his visits to the Officina dei Papiri Ercolanesi (National Library of Naples) and made pencil transcriptions of all the text columns.

Kleve was among the first to tackle the challenge of photographing the Herculaneum papyri. In 1970s he developed a particular microphotographic technique, which was first tested on *PHerc. 26*.³² Initially, he took more photographs of the same fragment under a microscope, obtaining microfilms with partial enlargements. By projecting each microfilm onto a sheet with a bottom-lighting system, he made a pencil sketch of the fragment, reproducing the letters or traces of letters as precisely as possible. Finally, by assembling the partial reproductions, he constructed a new, comprehensive drawing of the fragment on graph paper (fig. 1).

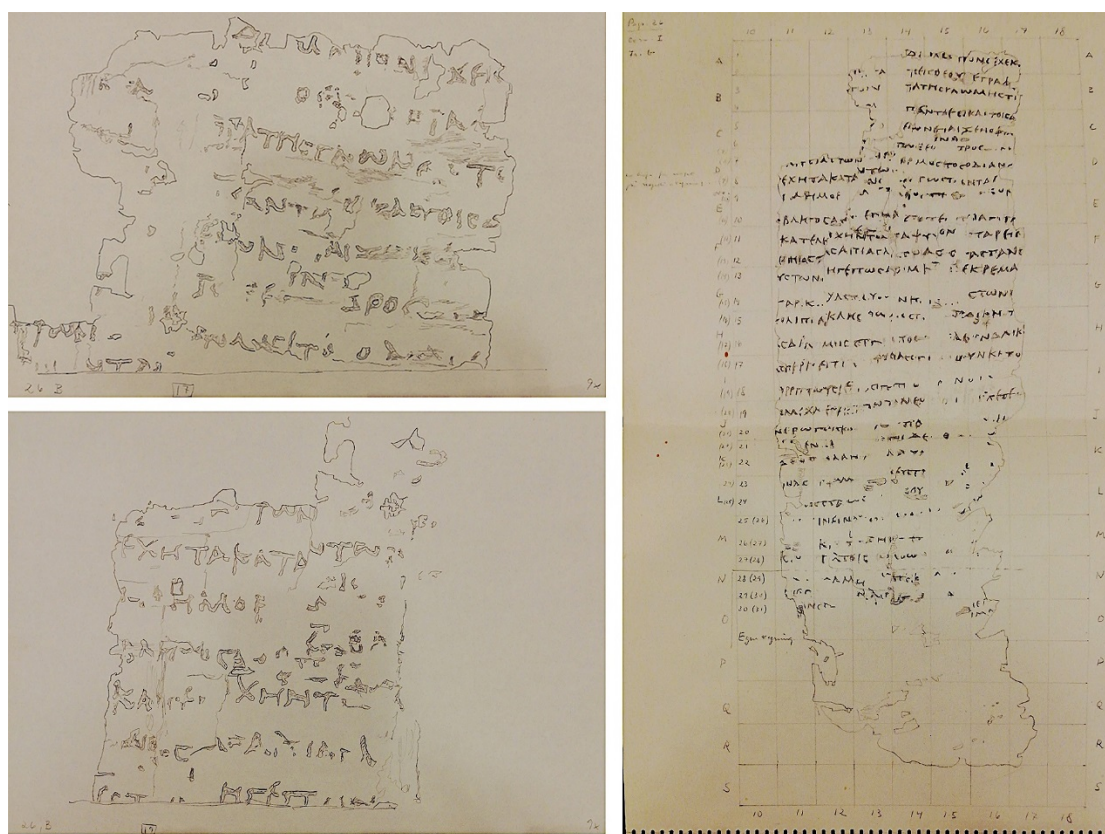


Fig. 1. Left, partial reproductions of *PHerc. 26* cornice 1, fr. b with tracing of the script. Right, transcription of the fragment, later published in KLEVE 1996.

³¹ *VH² V*, 153–175.

³² The technique is illustrated in KLEVE 1975. It was also used in later years for the photographic reproduction of papyri opened with the Oslo method (see KLEVE *et al.* 1991, 117–124, «Third guide. How to take pictures»).

The scholar used this method to produce pencil transcriptions of all the fragments of *PHerc.* 26, systematically comparing his new text with that found in the *disegni* and Scott's edition (fig. 2).

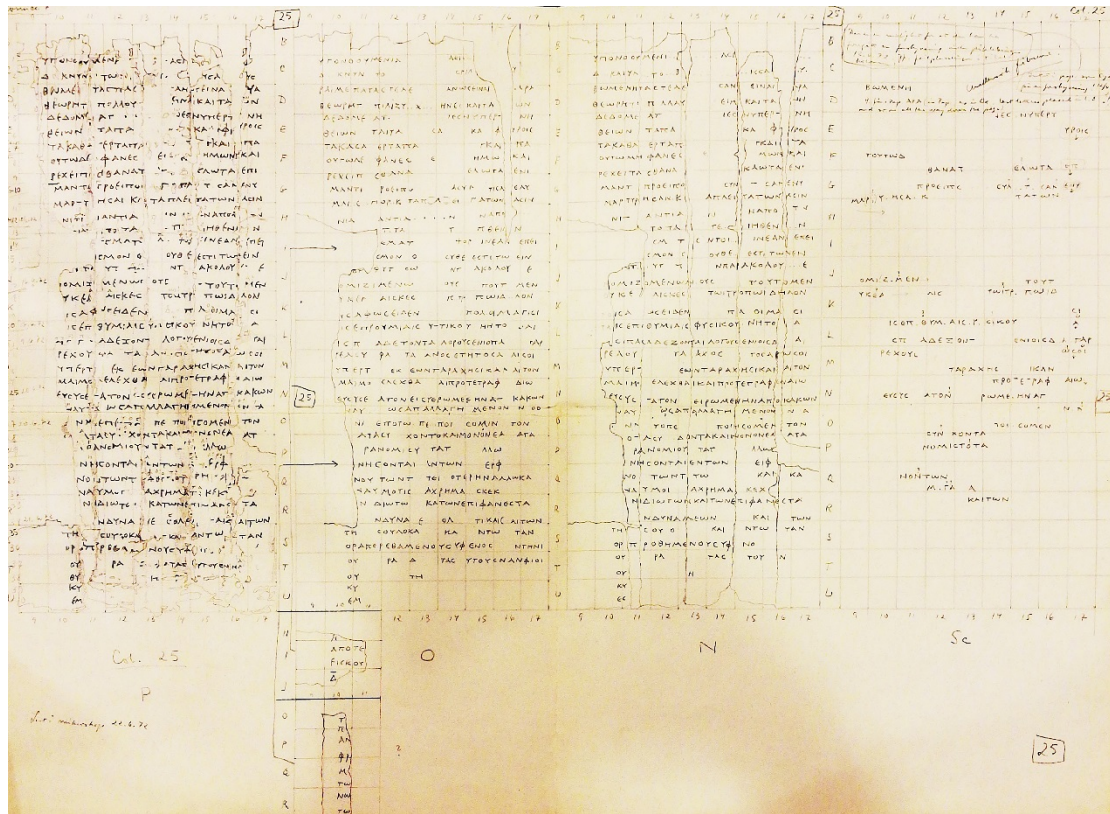


Fig. 2. Collation between the Kleve's transcription of col. 25 (P), the text witnessed by the Oxonian (O) and Neapolitan (N) drawings, and Walter Scott's previous readings (Sc).

As can be guessed, this technique relied on freehand drawing which, though executed with meticulous care, resulted in a new representation that could never perfectly match the original. This discrepancy arose from the potential for reproducing shadows or fracture marks as letters and from the risk of losing stratigraphic details during the sketching process, i.e. not recognising the presence of multiple layers of papyrus attached above or below the visible column surface (the so-called *sovrapposti* and *sottoposti*). As a result, this method often led to inaccuracies in transcription, and thus to conjectures based on misreadings.³³ Once again in

³³ Reading errors caused by this method can be found in Kleve's transcriptions of the fragments of *PHerc.* 26, cornice 1 (KLEVE 1996), which have now been partly re-read in D'ANGELO 2024. For a discussion of the limitations of this technique in the transcription and identification of texts, see CAPASSO 2014, esp. 146 and 154, regarding

the editorial history of *PHerc. 26*, the distance from Naples entailed the problem of the impossibility to check the original papyrus. By the late 1990s, as his advanced age led him to cut back on visits to the Officina, Kleve continued to pursue the transcription project through the eyes of his doctoral fellow, Pål Tidemandsen.

The Kleve–Tidemandsen Edition Drafts

Pål Tidemandsen spent several months working at the Officina dei Papiri between 1996 and the early 2000s, aiming to produce an edition of *PHerc. 26*. After 2003–2004, he was unable to devote much time to the project, and unfortunately the edition was never published. However, he made significant progress in studying the text and submitted to Kleve several instalments of his transcriptions, apparatus, translation and commentary over the years, which I found in the Kleve archive in Oslo. I owe it to Espen Ore, a long-time colleague and friend of Kleve, that after a long search I was finally able to get in touch with Pål and to have a fruitful discussion with him about his work.

Although he did not publish any preliminary findings, Tidemandsen completed a provisional transcription — the first based on autopsy under the microscope — of the 25 columns edited by Diels, including additional partial columns omitted from Diels' edition. To maintain consistency with Diels' numbering system, newly transcribed fragments were designated with identifiers like column + alphabet letter. Tidemandsen included transcriptions of coll. 4B, 4C, 9C, 9D, 10B, and small *sovrapposti* identified at coll. 3–4. Each transcription is accompanied by detailed palaeographic and philological apparatus, as well as English translation. Brief personal notes provide a commentary. As this is preliminary work, it lacks both an introduction and a virtual reconstruction model (*maquette*) of the scroll, which will be essential for re-establishing the correct order of the columns and repositioning the misplaced layers. The final version of his work was kindly sent to me by the author himself, who has authorised me to reference his conjectures in my forthcoming edition.

In terms of content, in an unpublished paper presented at a Classics Seminar at the University of Oslo in October 2003, Tidemandsen correctly observed that «the extant text of Περὶ θεῶν Ἄ is not so much about the gods as about fear of the gods, more precisely the disturbance

originating from this fear». According to him, at least four main sections can be identified in the text:

1. The first section extends from the (lost) beginning of the text to col. 2, 7. This is suggested by the presence of a *coronis* (identified by Tidemandsen for the first time), which marks a break in the text and signals the transition to a new line of argumentation.
2. The second section begins at this point and may continue up to col. 11, 33.
3. At col. 11, 33, Philodemus introduces a new section discussing whether humans or animals experience greater mental disturbance («we will show that beings without reason have the analogous disturbance»);
4. The final section begins at col. 16, 19–20, and addresses whether fear of the gods or fear of death is more distressing («the disturbance arising from false opinions concerning the gods or the (disturbance) concerning death we shall now examine»).

Between col. 2, 7 and col. 11, 3 at least one more section exists, as suggested by another *coronis*, which I have identified in the final inter-columnium of *cornice* 2, *pezzo* 3. This fragment follows *pezzo* 1 of the same *cornice*, which contains columns 3 and 4.

Kleve's Unpublished Books

The primary motivation behind Kleve's interest in producing a new edition of Philodemus' *On Gods* Book 1 was his profound engagement with Epicurean theology. Since the publication, in 1963, of the monograph *Gnosis Theon. Die Lehre von der natürlichen Gotterkenntnis in der epikureischen Theologie*,³⁴ his «masterly study»,³⁵ Kleve had aimed to reconstruct a comprehensive picture of Epicurean thought on gods. As stated in the Preface, *Gnosis Theon* was envisioned as the first in a series of three volumes dedicated to Epicurean theology, structured according to the tripartite division that the Epicureans themselves applied to their doctrine: gnoseology, physics, and ethics. Unfortunately, the volumes on physics and ethics were never completed.

In Kleve's archive I have found the draft of the second volume on physics in a bound undated manuscript of 133 typed pages entitled *Physis theon. Die epikureische Lehre von der körperlichen Beschaffenheit der*

³⁴ KLEVE 1963.

³⁵ So described by FARRINGTON 1966, esp. 229 in his review.

*Götter. Eine Studie mit Ausgangspunkt in Ciceros De natura deorum I.*³⁶ The book delves into the Epicurean doctrine concerning the physical nature of the gods. It draws primarily on the first book of Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*, which presents a dialogue between the Epicurean Velleius and the Academic Cotta on whether the gods should be understood as physical entities or as mental images, but also on passages from the theological works of Philodemus preserved in the Herculaneum papyri. Kleve explores the Epicurean notion of the gods' anthropomorphism and addresses the long-debated problem of reconciling their existence as both corporeal beings and as blessed and incorruptible entities.

The table of contents of *Physis theon* includes four chapters:

1. *Die körperliche Vollkommenheit und Schönheit der Götter;*
2. *Die Menschenähnlichkeit der Götter durch den Analogieschluss gezeigt;*
3. *Das Prinzip der gleichen Verteilung (ἰσονομία) im Universum und die Götter;*
4. *Die Ewigkeit und Unsterblichkeit der Götter.*

As stated in the Preface, the fourth chapter is not included in the book as the author directs readers to a previously published paper on the subject, *Die Unvergänglichkeit der Götter im Epikureismus*, which appeared in 1960 in the journal «Symbolae Osloenses».³⁷ A handwritten draft of the fourth chapter is attached to the volume as loose sheets enclosed in a green cover.

The book is also accompanied by a 50-page typewritten blue notebook with the Norwegian title «To forarbeider til *Physis Theon*», i.e. «Two preparatory works to *Physis Theon*». It contains the drafts of the second and third chapters of the book. In the notebook's preface, Kleve offers insights that help clarify the structure and timeline of what would eventually become the unpublished monograph *Physis Theon*.

Besides the two articles in this booklet, I have submitted two other preliminary works for the thesis 'Physis theon, die epikureische Lehre von der körperlichen Beschaffenheit der Götter', namely 'Dio è bello, ma com'è la sua apparenza?' and 'Die Unvergänglichkeit der Götter im

³⁶ D'Angelo 2020, 235. I am grateful to Per Kleve, Knut's son, for giving me permission to study this material. He also confirmed me *privatim* that probably «*Physis Theon* was intended as part of a series of publications following *Gnosis* (1963)».

³⁷ KLEVE 1960.

Epikureismus' (S.O. 36, 1960). The works are planned as four chapters in the thesis in the following order:

1. Dio è bello, ma com'è la sua apparenza?
2. Die Menschenähnlichkeit der Götter durch den Analogieschluss gezeigt.
3. Das epikureische Prinzip der *ἰσονομία* und die Götter.
4. Die Unvergänglichkeit der Götter im Epikureismus.

The works will be partly tightened and partly expanded with new material, including a position on recent scientific literature. An overall conclusion will also be prepared. In addition, I have a large collection of material for further work on Epicurean theology. The fact that I have not yet managed to finish 'Physis theon' and other works, this is partly due to the administrative duties I have had. Another important reason is my dissatisfaction with existing editions of the Herculaneum papyri, which has led me to begin work on an edition of Philodemus' *περὶ θεῶν*.

[my translation from the original Norwegian]

The preface reveals that the first chapter of *Physis Theon*, titled *Die körperliche Vollkommenheit und Schönheit der Götter*, is a reworking of the paper *Dio è bello, ma com'è la sua apparenza?*, which Kleve presented as a lecture at the University of Padua in 1971, a copy of which is preserved in his archive. It follows that *Physis Theon* was surely assembled after 1971.

It is also noteworthy that Kleve attributed his inability to complete the monograph to his dissatisfaction with the existing editions of the theological works. In fact, it was during the 1970s that he began studying the first book *On Gods* by Philodemus, publishing some preliminary findings in 1973.³⁸ Kleve's comments highlight a key principle in the study of the Herculaneum papyri: a comprehensive investigation of the philosophical texts they contain is only possible with reliable editions. The incomplete status of his monograph *Physis Theon* is closely linked to the fact that he never completed a new edition of *PHerc.* 26.

³⁸ KLEVE 1973.

	Side
INNHOLD	
Det var oprindeligt tænkt at sammestillet skulle	
Forord	
1. Die Körperliche Vollkommenheit und	153
Schönheit der Götter	183
2. Die Menschenähnlichkeit der Götter durch	204
den Analogieschluss gezeigt	252a
Anmerkungen zu Kap. 2	252a
Abkürzungen	258-259
3. Das Prinzip der gleichen Verteilung (ισονομία)	259
im Universum und die Götter	280
Anmerkungen zu Kap. 3	280
4. Die Ewigkeit und Unsterblichkeit der Götter	280
(se Symb. Ost. 35 (1960) pp. 116 - 126)	

Fig. 3. Title and table of contents of *Physis theon*.

It is worth mentioning that in Kleve's Archive there exists another partially unpublished work titled *Cicero und die epikureische Götterlehre. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion der Epikureischen Theologie*. It is a large preparatory text created before 1957, from which Kleve derived materials partly for *Gnosis Theon* (1963) and partly for *Physis theon*, the monograph that remained unpublished. The work is structured into three notebooks:

1. «Innledning til avhandlingene *Cicero und die epikureische Götterlehre*» (18 pages in Norwegian)
2. «Cicero und die epikureische Götterlehre I» (151 pages in German)
3. «Cicero und die epikureische Götterlehre II» (52 pages in German).

In the Preface («Forord») of the first notebook, Kleve writes:

My original plan was to write a comprehensive treatise on the Epicurean doctrine of gods. The following *Introduction*, written in 1957, is a preface to this planned comprehensive treatise. My present plan is to convert the “parts” of the comprehensive treatise into smaller, independent treatises. Writing extensively on the whole of Epicurean

theology is proving to be a year-long undertaking: it will be a relief to me to know that I will be able to deliver complete works on the subject at not too long intervals. I hope it will also be less of a burden for the reader, who will no longer be conscious of having to wade through section after section to arrive at the mammoth final thesis. As far as I can judge, I now have a complete collection of material for all the theses. All relevant modern literature on the subjects has also been examined.

[my translation from the original Norwegian]

In the same notebook, there is an overview of the topics discussed,³⁹ organised into six sections:

- Part 1: *Our knowledge of the Gods;*
- Part 2: *The physical constitution of the Gods;*
- Part 3: *On the life of the Gods;*
- Part 4: *On the religious life of Epicurus;*
- Part 5: *The consequences of the gods for our lives;*
- Part 6: *The Epicureans' position towards those who hold different beliefs.*

From his pencil notes we learn that Part 1 and 2 were respectively incorporated into *Gnosis Theon* and *Physis Theon*. There is no more extensive treatment of the topics announced in the other parts, specifically on ethics, which should have formed the third volume of the trilogy.

4. The English Translation by David Armstrong

Diels' edition of *On Gods* Book 1 includes only a partial German translation in the commentary, covering the best-preserved columns of text. The only other available translation, also in German, is by Wilhelm Nestle, which is based on Diels' text and covers only some columns (2; 13–14; 16–19; 24–25). An unpublished English translation of the first 20 columns was prepared by David Armstrong for Jacob Mackey around 2005. Mackey, who was tasked with a new edition after Tidemandsen, ultimately abandoned the project. Professor Armstrong in 2018 kindly shared a draft of his translation with me, based on Diels' text with personal annotations. He indicated that he found some reasonably certain text only in columns 11–19. Regarding the first columns, he wrote «[Columns] I–XI appear to me to be worthless as they stand: I hardly believe a single phrase». He also told me that one reason he went no

³⁹ «Oversikt over avhandlingene Cicero und die epikureische Götterlehre», at p. 6–18.

further with the translation is that Diels' supplements in many places assumed the wrong spacing, which, as Kleve had already noted, made the text of the edition unreliable.

Conclusions

The recent analysis of unpublished studies on Philodemus' *On Gods*, Book 1, following Diels' 1916 *editio princeps*, reveals that the text has undergone far more extensive scrutiny over the last century than previously acknowledged. Although Diels' edition remains a cornerstone for academic research, it is clear that the lack of direct examination of the original papyrus has significantly impacted both the reception and interpretation of the work.

The contributions of scholars such as von der Mühl, Eitrem and Armstrong relied exclusively on Diels' edition. As for von der Mühl and Eitrem, many of their conjectures turn out to be inapt because they are formulated on Diels' text, which frequently does not accurately reflect what one reads in the papyrus. Had they had access to a more reliable text, their contributions could have been even more significant. In contrast, the drafts of edition of Kleve and Tidemandsen, which include a closer examination of the surviving material, represent a significant advancement in the field. These drafts should be integrated into the new edition of the text where appropriate.

A separate discussion is warranted for Kleve's unpublished monograph, *Physis Theon*. This is a rich and comprehensive work that would deserve to be brought out from the archives of the Oslo library.⁴⁰ As noted in the preface, Kleve decided not to complete the monograph because he was dissatisfied with the existing editions of the theological works he used as sources to reconstruct Epicurean thought on divinity. The Norwegian scholar was referring mainly to the two theological books of Philodemus edited by Diels, preserved in *PHerc.* 26 and *PHerc.* 152/157. As mentioned, new editions of both these books are currently in progress. It is hoped that these updated texts will soon be available, providing a more reliable foundation for their thorough philosophical interpretation.

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⁴⁰ The publication of Kleve's monograph is among the planned outputs of the LACUNA project.

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PROLEGOMENA PER UN'EDIZIONE DEL SUBLIME DI LEONE ALLACCI*

— OLIVIA MONTEPAONE —

ABSTRACT

L'articolo presenta l'edizione attualmente in corso d'opera del materiale inedito di Leone Allacci sul Περὶ Ὑψους, che comprende una traduzione latina, due serie di annotazioni e un commentario in latino. Si introducono brevemente i diversi testi e si fornisce una descrizione dei due testimoni manoscritti, il cod. Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Carte Allacci XXIX, e il cod. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. gr. 190. Dopo aver discusso gli aspetti filologici — autografi, copie, mani e danni materiali — l'articolo illustra i criteri editoriali, affrontando questioni come la scelta tra edizione diplomatica e critica, nonché aspetti di trascrizione e traduzione. Infine, viene presentato un saggio di edizione di ciascun testo, al fine di offrire un'idea dei contenuti, dello stile e della rilevanza, e viene proposta una datazione ipotetica per la composizione di questo materiale.

This article presents the forthcoming edition of Leone Allacci's previously unpublished material on the Περὶ Ὑψους, which includes a Latin translation, two series of notes, and a Latin commentary. It briefly introduces the different texts and describes the manuscript witnesses: cod. Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Carte Allacci XXIX, and cod. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. gr. 190. After discussing the philological aspects — autographs, copies, scribal hands, and material damage — the article outlines the editorial criteria, addressing issues such as the choice between a diplomatic and a critical edition, as well as matters of transcription and translation. Finally, it presents a sample edition of each item, offering insight into their contents, style, and significance, and proposes a hypothetical dating for the composition of this material.

KEYWORDS

*Leone Allacci, seventeenth-century scholarship,
reception, Περὶ Ὑψους, textual criticism*

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1. Il lavoro di Allacci intorno al Περὶ Ὑψους

Il presente contributo è volto ad introdurre la pubblicazione attualmente in corso d'opera di un importante lavoro inedito di Leone Allacci (ca. 1588–1669), ovvero gli scritti incentrati sul trattato Περὶ Ὑψους. Si tratta di materiale conservato perlopiù nel fondo *Carte Allacci* della Biblioteca Vallicelliana di Roma, e in parte anche in un manoscritto vaticano, il *Vat. Barb. gr.* 190. Ho avuto occasione di trattare il fondo vallicelliano già in altra sede, e non mi soffermerò dunque ulteriormente sulla particolare storia di questa collezione e su quanto è emerso sinora relativamente ai suoi contenuti, limitandomi a ricordarne l'importanza per la vita e l'opera di Allacci¹. Tra gli inediti conservati in questo fondo il materiale composto da Allacci sul *Sublime* è quello che gli studiosi in generale conoscono da più tempo: fu segnalato in prima battuta da G. Costa, poi da C. M. Mazzucchi, e più recentemente anche da E. Refini, M. Heath e T. Vozar². Si tratta di materiale che attesta un lavoro composito e sicuramente non terminato: aspetti che ne rendono più difficoltosa non solo la decifrazione, ma anche, e soprattutto, la pubblicazione. Il fatto che non sia mai stata fatta un'edizione di questo materiale non dipende infatti dalla mancanza di interesse dello stesso: è chiaramente un prezioso tassello della ricezione del trattato pseudolonginiano e specialmente della personalità dell'Allacci filologo al lavoro sui testi classici. All'epoca in cui

¹ Sul fondo cf. specialmente, O. Montepaone, *Carte Allacci: Notes on the fate of Leone Allacci's papers in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Rome*, «Atene e Roma» N.S. XVI/1–4 (2022), pp. 105–120, poi T. Cerbu, *Leone Allacci (1587–1669): The Fortunes of an Early Byzantinist*, diss. Harvard University, 1986 e T. Papadopoulos, Περὶ τῶν Ἀλλατιανῶν χειρογράφων in «Praktika tēs Akadēmias Athēnōn» 55 (1980). Per l'analisi di altri manoscritti contenenti inediti allacciani cf. O. Montepaone, *Praising Virtue: Leone Allacci's unpublished work on Aristotle's Hymn to virtue*, «Sileno» 50 (2024), pp. 99–148, e O. Montepaone, 'One of the Most Curious Monuments of Antiquity'. Leone Allacci and the Monumentum Adulitanum, «Erudition and the Republic of Letters» 9 (2024), pp. 149–170.

² G. Costa, *Latin Translations of Longinus' Περὶ Ὑψους in Renaissance Italy*, in R. Schoeck (ed.), *Acta conventus neo-latini bononiensis: proceedings of the Fourth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies: Bologna, 26 August to 1 September 1979*, Binghamton 1985; C. M. Mazzucchi, *Fozio (Bibliotheca codd. 213, 250), Longino e la critica ellenistica*, «Aevum» 10 (1997), pp. 247–266; C. M. Mazzucchi (ed.), *Dionisio Longino. Del Sublime*, Milano 2010; E. Refini, *Longinus and Poetic Imagination in Late Renaissance Literary Theory*, in C. Van Eck – S. Bussels – M. Delbeke – J. Pieters, *Translations of the Sublime. The Early Modern Reception and Dissemination of Longinus' Peri Hupsous in Rhetoric, the Visual Arts, Architecture and the Theatre*, Leiden-Boston 2012, pp. 33–54; M. Heath, *Dionysius Longinus, On Sublimity*, in S. Papaioannou – A. Serafim – M. Edwards (eds.), *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Ancient Rhetoric*, Leiden-Boston 2021, pp. 223–246; T. Vozar, *Milton, Longinus, and the Sublime in the Seventeenth Century*, Oxford 2024.

Allacci vi si dedica, il trattato è alla sua quarta edizione³ e quarta traduzione⁴, ed è ben avviato per diventare uno dei testi antichi più influenti della storia della letteratura e dell'arte; da esso trae anche ispirazione una nota pubblicazione di Allacci, il *De erroribus magnorum virorum in dicendo*, divenuto subito un'opera di riferimento per le idee del tempo⁵. Se si considera poi il profilo intellettuale di Allacci stesso, il suo lavoro sui testi classici greci e latini è aspetto ben poco indagato, eppure non secondario, anche solo a tener conto della quantità e qualità di questi scritti, rimasti quasi del tutto inediti. Dunque, a fronte dell'evidente importanza di questo materiale, sono state piuttosto le difficoltà pratiche, legate appunto sia alla trascrizione che alle scelte editoriali, a scoraggiarne la pubblicazione sinora, e sono questi gli aspetti che vorrei maggiormente discutere in questa sede.

2. I testimoni manoscritti e i materiali conservati

Del lavoro di Allacci sul Περὶ Ὑψους sopravvive oggi quanto segue: autografo e copia di una traduzione latina completa del trattato pseudo-longiniano; autografo e copia parziale di alcune serie di note in latino (le cui caratteristiche saranno discusse più avanti); ed infine autografo e copia di un commentario in latino. L'autografo del commentario si trova

³ La prima a cura di Robortello (1516–1567), *Dionysii Longini Rhetoris praestantissimi liber de grandi sive sublimi orationis genere*, Basileae 1554, seguita l'anno dopo dall'edizione di Paolo Manuzio (1512–1574), *Dionysii Longini de sublimi genere dicendi*, Venetiis 1555; la terza e la quarta sono opera rispettivamente di Francesco Porto (1511–1581): *Aphthonius, Hermogenes et Dionysius Longinus praestantissimi artis rhetorices magistri Francisci Porti Cretensis opera industriaeque illustrati atque expoliti*, Genevae 1569; e Gabriel de Petra (†1639): *Dionysii Longini Rhetoris praestantissimi liber de grandi sive sublimi genere orationis*, Genevae 1612.

⁴ La prima inedita di Fulvio Orsini, datata 1554, è trattata da G. Costa, *Latin Translations* cit., e si legge nel cod. Vat. Lat. 3441, oggi digitalizzato al seguente indirizzo https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3441. Le traduzioni pubblicate furono invece a opera di D. Pizzimenti (1520–1592), *Dionysii Longini Rhetoris praestantissimi liber de grandi orationis genere*, Dominico Pizimentio Vibonensi interprete, Neapoli 1566 (su cui cf. G. Franzè, *Scelte traduttive della terminologia critico-esegetica del Περὶ Ὑψους nella traduzione di Domenico Pizzimenti*, «Analecta Papyrologica» 28 (2016), pp. 285–299); P. Pagano (fl. 1566), *Dionysii Longini de sublimi dicendi genere a Petro Pagano latinitate donatus*, Venetiis 1572; e G. De Petra, che la pubblicò nell'edizione citata alla nota precedente.

⁵ Cf. J. IJsewijn, *Scrittori Latini a Roma dal Barocco al Neoclassicismo*, «Studi Romani» 36/3–4 (1988), pp. 229–249, specialmente p. 244, e M. Fumaroli, *Crépuscule de l'enthousiasme au XVIIe siècle*, in J.-C. Margolin (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo Latini Turonensis*, vol. II, Paris 1980, pp. 1297–1305.

nel cod. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Vat. Barb. Gr.* 190⁶, mentre tutti i rimanenti testi (autografi e copie) sono contenuti nel cod. Biblioteca Vallicelliana, *Carte Allacci XXIX*⁷.

Il codice vallicelliano è un manoscritto cartaceo di 434 fogli con tre tipologie di filigrane: l'aquila, l'uccello sul *trimontium* (anche capovolto) e l'ancora. È composto da quattro unità codicologiche: gli autografi allacciani costituiscono la prima, e sono vergati su mezze pagine di 9x27 cm; le copie occupano le restanti unità, composte di fogli più grandi, di 20.3x28.1 cm. L'ordine dei fogli è stato alterato in più punti, come vedremo nel dettaglio più avanti. Le mani identificabili sono quattro: oltre ad Allacci, si riconoscono la mano di Raffaele Vernazza (1701–1780), lo *scriptor Graecus* che fu primo autore di questa collezione di materiali allacciani, e poi altre due mani di ignoti copisti. La traduzione del trattato e parte delle note sono state copiate da Vernazza, mentre il restante materiale dagli altri due copisti: la mano del primo dei due copisti anonimi che ha steso la copia del commentario è accurata e affidabile, mentre la seconda, che ha copiato parte delle note, è piuttosto problematica. Questo secondo copista chiaramente non legge bene la grafia di Allacci — al contrario di Vernazza, che invece è molto bravo a decifrarla anche quando è molto rapida e confusa — e non ha neanche piena padronanza del latino, introducendo errori abbastanza importanti⁸. Inespiegabilmente questo copista ha inoltre saltato delle porzioni di testo, che poi Vernazza ha integrato: questa serie di integrazioni di Vernazza si trova però prima della copia delle note stesse. La presenza delle copie è particolarmente importante, perché gli autografi presentano numerose difficoltà di lettura, anche dovute a danni materiali⁹: da un lato la copia consente di salvare porzioni altrimenti perdute o di decifrare punti decisamente ardui, ma, d'altra parte, quando l'unico testo sopravvissuto è quello della mano più problematica, esso risulta spesso privo di senso e si deve ricorrere alla congettura o anche alle *cruces*.

⁶ Digitalizzato e consultabile al seguente indirizzo: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Barb.gr.190. Il commentario è ai ff. Ir–21v; questo manoscritto contiene poi altri materiali inediti allacciani, cf. Montepaone, 'One of the Most Curious' cit.

⁷ Un elenco dettagliato dei contenuti di questo codice è in appendice.

⁸ Non è possibile fornire un elenco completo degli errori, troppo numerosi, ma a titolo di esempio si possono segnalare i seguenti: *tumit* in luogo di *sumit* (f. 297r); *Plutarcha* in luogo di *Plutarchi* (f. 297r); *et* in luogo di *ut* (f. 297v); *serie* anziché *scire* (f. 314v); *hac* in luogo di *ac* (f. 318r); *Traiani* per *Troiani* (f. 339r); *perculatus* in luogo di *postulatus* (f. 344r).

⁹ Si segnalano in particolare i seguenti danni, che interessano variamente l'intera porzione autografa: margini erosi; inchiostro sbiadito oppure sbavato; fori in corrispondenza di alcune parole. Trattandosi inoltre di fogli scritti recto verso spesso il testo sull'altra facciata ostacola la lettura.

L'autografo del codice barberiniano è conservato molto meglio: il manoscritto non presenta particolari danni materiali — fatta eccezione per una macchia che interessa le ultime due righe del f. 11 — e, come si è detto, il commentario latino qui contenuto è stato copiato con estrema precisione, così che questo è senz'altro il testo più semplice da affrontare e non solo a livello paleografico. Si deve infatti segnalare che, come accennato più sopra, oltre alle difficoltà derivanti dai danni meccanici, tutto il materiale allacciato sul *Sublime* ad eccezione del commentario è un lavoro non finito e lasciato in diversi stadi di composizione. La traduzione è il materiale più grezzo: pur essendo una versione latina dell'intero testo del Περὶ Ὑψους, reca moltissime cancellature e revisioni, oltre ad aggiunte in margine e nell'interlinea, così che la sua decifrazione sarebbe davvero impresa ardua senza l'ausilio della copia di Vernazza. Le note non presentano particolari segni di revisione, ma sono d'altra parte spesso tronche, ricche di «etc.», ad indicare passaggi che dovevano evidentemente essere completati più avanti; sono in particolare le citazioni di autori greci, latini e italiani ad essere incomplete — spesso si ha soltanto il nome dell'autore o il titolo dell'opera — ma talvolta anche le frasi stesse di Allacci. Le note sono poi piuttosto complesse anche dal punto di vista dell'organizzazione logica. Si hanno due gruppi principali, che ho per comodità distinto in “note alla traduzione” e “note al testo greco” per indicarne la differenza più importante, ovvero che le prime interessano la versione latina del Περὶ Ὑψους, mentre le seconde sono rivolte al commento del testo greco. Entrambe le serie di annotazioni sono stese nel tipico formato dei volumi di *Animadversa* umanistici, quindi con una porzione del testo che si intende commentare, separata con una parentesi quadra chiusa dal commento ad essa dedicato (cf. l'esempio più in basso); tuttavia, mentre le note alla traduzione — che coprono solo i § 1–33, 2 del trattato — commentano aspetti di tipo contenutistico, riportando molte citazioni di autori e testi ma spesso semplicemente parafrasando il trattato, le note al testo greco — che interessano l'intero trattato — sono molto eterogenee e contengono anche commenti di natura linguistica e filologica, per noi estremamente interessanti.

Per quanto riguarda le note al testo greco si aggiungono poi ulteriori elementi di complessità. Anzitutto occorre segnalare che di esse non si ha una copia completa, come invece accade con le note alla traduzione: Vernazza trascrive egli stesso solamente le prime 21, poi la copia si

interrompe e si avvia quella delle note alla traduzione¹⁰. Questo è un dato non da poco, giacché l'autografo allacciano di queste note è piuttosto rovinato, la carta si è molto scurita rendendo alquanto complessa la lettura in parecchi punti. Inoltre, laddove le note alla traduzione costituiscono un gruppo compatto di note numerate da 1 a 65¹¹, nel caso delle note al testo greco si tratta in realtà di ben tre gruppi diversi: tutti lemmatizzano il testo greco ma hanno caratteristiche formali e contenutistiche differenti. Il primo gruppo di queste note occupa i ff. 66v–67v e 147r–155v: è diviso in due parti, perché i fascicoli che contengono gli altri due gruppi sono stati inseriti in mezzo al fascicolo del primo. In questo gruppo si hanno principalmente note di commento alle precedenti traduzioni latine del trattato pseudolonginiano, ma anche note a carattere filologico, e Allacci segue l'ordine dei capitoli del Περὶ Ὑψους. Il secondo gruppo di note si trova ai ff. 70r–131v, è il più eterogeneo ed anche il più difficile da leggere per diverse ragioni: contiene osservazioni molto varie, di diversa lunghezza, e non segue l'ordine dei capitoli del Περὶ Ὑψους, ripetendo talvolta anche due o tre volte lo stesso passo in punti diversi. Il terzo gruppo interessa i ff. 132r–143r: si tratta in questo caso di note brevissime, spesso costituite solo da qualche parola o breve frase, e nel complesso appare quasi come un compendio di quanto detto nei due gruppi precedenti. Sembra dunque che Allacci abbia ricominciato tre volte ad annotare il trattato sotto il profilo del testo greco. Nell'insieme, tanto le note alla traduzione quanto le note al testo restituiscono l'impressione di appunti di lavoro: materiale preliminare che sarebbe poi stato condensato e inquadrato in una veste più precisa in fase di edizione.

Il commentario appare invece in forma più definitiva: si tratta comunque di un commento organizzato per lemmi (con riferimento al testo greco), ma il contenuto è a carattere discorsivo, i lemmi non sono molti e la trattazione è ampia e digressiva. Si ha qualche revisione occasionale nella forma di integrazioni in margine, ma questo lavoro è indubbiamente più compiuto. Presenta peraltro anche un titolo (al contrario di tutti gli altri testi):

«Leonis Allatii commentarii in librum Dionysii Longini Rhetoris De sublimi genere orationis quem nunc denuo latinis verbis expressit et emendavit etc» (cod. *Vat. Barb. gr.* 190, f. 1r).

¹⁰ Come si evince dai contenuti dettagliati in appendice, nel manoscritto si ha un totale di 18 facciate lasciate bianche tra le serie di note: uno spazio non piccolo, ma comunque insufficiente a contenere tutte le note mancanti.

¹¹ Benché ovvio è comunque opportuno precisare che questa numerazione, voluta da Allacci stesso, non fa riferimento ai capitoli del trattato pseudolonginiano, la cui numerazione nella versione allacciana in ogni caso diverge da quella moderna.

È possibile confrontare questo titolo con quello che Allacci cita nelle sue *Apes urbanae* (1633) — in cui si trova appunto un riferimento al lavoro sul *Sublime* — ovvero «Commentarii in Libellum Longini *de sublimi genere dicendi* cum nova versione et notis censoriis». Dai due titoli pare di potersi dedurre che l'intenzione di Allacci in merito alla pubblicazione di questi lavori fosse di dare alle stampe il commentario, la traduzione e alcune note di critica testuale (cf. «notis censoriis»/«emendavit»), senza produrre una nuova edizione del trattato.

Ciò che infine stupisce notevolmente del commentario è che — pur terminando con l'affermazione «Pro explicatione tamen verborum Longini hoc satis sint» (cod. *Vat. Barb. gr.* 190 f. 21r) — esso copre di fatto soltanto parte della prima frase del Περὶ Ὑψους¹². Si nota una ripresa di alcuni punti discussi nelle note alla traduzione — che in quei casi sembrano dunque preparatorie rispetto al commento — ma questo testo ha perlopiù una natura differente e autonoma. Esso è peraltro assai divagante, e ospita osservazioni pertinenti accanto ad *excursus* anche di natura apparentemente quasi personale, quale un'estesa parentesi sulla lunghezza e l'oscurità dei titoli delle pubblicazioni ai tempi di Allacci, o sulla bruttezza dei carmi di un non meglio specificato conoscente.

3. Criteri editoriali

Dal quadro tracciato emerge dunque una situazione piuttosto articolata, che implica chiaramente che i testi non possono essere affrontati allo stesso modo in sede di edizione. Il materiale più complesso è senz'altro quello rappresentato dalle note al testo greco: benché restituiscano un interessante quadro del metodo di lavoro di Allacci — che procedeva evidentemente scrivendo, riscrivendo e compendiando — un'edizione completa risulterebbe ripetitiva e farraginosa, anche se si decidesse di ripristinare l'ordine corretto tanto dei vari gruppi quanto delle singole note in relazione al trattato pseudolonginiano. Va poi considerato anche il dato della volontà autoriale: è evidente come Allacci non intendesse pubblicare il lavoro con questa precisa veste, e benché per noi questi materiali presentino un valore storico indipendente è comunque sensato rimarcare il divario tra quanto si legge oggi e quanto probabilmente fosse

¹² Ovvero § 1, 1: Τὸ μὲν τοῦ Καικιλίου συγγραμμάτων, ὃ περὶ ὕψους συνετάξατο, ἀνασκοπούμενοις ἡμῖν ὡς οἶσθα κοινῇ, Ποστούμει Τερεντιανὲ φίλτατε, ταπεινότερον ἐφάνη τῆς ὅλης ὑποθέσεως καὶ ἥκιστα τῶν καιρίων ἐφαπτόμενον, οὐ πολλὴν τε ὠφέλειαν, ἥς μάλιστα δεῖ στοχάζεσθαι τὸν γράφοντα, περιποιοῦν τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν, εἴγ' ἐπὶ πάσης τεχνολογίας δεῖν ἀπαιτούμενων, προτέρου μὲν τοῦ δείξαι τί τὸ ὑποκείμενον, δευτέρου δὲ τῇ τάξει, τῇ δυνάμει δὲ κυριωτέρου.

nelle intenzioni del suo autore. Poiché la lettura delle note ha comunque evidenziato osservazioni di un certo interesse, tanto sul piano filologico quanto su quello interpretativo, nonché per ciò che concerne l'approccio allacciano, sembra più utile selezionare le note più interessanti e commentarle all'interno di una trattazione discorsiva che ne agevoli la lettura evidenziandone al contempo il rilievo.

Gli altri testi devono essere invece oggetto di edizione critica; poiché presentano caratteristiche differenti tanto a livello critico-testuale quanto contenutistico è però necessario procedere diversamente per ciascuno. Per quanto riguarda la traduzione del trattato le possibilità in sede di edizione sono sostanzialmente due: un'edizione diplomatica che dia conto di tutte le revisioni e gli interventi di Allacci; oppure un'edizione critica che presenti il testo 'finale'. La prima opzione ha un certo interesse, anche perché Allacci nelle note non cita il testo finale della traduzione ma la prima versione, precedente le sue stesse revisioni. Tuttavia, questo tipo di edizione risulterebbe più opportuna come pubblicazione isolata: nel contesto di un volume contenente più materiali, così diversi tra loro e con vari livelli di complessità e interesse, è parso più utile presentare un'edizione del testo finale, riservando le osservazioni sulle revisioni e sul metodo traduttorio di Allacci ad altra sede.

Il commentario, che, come si è detto, non presenta particolari difficoltà di lettura, deve essere edito criticamente nella sua interezza e corredato da una traduzione a fronte. È necessario inoltre accompagnare i materiali allacciani editi da una traduzione per rispondere anzitutto ad esigenze di tipo interpretativo. Il latino allacciano non è particolarmente scorrevole, l'uso della punteggiatura è scarno e non risponde naturalmente alle convenzioni moderne, producendo dunque periodi estremamente lunghi e a tratti persino confusi: in certi casi parrebbe di trovarsi davanti ad un periodare greco, specialmente per via di una struttura ipotattica spesso asimmetrica. La traduzione si pone quindi come una scelta interpretativa, volta a fare chiarezza di un testo assai denso, con la consapevolezza dei limiti insiti in qualsiasi operazione di questo tipo. La possibilità di corredare il testo tradotto di un apparato di note di commento consente poi di evidenziare le opacità a livello tanto stilistico quanto contenutistico, oppure di mettere in risalto singoli punti significativi. Inoltre, il valore storico di questi materiali, incentrati su un testo antico di capitale importanza artistico-letteraria, impone di raggiungere un pubblico ampio, e dunque di rendere i testi accessibili anche a studi che non abbiano esigenze di tipo linguistico e filologico¹³.

¹³ Cf. specialmente le osservazioni di I. A. R. De Smet, *Translating Neo-Latin Texts for Contemporary Audiences: Some Methodological Reflections*, in D. Sacré – A.

Le note allacciane alla traduzione, anch'esse oggetto di edizione e corredate da nostra traduzione, non possono essere edite nella loro interezza. Come si è detto, si tratta in questo caso di materiale incompleto, costellato di frasi tronche e di «etc.», nonché talvolta di semplici parafrasi del trattato pseudolonginiano. Per rendere dunque più immediatamente evidente ed incisivo il pensiero allacciano, si è deciso di optare per una selezione delle note più complete e ricche, e dunque anche più leggibili.

Infine, viste le condizioni del materiale, per tutti i testi proposti è necessaria un'edizione critica con apparato, che ha naturalmente maggior peso nel caso dei materiali più compromessi (la traduzione in particolare) e risulta invece più scarno in caso di testi o passi senza difficoltà di lettura. Qualsiasi incertezza nella trascrizione è stata segnalata, indicando esattamente quanto si legge (o *non* si legge) nell'autografo e quanto recato invece dalle copie. Quando il testo dell'autografo non è presente o non è leggibile e si deve dunque ricorrere alla copia, ciò è sempre segnalato, anche quando non vi sono particolari problemi nel testo, per chiarire quanto è prodotto genuinamente allacciano e quanto no. In casi estremamente rari è poi necessario correggere Allacci stesso, che ha commesso normali errori di scrittura come omissioni o aggiunte: tutti gli interventi di questo tipo devono necessariamente essere segnalati in apparato.

Per quanto riguarda la trascrizione del latino, negli esempi qui riportati così come nell'edizione completa sembra opportuno adottare le norme ortografiche del latino classico, modernizzare la punteggiatura e la capitalizzazione, ed espandere tutte le abbreviazioni. Quello della normalizzazione è un tema assai dibattuto in sede di edizione di testi cosiddetti neolatini¹⁴, e le possibilità che si offrono agli studiosi sono tre, ovvero non normalizzare, normalizzare completamente oppure parzialmente. L'ultima possibilità, oltre ad essere 'astorica'¹⁵, lascia spazio a discussioni su che cosa debba essere conservato e cosa no, finendo per approdare ad una sostanziale arbitrarietà, dettata dalle necessità del singolo studio. La scelta di non intervenire in alcun modo è senz'altro volta a conservare la storicità del materiale, e dunque in molte situazioni risulta auspicabile, ma nel caso dei testi allacciani, di cui abbiamo già osservato la complessità sotto vari profili, mantenere tutte le peculiarità

Smeesters – T. Van Houdt – K. Viiding (eds.), *‘Quicquid laborum suscipiebat, amore studiorum suscipiebat’*: *Studies in Memory of Jeanine De Landtsheer* = Special Issue «Humanistica Lovaniensia», n.s. (2023), pp. 451–485.

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. L. Deitz, *The Tools of the Trade: A Few Remarks on Editing Renaissance Latin Texts*, «HL» 54 (2005), pp. 345–358, e K. Sidwell, *Editing Neo-Latin Literature*, in V. Moul (ed.), *A Guide to Neo-Latin Literature*, Cambridge 2017, pp. 394–407.

¹⁵ Come già osservato da Sidwell (2017), *Editing cit.*, pp. 402–403.

ortografiche di Allacci, pur corredate da spiegazione, aggiungerebbe un ulteriore ostacolo alla lettura di materiale già di per sé denso. Inoltre, Allacci stesso non è sempre coerente e non aderisce tanto ad uno standard seicentesco, quanto a sue idiosincrasie — in certi casi forse dovute alla madrelingua greca — con esiti inaspettati, che potrebbero persino apparire errori di stampa a prima vista. Come si è detto, lo scarno uso della punteggiatura produce poi un testo estremamente faticoso per il lettore moderno, anche se esperto latinista. La standardizzazione risulta dunque preferibile nell'ottica di una migliore fruizione degli scritti allacciani, e nell'intenzione di produrne un'edizione critica e non diplomatica.

Quanto osservato sin qui chiarisce bene le difficoltà poste da questo materiale e la necessità di operare scelte ben precise, inquadrando i testi entro un orizzonte interpretativo senza il quale sarebbero di più difficile consultazione. Le scelte fatte sono andate nella direzione di dare comunque risalto ai testi, mettendo al centro del lavoro il commentario e una selezione delle note alla traduzione, e riservando uno spazio minore alla traduzione del trattato e alle note al testo greco. Vale la pena soffermarsi brevemente su qualche esempio indicativo tanto del valore dei materiali quanto delle scelte fatte.

4. La traduzione

Riportiamo innanzitutto un estratto della traduzione allacciana di parte del § 1, che accostiamo qui al testo greco dell'ultima edizione disponibile al tempo della composizione di questo materiale, ovvero quella di G. De Petra (1612)¹⁶:

Compendia et signa

A translatio Longini ab Allatio composita

V exemplar translationis allatiana a Vernazza redactum

... litterae quae legi non possunt

h littera dubia

Nam quae naturam superant non in persuasionem auditores, sed in	1
stuporem impellunt. Locis item omnibus semperque non sine animi	
consternatione ab admirabili vincitur quod probabile est et ad	
gratiam comparatur, siquidem probabile plerumque in nostra manu	
est; haec vero grandia scilicet veluti tyrannidem exercentia et	5
inexpugnabilem vim adferentia supra auditorem sunt. Et inventionis	

¹⁶ Cf. n. 3.

solertiam, rerum item ordinem, et dispositionem non ex una re aut duabus sed ex universa orationis structura vix elucentem intuemur. At sublime enunciatum si tempestive usurpetur instar fulminis omnia convellit et dissipat, nec non repente confertasaſque oratoris vires 10 patefacit. Haec namque et his similia tu quoque Terentiane suavissime ex usu atque experientia eductus aliis traderes.

(cod. *Carte Allacci* XXIX, ff. 45r–45v)

10aſque legitur inter lineam A: pissasque V

οὐ γὰρ εἰς πειθῶ τοὺς ἀκροωμένους ἀλλ'εἰς ἔκστασιν ἄγει τὰ ὑπερφυᾶ· πάντη δέ γε σὺν ἐκπλήξει τοῦ πιθανοῦ καὶ τοῦ πρὸς χάριν ἀεὶ κρατεῖ τὸ θαυμάσιον, εἶγε τὸ μὲν πιθανὸν ὥς τὰ πολλὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν. ταῦτα δὲ δυναστείαν καὶ βίαν ἄμαχον προσφέροντα παντὸς ἐπάνω τοῦ ἀκροωμένου καθίσταται. καὶ τὴν μὲν ἐμπειρίαν τῆς εὐρέσεως καὶ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων τάξιν καὶ οἰκονομίαν οὐκ ἐξ ἑνὸς οὐδ' ἐκ δυοῖν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ὅλου τῶν λόγων ὕφους μόλις ἐκφαινομένην ὁρῶμεν. ὕψος δέ που καιρίως ἐξενεχθὲν τά τε πράγματα δίκην σκηπτοῦ πάντα διεφόρησε καὶ τὴν τοῦ ῥήτορος εὐθὺς ἀθρόαν ἐνεδείξατο δύναμιν. ταῦτα γὰρ οἶμαι καὶ τὰ παραπλήσια, Τερεντιανὲ ἥδιστε, κἂν αὐτὸς ἐκ πείρας ὑφηγήσαιο.

Questo passo — punto centrale dell'*incipit* del trattato — è oggetto di molteplici revisioni da parte di Allacci, ed è infatti anche di ardua decifrazione. Notiamo anzitutto che Allacci ha tradotto τὰ ὑπερφυᾶ con la relativa «quae naturam superant», optando dunque per una resa letterale e quasi didascalica del termine greco: è evidente lungo tutta la traduzione di Allacci una preoccupazione per una resa più fedele possibile al Περὶ Ὑψους, in risposta soprattutto ai primi due traduttori, D. Pizzimenti (1566) e P. Pagano (1572)¹⁷, ampiamente commentati e criticati nelle note al testo greco. L'efficace traduzione di εἰς ἔκστασιν con «in stuporem» appariva già nell'ultima versione a cura di G. De Petra (1612). La resa diventa leggermente meno letterale nella seconda frase, ove Allacci preferisce la litote «non sine animi consternatione» per rendere il semplice complemento σὺν ἐκπλήξει, e volge poi il verbo al passivo. Il periodo alle r. 6–8 ricalca invece molto da vicino il greco, rispettandone attentamente l'*ordo verborum*: anche questa è una caratteristica che si riscontra in vari punti della traduzione. Alla r. 10 troviamo invece un problema di lettura, dovuto al fatto che qui il testo, di piccolissime dimensioni, è scritto *inter lineam*, a correggere una porzione cancellata oggi completamente illegibile. La copia di Vernazza non è qui particolarmente utile e reca un poco perspicuo *pissasque*, che risulta anche

¹⁷ Cf. n. 4.

poco compatibile a livello paleografico con i segni leggibili¹⁸: il testo greco del XVII secolo — come anche quello di oggi — legge τὴν τοῦ ῥήτορος εὐθὺς ἀθρόαν ἐνεδείξατο δύναμιν, con il solo sintagma ἀθρόαν δύναμιν, di cui *confertas vires* è traduzione letterale esatta. Come per il verbo διεφόρησε, tradotto da Allacci con «convellit et dissipat», anche qui deve trovarsi probabilmente un'endiadi, che espande ἀθρόαν, ma l'altro participio da accostare a *confertas* non è di semplice individuazione.

5. Le note al testo greco

Come si è detto sopra, tra le note al testo greco si trovano commenti a carattere critico-testuale: questo aspetto dell'attività allacciana, sinora considerato secondario, ha invece un suo ruolo ben preciso nel più ampio quadro dell'approccio al Περὶ Ὑψους e ai testi classici in genere. Come già osservato in altra sede¹⁹, benché quello filologico non fosse l'interesse primario di Allacci nell'affrontare opere antiche, esso è comunque ben documentato, e Allacci è spesso in grado di fare osservazioni acute. Si consideri ad esempio la seguente nota, relativa ad un passaggio del § 32, 3 (il latino che traduce il trattato è posto in corsivo, mentre le parole di Allacci sono in tondo):

ἐνταῦθα τῷ πλήθει] Piz. *Hic translationum copia oratoris in proditores ira ante oculos posita est. Pag. Hoc in loco multitudine verborum translatorum oratoris ira in proditores fuit obscurata. Ita sibi invicem sunt contrarii ut Longino ipsi, neque enim ullo pacto oratoris ira ante oculos posita est, aut est obscurata translatorum multitudine et copia sed ipsamet ira effecit ne huiusmodi multitudo vitio detur oratori. Equidem Piz. deceptus est lectione codicis Manutiani in quo male habetur ἐπίπροσθε, non ἐπιπροσθεῖ ut recte Basileiana.*

(cod. Carte Allacci XXIX, ff. 154v–155r).

«ἐνταῦθα τῷ πλήθει] Pizzimenti: *Hic translationum copia oratoris in proditores ira ante oculos posita est. Pagano: Hoc in loco multitudine verborum translatorum oratoris ira in proditores fuit obscurata.* Sono tanto discordi tra loro quanto con Longino stesso; infatti non è affatto che “l'ira dell'oratore è posta davanti agli occhi” o “è oscurata dalla moltitudine e abbondanza di metafore”, ma l'ira stessa fa in modo

¹⁸ La lettera iniziale ha infatti un'asta discendente che risulta forse più simile a quella della lettera f, anziché della p, ma la dimensione così ridotta produce naturalmente tratti meno coerenti con la normale grafia di Allacci, distorcendo le lettere, ed è quindi necessaria molta cautela nella loro identificazione.

¹⁹ Cf. Montepaone, ‘One of the Most Curious’ cit.

che una siffatta moltitudine non sia attribuita a difetto dell'oratore. Sicuramente Pizzimenti è stato ingannato dalla lezione del codice manuziano, in cui si legge scorrettamente *ἐπίπροσθε*, e non *ἐπιπροσθεῖ*, come correttamente si ha nell'edizione di Basilea».

Allacci prende qui le mosse dalla discussione sulle due precedenti traduzioni del trattato, per poi passare alla critica del testo. In questo caso, osserva Allacci, l'origine di una delle traduzioni scorrette era una particolare variante dell'edizione di Paolo Manuzio (1555), a fronte di un testo più corretto nella «Basileiana», ossia l'edizione di Robortello (1554)²⁰. Allacci nota giustamente che qui il testo del trattato deve essere *ἐπιπροσθεῖ*, che anche oggi si stampa, e che fu a tutti gli effetti un'emendazione di Robortello, laddove il manoscritto comune ad entrambe le edizioni (cod. *Parisinus graecus* 2036) recava *ἐπίπροσθε*.

Oltre ad osservazioni di questo tipo si hanno anche note filologiche rivolte ai testi citati dallo Pseudo Longino, dalle quali emerge chiaramente l'attività di collazione eseguita dall'erudito greco: Allacci ha compreso che il trattato è una fonte preziosa che può fornire varianti anche per altri autori e confronta così le edizioni a sua disposizione con il testo pseudolonginiano, traendone varie osservazioni. Così accade ad esempio con la citazione platonica del § 32, 5, che riporta un estratto di *Tim.* 70b:

ἄμμα δὲ τῶν φλεβῶν] Basilaean habet *ἄναμμα* eodem sensu, quare necessario restituenda est vox apud Platonem, in quo est *ἄμα* pro *ἄμμα*, quod et suspicatus est ultimae translationis auctor.

(cod. *Carte Allacci* XXIX, f. 155r)

«*ἄμμα δὲ τῶν φλεβῶν*] l'edizione di Basilea reca *ἄναμμα* con lo stesso significato: si deve perciò necessariamente restituire la lezione anche presso Platone, in cui si legge *ἄμα* in luogo di *ἄμμα*, come ha sospettato anche l'ultimo traduttore».

Questa nota è tratta dal primo gruppo, ma la questione è ripresa ancora da Allacci nelle note del terzo gruppo, in cui egli formula anche una sua congettura, ovvero:

ἄμμα δὲ τῶν φλεβῶν] lego *ναμμα* supplendo ex Platone Timaeo *καρδίαν*.

(cod. *Carte Allacci* XXIX, f. 139r)

²⁰ Cf. nota 3. Si tenga presente che in realtà le due edizioni non si basavano su codici differenti, ma divergevano per il lavoro degli editori.

«ἄμματα δὲ τῶν φλεβῶν] leggo νᾶματα aggiungendo καρδίαν dal *Timeo* di Platone».

Nel gruppo più sintetico dei tre, in cui Allacci sembra talvolta aver compendiato le osservazioni dei precedenti gruppi, egli modifica la sua proposta di lettura del passo tanto nel trattato *Sul Sublime* quanto nel dialogo platonico, suggerendo dunque τὴν δὲ δὴ καρδίαν νᾶματα τῶν φλεβῶν, con l'introduzione di καρδίαν, presente nel *Timeo*. La selezione delle note alla traduzione che si vuole proporre mira dunque a mettere in risalto contenuti di questo tipo, che illustrino l'acutezza critica di Allacci e l'intensa attività di collazione, descrivendo il suo metodo di lavoro.

6. Le note alla traduzione

Confrontiamo ora queste note con un estratto dalle note alla traduzione latina, e precisamente le ultime frasi della n. 33, in cui Allacci conclude un lungo confronto tra il famoso carne di Saffo (citato nel § 10 del trattato) e la sua celebre traduzione catulliana. Di seguito l'edizione critica del passo, in cui le citazioni sono state poste in corsivo per agevolare la lettura:

Compendia et signa

{abcd} quae ab exemplari notarum unice traduntur

Catullus quidem diversa prorsus sententia suam odam conclusit et 1
sententiae gravitatem alia graviori firmavit sententia dicens *otio*
exultas nimiumque gestis, otium et reges prius et beatas perdidit
urbes. Uter autem melius, ego sane conceptum hunc nimis diversum a
re proposita sentio, et ut non improbo illud *Otia si tollas* etc. nec 5
Corydonis poenitentiam damno. *Ah Corydon Corydon* etc. Magis
tamen naturalem et hoc in loco magis praestantem arbitror Sapphonis
conclusionem utpote {quae} serio agentem, id est re vera sic affectam
ut praedictas novem consequentias re vera credat et re vera sentiat ac
patiat. Accedit quod brevior enumeratio istarum passionum 10
multum virium detraxit extasi Catullianae, et poenitentia iusto
celerior, praeter quam idem operetur, se ipsam facit minus
verisimilem quatenus ab animi incostantia potius quam e seria
poenitentia ortum habere videtur. Illud quoque praetereundum non
est quod magis patheticum est enumerare singulas passiones pro ut 15
occurrunt quam ut fecit Catullus qui logice agens, tuus, inquit,
aspectus tua loquela, tuus risus {misero} mihi {omnes} sensus eripiunt
nam simul te aspexi etc. Aliud enim est serio probare quod dicis, quam

dolenter enumerare quod pateris; pauca vero haec nostra de Catullo egregie confirmantur ex sequentibus etc. 20
(cod. *Carte Allacci* XXIX, ff. 16v–17r).

«Catullo tuttavia concluse la sua ode con un concetto molto diverso e ne rinforzò la serietà con un altro ancora più grave, dicendo “gioisci e godi eccessivamente dell’ozio, e l’ozio ha distrutto in passato re e ricche città”²¹. Su quale dei due sia meglio, io per parte mia trovo questo concetto troppo diverso dal proposito iniziale, e così come non disapprovo quel “se rimuovi l’ozio”²², non condanno Catullo alla pena di Coridone²³. “Ah, Coridone, Coridone”, ecc. Ma ritengo che la conclusione di Saffo sia più naturale e più efficace qui, poiché ella procede seriamente, cioè in quanto realmente influenzata, al punto da credere vere le nove conseguenze e provarle e soffrirle davvero. Si aggiunge il fatto che il più breve elenco di queste passioni ha ridotto l’intensità dell’estasi catulliana, e la penitenza che giunge troppo rapida si rende poco credibile — se non per il fatto che agisce allo stesso modo — dato che sembra sorgere dall’incostanza dell’animo anziché dalla sincera penitenza. Non si dovrebbe inoltre tralasciare il fatto che è più capace di smuovere l’animo elencare le singole passioni man mano che sorgono, anziché fare come Catullo, che procede in modo logico, dicendo “il tuo aspetto, la tua parola, il tuo riso strappano a me misero ogni senso appena ti vedo” ecc. Dimostrare ciò che dici seriamente è diverso infatti dall’elencare ciò che soffri con forte emozione. Questi pochi punti che abbiamo discusso su Catullo sono confermati da ciò che segue ecc.».

La diversa natura di questa serie di note è ben evidente, così come il suo carattere non finito, segnato dai vari «etc.» inframmezzati al testo. Come si vede, il commento qui proposto è di natura prettamente letteraria, volto ad analizzare le differenze tra i due testi in base alle categorie del sublime indicate nel trattato. Allacci stesso esprime la sua preferenza per il maggiore *pathos* dell’ode saffica, a fronte del razionalismo di Catullo, «logice agens». Il passo contiene un riferimento ovidiano (*otia si tollas*) — qui accostato al testo di Catullo — e un generico cenno virgiliano (*Ah Corydon, Corydon*), ma, come anticipato, Allacci spazia molto nei riferimenti di queste note, che, in altri casi qui non riportati, includono anche autori come Ariosto, citato nella n. 7 per il suo trattamento della follia di Orlando; o Petrarca, che compare nella n. 25 per la potenza

²¹ *Carmina* 51, 14–16.

²² *Remedia amoris* 135.

²³ Un riferimento a *Ecloga* 7, v. 70.

dell'espressione; o ancora Sannazaro, che viene invece alquanto criticato nella n. 7.

7. Il commentario

Infine, passando al commentario latino, tra i molti passi interessanti ci si può qui soffermare sulla lunga discussione di Allacci intorno alla definizione di *ars*, tratta dal commento al termine *τεχνολογία* che figura nel § 1, 1 del trattato pseudolonginiano. Non è possibile riportare l'intera discussione, che, pur prendendo le mosse dal trattato, se ne distanzia ampiamente, ma il seguente estratto può dare una chiara idea tanto del pensiero quanto dello stile allacciano. Come si è detto più sopra, il commentario non presenta particolari problemi e le difficoltà di lettura sono molto rare, così che l'apparato critico è raramente necessario; nel caso di questo passo non vi è alcuna criticità ed è dunque presentato qui senza apparato:

Τέχνην eam vocatam quasi *ἐχονόην* vult Plato in Cratylo, eiusque rationem dat. Latinis vero ars est quia arcto principio singula definiat, et eruditionum modus breviter perstringat, et velut vias quasdam ostendit, vel *ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς* id est a virtute, unde veteres artem pro virtute posuerunt. Cuius auctorem Deum esse quidam contendunt nec immerito. Ipse enim est dux, fons, et origo omnium bonorum. Alii ad Chaldaeos, multi ad Graecos eius inventionem referunt, qui ludere potius quam serio agere mihi videntur. Rationibus enim videntur concludere artes nullas, ni Chaldaei Graecique extitissent, inter homines excolendas fuisse, meliori itaque consilio artium, sicut et reliquarum disciplinarum, primam originem fuisse necessitatem atque experientiam, ministerio tamen sensuum, observationis, sciendi cupiditatis, atque admirationis, ut videtur colligi ex Aristotele et Platone in Theaeteto ex fabula Thaumantis et Iridis. Primum enim homines, dura egestate vexati, ea tantum quae incommodis opem ferre videantur adinvenerunt, deinde quae illis melius occurrerent, tandem ad voluptatem etiam multa et lautioris vitae luxusque causa non tantum corporis sed et animi offenderunt, rerum praeteritarum memoria, duce experientia, et avido cupiditatis et insatiabili desiderio. [...]

Quibus omnibus si addas hominum ab omni curatione et administratione rerum, a forensibus concitationibus, ab omni munere officioque publico ac domestico, a cogitatione rerum necessariarum vacantium industriam quosnam profectus progressusque artes habuisse existimas? Hinc circa Aegyptum Mathematicae artes constitutae et auctae sunt, illic enim gens sacerdotum vacare permissa

erat. Et Asclepius loco saepius citato ἐκέεισε γὰρ πρῶτον συνέστησαν αἱ μαθηματικαὶ ἐπιστήμαι, ἐπειδὴ οἱ ἱερεῖς τὰ ἀναγκαῖα εἶχον ἄλλοθεν αὐτοῖς παρεχόμενα καὶ ἐσχόλαζον μόνοις τοῖς μαθήμασιν· διὸ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἱερογλυφικοῖς γράμμασι ταῦτα εἶχον γεγραμμένα. Et hunc etiam ordinem fuisse non dubitamus affirmare, quidquid alii dicant, primo enim vitae necessitati consulitur, deinde voluptates atque oblectamenta quaeruntur.

(cod. Vat. Barb. gr. 190, f. 15v).

«Nel *Cratilo*, Platone definisce la τέχνη come ἐχονόη, e ne dà conto²⁴. Invero in latino essa è detta *ars* perché definisce le cose individuali secondo un principio ristretto (*arcto principio*), e riassume brevemente le forme di conoscenza, come se mostrasse dei percorsi; ossia ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, cioè “dalla virtù” — ed è per questo che gli antichi chiamavano virtù l’arte²⁵. Alcuni ritengono, e a ragione, che il suo creatore sia stato Dio. Egli è infatti la guida, la fonte e l’origine di ogni bene. Altri ne attribuiscono la scoperta ai Caldei, e molti ai Greci: costoro, a mio avviso, scherzano più che parlare seriamente. Infatti, se così fosse, potremmo ragionevolmente concludere che nessuna arte sarebbe praticata dagli uomini, se i Caldei e i Greci non fossero mai esistiti. È dunque più logico concludere che l’origine dell’arte, così come di tutte le altre discipline, siano state la necessità e l’esperienza, ma sotto la guida dei sensi, dell’osservazione, del desiderio di conoscere e della meraviglia, come si può dedurre da Aristotele e da Platone, nel *Teeteto*, in base al mito di Taumante e Iris²⁶. In un primo momento, gli uomini, tormentati dalla dura privazione, idearono solo ciò che sembrava alleviare le loro sofferenze, poi quanto offriva soluzioni migliori. Infine, spinti dalla memoria degli eventi passati, e guidati sia dall’esperienza sia da un desiderio ardente e insaziabile di piacere, si danneggiarono molto per il godimento e per il desiderio di una vita più splendida e della dissolutezza, non solo del corpo ma anche dell’anima. [...]

Se aggiungi a tutto ciò l’operosità degli uomini liberi da ogni affanno e occupazione, dalle passioni pubbliche, da ogni dovere pubblico o privato e dalla preoccupazione del bisogno, quali progressi e perfezionamenti credi che le arti avrebbero raggiunto? È per questo che le arti matematiche furono inventate ed accresciute in Egitto, poiché ai sacerdoti lì era concesso tempo per studiare. Asclepio, nel passo spesso

²⁴ *Cratylus* 414b–c: Οὐκοῦν τοῦτό γε ἔξω νοῦ σημαίνει, τὸ μὲν ταῦ ἀφελόντι, ἐμβαλόντι δὲ οὐ μεταξὺ τοῦ χεῖ καὶ τοῦ νῦ καὶ <τοῦ νῦ καὶ> τοῦ ἦτα;

²⁵ Allacci immagina qui un’affinità etimologica tra *ars* e *arctus*, o tra *ars* e ἀρετή, che nella traduzione necessariamente si perde.

²⁶ *Theaetetus* 155d.

citato, afferma: “Là per la prima volta furono istituite le scienze matematiche, poiché i sacerdoti ricevevano altrove ciò che era necessario alla loro sussistenza, e avevano tempo libero solo per l'apprendimento; perciò anche nei caratteri geroglifici queste cose erano state scritte”²⁷.

Qualunque cosa dicano alcuni, non esitiamo ad affermare che questa fu una forma di ordine: prima si provvede ai bisogni essenziali della vita; poi si cercano i piaceri e i divertimenti».

La riflessione prende le mosse dalla celebre definizione del *Cratilo*, per poi introdurre un'osservazione a carattere linguistico, etimologico per la precisione, dalla quale addentrarsi in notazioni di tipo storico e filosofico. L'etimologia di *ars* «ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς» è comune a vari grammatici, tra cui Servio (*ad Aen.* V, 705) e Donato (*Andria* v. 30), ma la formulazione che più si avvicina alla definizione allacciana è quella dell'*Ars grammatica* di Diomede²⁸. Come si vede, il breve passo è ricco di citazioni di vario genere (per brevità sono state rimosse due citazioni da Diodoro, *Biblioteca* I, 8, 8 e Moschione, fr. 6, 25–33), che servono a rafforzare il pensiero di Allacci, solidamente costruito e ancorato ai testi. Allacci trae molto sia da Platone che da Aristotele, entrambi oggetto di altri suoi lavori, tanto editi quanto inediti, e spesso citati nel commentario, che è dunque essenziale anche per approfondire ulteriormente la posizione filosofica di Allacci, non solo relativamente al *Sublime*, ma in senso più ampio. Qui vediamo prendere forma una definizione di *ars* che finisce per delineare l'evoluzione stessa del genere umano: l'*ars* è l'esito della liberazione dalle necessità, nasce dal *vacare*, e produce un vero e proprio piacere, è sintomo di benessere e tranquillità, di origine divina, ma legata strettamente alla creatività dell'uomo.

8. Conclusioni

In conclusione, è opportuno segnalare che non è possibile datare con precisione la composizione di questo materiale: vi sono però alcuni elementi che consentono di proporre una ricostruzione ipotetica. G. Costa ha individuato una lettera del 1631 in cui Allacci fa riferimento al lavoro sul *Sublime* come già compiuto, molto richiesto e in attesa solo del

²⁷ In *Aristotelis metaphysicorum libros A–Z commentaria* p. 12 ed. Hayduck, con riferimento ad Aristot. *Metaph.* 981b, 20–27.

²⁸ II, p. 421: *ars dicta, quod arto praecepto singula definiat et velut vias quasdam ostendat; vel ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, unde veteres artem pro virtute appellabant.*

tipografo²⁹: come si è detto però, nessuno dei materiali superstiti pare realmente terminato e pronto ad andare in stampa, fatta eccezione per il commentario, che, benché compiuto, reca ancora qualche segno di correzione e interessa comunque solo la prima frase del trattato. Nel commentario Allacci menziona vari trattati alchemici pubblicati tra la fine del XVI e l'inizio del XVII secolo, dei quali il più tardo è del 1620: è questo dunque ragionevolmente il *terminus post quem*, almeno per il commentario. Vi è poi, sempre all'interno del commentario, un oscuro riferimento ad un «amicus meus», recatosi a Napoli quattro anni prima, e rimasto vittima del furto dei suoi lavori: se, come ipotizzato da T. Evans³⁰, l'amico in questione fosse da identificare con Lucas Holstenius, il cui soggiorno a Napoli risale al 1637, si dovrebbe allora immaginare un'ultima stesura del commentario nel 1641. Non è infatti inverosimile che il lavoro sia stato realizzato in più fasi e in momenti diversi³¹: come si è detto, la traduzione stessa è stata rivista dopo la composizione delle note; inoltre nel commentario Allacci esprime posizioni leggermente differenti da quelle che si trovano nelle note, che possono dunque suggerire una distanza anche cronologica tra i due testi. Quello che oggi leggiamo potrebbe quindi rappresentare una seconda redazione del commentario. Come anticipato, il lavoro sul *Sublime* è citato nelle *Apes urbanae* del 1633³² (in cui si parla già comunque di traduzione, commentario e note) mentre non appare nel ricco elenco di lavori citati nei *Symmikta* del 1668³³. Come noto, i *Symmikta* del 1668 rappresentano una sorta di progetto editoriale di Allacci dei suoi stessi *Opera omnia*, un progetto che il dotto riteneva ancora possibile portare a termine a questa data³⁴. Allacci potrebbe dunque aver iniziato a lavorare sul Περὶ Ὑψους forse negli anni Venti, producendo una prima stesura dei materiali, e annunciandone la pubblicazione nel 1631 e nel 1633, per poi però metterli da parte, al punto di non volerli più menzionare tra gli *Opera omnia*. Si potrebbe azzardare l'ipotesi che questo complesso lavoro sia stato abbandonato all'inizio degli anni Trenta a favore invece del *De erroribus* — uscito nel 1635, ma già citato nelle *Apes* nel 1633 — che, come si diceva più sopra, trae molto dal Περὶ Ὑψους ed è opera di

²⁹ Costa, *Latin Translations* cit., p. 232.

³⁰ L'ipotesi è ancora inedita e sarà esposta nel dettaglio in un saggio di Tomos Evans incentrato sul *Sublime* in epoca barocca, che sarà accluso all'edizione dei materiali.

³¹ Così sembra essere accaduto, ad esempio, per il lavoro sull'*Inno alla virtù* di Aristotele, cf. Montepaone, *Praising Virtue* cit.

³² Leonis Allatii *Apes Urbanae, sive de viris illustribus*, Romae 1633, p. 178.

³³ Leonis Allatii ΣΥΜΜΙΚΤΩΝ *sive Opusculorum Graecorum et Latinorum Vetustiorum ac Recentiorum Libri X*, Romae 1668.

³⁴ Cf. Montepaone, Carte Allacci cit.

tutt'altro genere, grazie alla quale Allacci si inserisce in modo incisivo nella discussione estetica e filosofica dell'epoca. Il materiale sul Περὶ Ὑψους potrebbe essere stato ripreso qualche tempo dopo l'uscita del *De erroribus* con la prospettiva di poterlo a quel punto dare alle stampe, ma poi definitivamente messo da parte, per ragioni difficili da individuare. La connessione del trattato pseudolonginiano e dello stesso *De erroribus* con posizioni neoplatoniche, all'epoca piuttosto pericolose nel clima successivo al caso di Galileo³⁵, potrebbero aver scoraggiato Allacci dalla pubblicazione di questo materiale, per il quale tuttavia nutriva notevole interesse.

Quello che si è presentato qui è solo un breve stralcio del ricco lavoro allacciano, che, pur nella sua complessità, ci restituisce un quadro denso, storicamente e filologicamente molto stimolante e variegato, tanto dei primi momenti della ricezione di quest'opera quanto dell'intensa passione dell'erudito greco per il mondo antico: un capitolo ancora in parte da esplorare.

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³⁵ Cf. specialmente Fumaroli, *Crépuscule de l'enthousiasme* cit.

APPENDICE

IL COD. BIBLIOTECA VALLICELLIANA, *CARTE ALLACCI XXIX*

Riportiamo qui i contenuti completi del codice della Biblioteca Vallicelliana, *Carte Allacci XXIX*, che conserva la gran parte di questo materiale inedito:

- f. 1r: sommario dei contenuti in corsiva, mano non identificata, comune a diversi codici del fondo³⁶;
- f. 1r: titolo nella stessa mano: *Autographum / Versionis / Notarum / Et Commentarii in Longinum*
- ff. 2r–42v: “note alla traduzione” autografe;
- ff. 45r–66r: traduzione latina autografa;
- ff. 66v–155v: “note al testo greco” autografe;
- ff. 157r–161r: copia delle prime 21 “note al testo greco”, mano di Raffaele Vernazza;
- ff. 161v–166v: fogli bianchi
- ff. 167r–171v: copia di un'altra porzione di “note al testo greco”, mano di Raffaele Vernazza;
- ff. 172r–174v: fogli bianchi
- ff. 175r–253r: copia della traduzione Latina, mano di Raffaele Vernazza;
- ff. 253v–255v: fogli bianchi
- ff. 256r–296v: copia delle integrazioni alle “note alla traduzione”, mano di Raffaele Vernazza;
- ff. 297r–378v: copia delle “note alla traduzione”, mano A;
- ff. 380r–434v: copia del commentario latino, mano B.

³⁶ Su cui cf. Montepaone, *Carte Allacci* cit.