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Introduction

The present volume contains fourteen articles wherein classical culture and language researchers study the thought on the phenomenon of death in ancient times and its development in literature and Mediterranean culture.

The authors refer to different religions, myths, rituals, or symbols established in a literary and philosophical tradition of diverse cultural and ethnic sources (Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Jewish-Christian) and show the importance of the theme of fear of death and corpse decay in ancient Mediterranean culture.

In the opening article, the author recollects the figure of Professor Jerzy Kolendo, provoking thought on the human condition wherein our powerlessness in the face of death plays the crucial role.

We thank the authors who were willing to consider the ancient authors' thought on death and our readers who will find it worthy of searching their inspiration.

Anna Kucz and *Patrycja Matusiak*

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Professor Jerzy Kolendo (1933–2014) In memoriam

Professor Jerzy Kolendo was immensely hardworking, erudite and an outstanding teacher.[1] How great a teacher he was is best illustrated by his colleagues and students who were nicknamed "the school of Jerzy, the Mentor."[2] Because of his vast knowledge and a wide area of studies, Professor himself was called by many the Last Great Polihistor.[3] As he wrote himself on the University of Warsaw Institute of Archaeology website,[4] his studies focused on three areas: the economic and social history of ancient Rome and related issues of Latin epigraphy, the history of contacts between Polish lands, or more widely, the whole of Barbaricum, with the Mediterranean world, and also the treatment of the Mediterranean world and of Polish lands in antiquity in both Polish and Western European studies. Last but not least, there is a large number of publications – books, com-

[1] L. Mrozewicz: "Między Scyllą a Charybdą… Wspomnienie o Profesorze Jerzym Kolendo." *Studia Europaea Gnesnensia* 2014, Vol. 10, pp. 433–439; A. Bursche: "Wspomnienie o Profesorze Jerzym Kolendo (1933–2014)." *Archeo UW* 2014, Vol. 2, pp. 130–140; A. Zawadzka: "Wspomnienie o Profesorze Jerzym Kolendo (9 czerwca 1933 – 28 lutego 2014)." *Meander* 2014, Vol. 69, pp. 13–26.

[2] A. Bursche, R. Ciołek: "Wstęp." In: *Antyk i barbarzyńcy. Księga dedykowana profesorowi Jerzemu Kolendo w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*. Ed. A. Bursche, R. Ciołek. Warszawa 2003, pp. 5–6.

[3] Ibidem, p. 5.

[4] Cf. http://www.archeo.uw.edu.pl/szablon.php?id=216. See also a conversation with Jerzy Ciechanowicz "Z Rzymu nad Bałtyk." In: J. Ciechanowicz: *Medea i czereśnie. Rozmowy o starożytności*. Warszawa 1994, pp. 273–297.

mentaries, articles and reviews. Between 1955 and 1995, Professor published 440 works,[5] by 2005 the number exceeded 600,[6] and he kept on working.

I was first introduced to Professor Kolendo by Professor Jerzy Axer in Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA, today Faculty of "Artes Liberales," University of Warsaw). Professor Axer believed that Professor Kolendo, his teacher and friend, could help me define the topic of my PhD dissertation, which originally was to deal with Roman imperialism. Professor Kolendo brought three ideas to our meeting – the first one being the stereotype of the Carthaginian in ancient literature. I never found out what the two others were. We immediately got carried away by our "Carthaginian" debate. Professor Kolendo soon became my tutor during my four-year studies in the Starting Programme of PhD Interdisciplinary Studies in "Artes Liberales," and later our cooperation became more formal after my proposal for doctoral dissertation had been reviewed and accepted and he co-promoted it together with professor Tadeusz Aleksandrowicz of the University of Silesia.

We used to meet quite frequently, mostly in Warsaw, at the university or in his book-filled flat, but also in Jagiellonian Library in Cracow where he would come for query. Every such occasion was intelectually stimulating but also exhausting. Debating with Professor Kolendo was always endlessly fascinating, highly demanding, very learned and at times Socratean, when he tried to get the interlocutor onto the right track without giving ready answers himself. On occasion we reached the levels of mutual understanding and intellectual stimulation which I could not attain with anyone else. He would then become very passionate and stress the weightiness of the conclusions we arrived at by enthusiastically repeating "yes, yes, exactly." Every time I got the impression that he could work towards the suggested topic as well as any of the issues that turned up during our discussions by himself, without any prior preparation.

He never shied away from expressing strong opinions both about scientific papers and translations. One of the contemporary translators agitated him so much he wanted to point a (fortunately, only imaginary) gun at him. He was guiding me with extreme patience through good and bad papers, canonic books and critical publications, through forgotten and obscure authors and also through methodology of historical research which was completely foreign to me. His opinions about all the texts he happened to read, including mine, ranged from "trivial, boring" (the aforementioned gun-pointing gesture was accompanied by "embarrassing") to "interesting" and "absolutely genius" and many in-between such as "nice, charming, clever, precious, curious" and a very rare, thus most valued "very good." Every

[5] "Bibliografia prac Jerzego Kolendo 1955–1995." In: *Nvnc de Svebis dicendvm est… Studia archeologica et historica Georgii Kolendo ab amici et discipuli dicata. Studia dedykowane profesorowi Jerzemu Kolendo w 60-lecie urodzin i 40-lecie pracy naukowej*. Ed. A. Bursche, M. Mielczarek, W. Nowakowski. Warszawa 1995, pp. 7–28.

[6] Z. Kapera: "Profesor Jerzy Kolendo (1933–2014)." *Nowy Filomata* 2014, no. 1, p. 13.

such opinion was followed by an explanation or development of the subject he was discussing. Professor's students, Professor Aleksander Bursche and Renata Ciołek, PhD, in the Introduction to the book *Antiquity and Barbarians*,[7] dedicated to him on his 70th birthday reminisce about how Professor Kolendo would express his opinions. After complimenting the works he used to say, "I agree, I agree, all the same…," or "this text is brilliant, only you need to… write it all over again." That was why it made me so happy to hear that he "liked this one very much" after he had read one of the chapters of my work. He showed his interest in his students also by offering his companionship. He accompanied and supported me at an international conference in Warsaw and later we discussed my paper sitting comfortably on a sofa in the University of Warsaw former Library, where he had spent many years studying and reading.

I find much of his advice endlessly useful and apply his suggestions not only in my own writing but also in teaching students how to be diligent and how to have a broad perspective. His teaching not only allowed me to analyse source texts as a philologist, but also broadened my horizons, since he showed me work ethic in practice. He was always very glad to help with any kind of text, not exclusively my doctoral dissertations, and his desk was always occupied with millions of things to read. He spent a lot of time discussing them, also on the phone.

After my PhD defence, as a gift he gave me a very interesting suggestion for research, never done before. We spoke about it on the phone back in January, he seemed to look forward to our discussions. We never managed to have them.

His passing was a huge loss for his family and friends, his colleagues and students, as well as for many scholars connected with historical and philological studies. Professor was a kind man, an exceptional scholar, a great teacher. My Mentor. All hail to His memory!

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[7] A. Bursche, R. Ciołek: "Wstęp." In: *Antyk i barbarzyńcy. Księga dedykowana profesorowi Jerzemu Kolendo w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*. Eds. A. Bursche, R. Ciołek. Warszawa 2003, p. 6.

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Capital Punishment in Classical Athens*

Abstract: This paper attempts to describe the working of capital punishment within the frame of the Athenian legal system, taking into account the latter's peculiarities and idiosyncracies. In the first place, it approaches the problem of the so-called procedural orientation of Athenian law, arguing that no definite list of capital offences in classical Athens can be compiled. Secondly, it considers the question of how death penalty was imposed in classical Athens and what were its viable substitutes. Finally, it looks at the different ways of its execution, with particular attention given to hemlock poisoning and bloodless crucifixion (*apotympanismos*).

Key words: Greece, Athens, Greek law, capital punishment, hemlock, crucifixion

Capital Offences?

The Athenian law applied the death penalty with truly draconian severity. It is, however, remarkable that no definite list of capital offences can ever be compiled.[1] This is firstly due to our fragmentary knowledge of the Athenian law itself, its workings and its enforcement. But what we do know, instead of clarification, brings further disorder into an already hazy and incomplete picture.

* Research for this paper was made possible by a grant from the Polish National Science Centre (no. 2013/11/B/HS2/02973).

[1] Such attempt has been made by I. Barkan: *Capital Punishment in Ancient Athens*. Chicago 1936, pp. 5–40, but his list comprises offences which only could, but needed not be subject to capital punishment, and that depending on the procedure chosen and the discretion of the prosecutor and the jury; see the discussion below.

The most serious obstacle comes with the so-called procedural orientation of Athenian law. It means that the legal system of classical Athens was, to quote Todd, "primarily concerned not with how to formulate and apply legal doctrines, but rather with how to get a dispute satisfactorily settled."[2] In other words, the Athenian law does not present us with an abstract and coherent system of explicitly formulated rights, duties and sanctions (the legal substance), but instead tends to focus on the procedures by which a given problem or a dispute may be resolved, and in most cases – taken to court.[3] The most frequently used example to illustrate this phenomenon is the Athenian law on *hybris*:

> If anyone treats with hybris (*hybrizēi*) any person, either child or woman or man, free or slave, or does anything unlawful against any of these, let anyone who wishes, of those Athenians who are entitled, submit a public prosecution (*graphē*) to the *thesmothetai*. Let the *thesmothetai* bring the case to the people's court within thirty days of the submission of the public prosecution, if no public business prevents it, or otherwise as soon as possible. Whoever the people's court finds guilty, let it immediately assess whatever the penalty it thinks right for him to suffer or pay.[4]

What is striking about this law is that it specifies neither the offence itself (what does it mean to treat with *hybris*?)[5] nor the punishment to be meted out to the offender. Instead it is preoccupied with defining the details of the procedure: we are told which magistrate is responsible for the proceedings (*thesmothetai*), when is the hearing-in-chief to be introduced (within thirty days), and even under what conditions it could be postponed. Admittedly, the prosecution for *hybris* (*graphē hybreōs*) is a *timētos agōn*, a procedure with no fixed penalty (see below). The

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[2] S.C. Todd: *The Shape of Athenian Law*. Oxford 1993, p. 65; M.H. Hansen: *Eisangelia. The Sovereignty of the People's Court in Athens in the Fourth Century B.C. and the Impeachment of Generals and Politicians*. Odense 1975, pp. 9–10.

[3] "An orientation towards procedure is equally visible in some areas which are subject to automatic penalties and extra-judicial remedies." Ch. Carey: "The Shape of Athenian Laws." *CQ* 1998, Vol. 48, no. 1, p. 96.

[4] Ἐάν τις ὑβρίζηι εἴς τινα, ἢ παῖδα ἢ γυναῖκα ἢ ἄνδρα, τῶν ἐλευθέρων ἢ τῶν δούλων, ἢ παράνομόν τι ποιήσηι εἰς τούτων τινά, γραφέσθω πρὸς τοὺς θεσμοθέτας ὁ βουλόμενος Ἀθηναίων οἷς ἔξεστιν, οἱ δὲ θεσμοθέται εἰσαγόντων εἰς τὴν ἡλιαίαν τριάκοντα ἡμερῶν ἀφ' ἧς ἂν ἡ γραφὴ ἐὰν μή τι δημόσιον κωλύηι, εἰ δὲ μὴ, ὅταν ἥι πρῶτον οἷόν τε. ὅτου δ' ἂν καταγνῶι ἡ ἡλιαία, τιμάτω περὶ αὐτοῦ παραχρῆμα, ὅτου ἂν δοκῆι ἄξιος εἶναι παθεῖν ἢ ἀποτεῖσαι (Dem. 21.47; tr. D. MacDowell: *Demosthenes: Against Meidias*. Ed. with introduction, translation and commentary. Oxford 1990; slightly modified).

[5] An answer is given by Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 1374a): *hybris* is violence (*pataxai*) commited for the sake of humiliation (*atimasai*) of the victim or self-gratification (*hēsthēnai*); this however, seems to be a rhetorical explication of the law, most likely the correct one, but not contained in its letter nonetheless; another curious example of such cavalier approach to legal definitions is the exact meaning of the term συνοικεῖν, a key word of the law quoted in [Dem.] 59.19: ἐὰν δὲ ξένος ἀστῆι συνοικῆι… (cf. Ch. Carey: "The Shape of Athenian Laws"…, p. 99).

impression, however, that the relevant law gives priority to matters of procedure over those of substance, seems inescapable.[6]

The understanding of Athenian law as procedural rather than substantive has not gone unchallenged.[7] Scholars have pointed to the existence of explicitly formulated substantial element in many statutes. Perhaps indeed the focus on procedure, undoubtedly marking its presence in some of them, has been unduly emphasized and incautiously generalized onto the entire legal system. Whatever the case, two of its corollaries still seems to hold good ground against criticism. First the procedural flexibility of Athenian law:[8] a given offence may be liable to different procedures, depending on the choosing of the prosecutor or plaintiff.[9] This phenomenon is most succinctly stated by Demosthenes:

> Solon, who made these laws, did not give those who wanted to prosecute just one way of exacting justice from the offenders for each offence but many […] He thought that it was not proper to deprive one of obtaining justice, as each was capable. But how could this be managed? By giving many ways of legal action against offenders – for example thieves. You are strong and confident: use *apagōgē*; you risk a thousand drachma fine. You are weaker: use *ephēgēsis* to the magistrates; they will then manage the procedure. You are afraid even of that: use a *graphē*. You have no confidence in yourself and are too poor to risk a thousand drachma fine: bring a *dikē* before the arbitrator and you will run no risk. None of these actions is the same. In the case of impiety, similarly, you can use *apagōgē*, *graphē*, a *dikē* to the Eumolpidai, a phasis to the Basileus. It is pretty much like that for all the other offences.[10]

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[6] Cf. Ibidem, pp. 95–96 for more examples of such procedural orientation.

[7] E.M. Harris: "What Are the Laws of Athens About? Substance and Procedure in Athenian Statutes." *Dike* 2009/2010, Vol. 12/13, pp. 5–64; cf. Idem: *The Rule of Law in Action in Democratic Athens*. Oxford 2013, pp. 138–174. Ch. Carey: "The Shape of Athenian Laws"…, pp. 98–107; cf. also P.J. Rhodes: "ΕΙΣΑΓΓΕΛΙΑ in Athens." *JHS* 1979, Vol. 99, pp. 106–107.

[8] The classic study of this phenomenon is R. Osborne: "Law in Action in Classical Athens." *JHS* 1985, Vol. 105, pp. 40–58; cf. Idem: *Athens and Athenian Democracy*. Cambridge 2010, pp. 171–200; perhaps it is unduly confused with the concept of "open texture"; cf. E.M. Harris: "Open Texture in Athenian Law." *Dike* 2000, Vol. 3, pp. 27–79; cf. Idem: *The Rule of Law*…, pp. 178–180; Carey 2004: 112–113; but see R. Osborne: *Athens and Athenian Democracy*. Cambridge–New York 2010, pp. 200–202.

[9] For this see R. Osborne: "Law in Action in Classical Athens"…, pp. 40–44; cf. Idem: *Athens and Athenian Democracy*…, pp. 171–177, and the corrective remarks of Carey 2004.

[10] δεῖν δ' ὥιετο μηδέν ἀποστερεῖσθαι τοῦ δίκης τυχεῖν, ὡς ἕκαστος δύναται. πῶς οὖν ἔσται τοῦτο; ἐὰν πολλὰς ὁδοὺς δῶι διὰ τῶν νόμων ἐπὶ τοὺς ἠδικηκότας οἷον τῆς κλοπῆς. ἔρρωσαι καὶ σαυτῶ πιστεύεις· ἄπαγε· ἐν χιλίαις δ' ὁ κίνδυνος. ἀσθενέστερος εἰ· τοῖς ἄρχουσιν ἐφηγοῦ· τοῦτο πιήσουσιν ἐκεῖνοι. φοβεῖ καὶ τοῦτο· γράφου. καταμέμφει σεαυτὸν καὶ πενὴς ὢν οὐκ ἂν ἔχοις χιλίας ἐκτεῖσαι· δικάζου κλπῆς πρὸς διαιτητὴν καὶ οὐ κινδυνεύσεις… (Demostenes 22.25; tr. R. Osborne: *Athens and Athenian Democracy*…).

The second, closely related corollary of the procedural orientation of Athenian law is that penalties in Athenian law tend not to follow the offence itself (legal substance), but depend on procedures used by the litigant to redress it. Thus, to use Demosthenes' example of theft,[11] a criminal brought to trial through a private suit (*dikē klopēs*), if found guilty, had to pay damages in the double of the incriminated sum or the stolen object's value, in addition to which he could be also bound in the stocks for five days. If, however, the aggrieved party chose the more serious procedure of public prosecution (*graphē klopēs*),[12] the thief could face the death penalty which, however, was not fixed by law (the case being a *timētos agōn*).[13] It was a statutory requirement in the most extreme possibility of dealing with theft: that of "arrest" (*apagōgē*) along with its variation (*ephēgēsis*).

Procedures in which the penalties were not fixed by law are referred to as *timētoi agones*, named so because conviction in such cases was followed by a second hearing in which the punishment to be imposed was "assessed" (*timēsis*) by the jury. The assessment of penalty was limited to two options only, that proposed by the prosecutor on the one hand, and by the defendant on the other. This is most explicitly brought out in Socrates' deliberation, as Plato would have it:[14]

> This man has assessed (*timatai*) the death penalty (*thanatou*) for me. What should I therefore assess in return?

Thus, in a case like the public prosecution of theft (*graphē klopēs*) the defendant could risk capital punishment only if the prosecutor chose to propose it in his indictment and if, upon conviction, the jury found his proposition, and not the defendant's, more suitable during the assessment.

It seems, therefore, that compiling a necessarily incomplete and uncertain list of capital offences cannot do justice to the complexity of the Athenian legal system in this respect. More promising would be a list of procedures which may have been followed by a death sentence upon conviction. Among these a distinction should be made between those in which capital punishment was statutory (*agōnes*

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[11] Cf. Hansen's example: "It is an accepted modern conception of law and justice that, for example, a magistrate guilty of corruption deserves one and the same punishment regardless of the legal procedure employed against him. Not so in Athens. Corruption might be punished with death if the type of process was an *eisangelia*, with a tenfold fine if the offender was brought to trial by an *euthynai*, and he might escape with confiscation of the bribe if the prosecutor preferred to bring in an *apographe*." M.H. Hansen: *Eisangelia. The Sovereignty of the People's Court in Athens*…, p. 9.

[12] The existence of a *graphē klopēs* for the theft of private property has been doubted by D. Cohen: *Theft in Athenian Law*. München 1983, pp. 44–49; cf. however S.C. Todd: *The Shape of Athenian Law*…, pp. 108, 283–284.

[13] R. Osborne: "Law in Action in Classical Athens"…, p. 43; cf. Idem: *Athens and Athenian Democracy*…, p. 176.

[14] τιμᾶται δ' οὖν μοι ὁ ἀνὴρ θανάτου. εἶεν· ἐγὼ δὲ δὴ τίνος ὑμῖν ἀντιτιμήσομαι (Pl. *Ap.* 36b).

atimētoi), and those in which it remained a possibility subject to the discretion of the prosecutor and the jury (*agones timētoi*).

Capital Procedures?

In the first group listed should be the prosecution for theft of sacred property (*graphē hierosylias*) where death sentence was "embellished" with a ban on burial in Attica (*ataphia*);[15] prosecution for procuring sexual services of free persons (*graphē proagōgeias*);[16] for transgressing the limitations incurred by prostituting oneself (*graphē hetaireseōs*);[17] and – possibly – for adultery (*graphē moicheias*).[18] Capital punishment was also mandatory in the essentially private prosecution of homicide (*dikē phonou*), with an important proviso that it applied only to conviction in cases tried by the Areopagus (premeditated homicide; *phonos ek pronoias*) and the Delphinion (justified homicide; *phonos dikaios*).[19]

Many other procedures from among the *agōnes timētoi* provided the possibility of sentencing the accused to death upon conviction. Among these in the first place should be listed the notorious prosecution for moving a decree contrary to the law (*graphē paranomōn*) and the closely related case of introducing an inexpedient law (*graphē nomon mē epitēdeion theinai*); the prosecution for theft (*graphē klopēs*); for *hybris* (*graphē hybreōs*); for providing false summons (*graphē pseudokleteias*). No private case (except for the *dikē phonou*, see above) in which capital punishment could follow the assessment of penalty upon conviction is known.

There are, however, notable absences from the above lists, which testify to the incompletness and perhaps unreliability of the procedural criterion. The most revealing example are the procedures of "arrest" (*apagōgē*) and "denunciation" (*endeixis*). Both were used against three distinct groups of offenders: "common criminals" (*kakourgoi*), "exiles" (*pheugontes*) – in case of their illegal return, and finally "disenfranchised" citizens (*atimoi*) – in case when they exercised rights to

[15] X. *Hell*. 1.7.22; *Mem*. 1.2.62; Lyc. 1.65; Isocr. 20.6; D.M. MacDowell: *The Law in Classical Athens*. London 1978, p. 149.

[16] Aesch. 1.14, 184; D.M. MacDowell: *The Law in Classical Athens*…., p. 125; N. Fisher (ed.): *Aeschines: Against Timarchos*. Oxford 2001, p. 138.

[17] Aesch. 1.19–20 (with the inauthentic law quoted at 1.21); A.R.W. Harrison: *The Law of Athens*, Vol. 1–2, Oxford 1968–1971, p. 37.

[18] Death – Ibidem, p. 35; not known whether *timetos* or *atimetos* – D.M. MacDowell: *The Law in Classical Athens*…., p. 125.

[19] The court at Delphinion tried cases of homicide where the accused admits to the killing, but claims it was justified according to the letter of the law; if the jury (the *ephetai*) did not accept his plea, he was punished with death (cf. D.M. MacDowell: *Athenian Homicide Law in the Age of the Orators*. Manchester 1963, pp. 70–81).

which they were no longer entitled. In the trials of "common criminals" and "exiles" the death penalty was prescribed by law; as for the "disenfranchised," only those caught holding a magistracy faced statutory capital punishment upon conviction in an *apagōgē* or *endeixis*; those, on the other hand, who in spite of their disenfranchisement spoke in the assembly or in the courts, if proved guilty, were subject to an assessment of punishment which, of course, could but need not have resulted in death penalty.[20] Yet another well-known procedure, not included in the lists above, the public prosecution for impiety (*graphē asebeias*), is traditionally held to have been a standard *agōn timētos*. However, the conviction on the charge of cutting a sacred olive tree, tried by the Areopagus, was, according to Aristotle followed by a statutory death penalty.[21] Even more revealing in this respect are the charges of "deceiving the people" (*apatē tou dēmou*) and "treason" (*prodosia*). Both are said to have been invariably punished with death, yet the relevant procedures: public prosecution for treason (*graphē prodosias*), "investigation" (*apophasis*), "bringing forth" (*probolē*) and "impeachment" (*eisangelia*) were all, most likely, *agōnes timētoi*. Yet another crux is found in the prosecution of bribery (*graphē dōrōn*): the standard, statutory penalty was monetary: the tenfold of the incriminated sum; however, in cases of buying the votes of the judges, it was – also mandatory – death.[22]

Summing up, it seems that it was very easy to commit a capital offence in classical Athens. Not only because of the law's severity, but also, perhaps even chiefly because of its substantial laxity and procedural flexibility. Many offences lacked a precise definition, which therefore allowed for a considerable variety of charges to be subsumed under the heading of, say, *hybris*, "treason," "impiety" and so forth. Many procedures were by definition open to a variety of penalties (*agōnes timētoi*), capital punishment being the most severe: not infrequently, however, this most severe penalty was demanded in cases of delicts otherwise quite innocuous.[23]

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[20] A.R.W. Harrison: *The Law of Athens*…, pp. 229, 231; M.H. Hansen: Apagoge, Endeixis *and* Ephegesis *against* Kakourgoi, Atimoi *and* Pheugontes. *A Study in the Athenian Administration of Justice in the Fourth Century BC*. Odense 1976, p. 21.

[21] *AP* 60.2; cf. P.J. Rhodes: *A Commentary on the Aristotelian* Athenaion Politeia. Oxford 1993[2] (orig. 1981), p. 673; on the removal of sacred olive trees as *asebeia* see S.C. Todd: *The Shape of Athenian Law*…, p. 308; on impiety and its prosecution in Athens see recently J. Filonik: "Athenian Impiety Trials. A Reappraisal." *Dike* 2013, Vol. 16, pp. 11–96.

[22] J.H. Lipsius: *Das Attische Recht und Rechtsverfahren*. Leipzig 1914, p. 403; Aesch. 1.87; Isocr. 8.50; cf. Din. 1.60; Hyp. *Dem*. 24; D.M. MacDowell: "Athenian Laws about Bribery." *RIDA* 1983, Vol. 30, pp. 60, 64–69.

[23] A good example of which is the use (and abuse) of the "impeachment" (*eisangelia*) procedure by Lycurgus; cf. Hyp. *Eux*. 3; see also D.D. Phillips: "Why Was Lycophron Prosecutedby Eisangelia?" *GRBS* 2006, Vol. 46, pp. 375–394; M.H. Hansen: *Eisangelia. The Sovereignty of the People's Court in Athens*…, pp. 103–111.

Substitute(s) and Embellishments

The severity with which the Athenian law implemented the death penalty was, however, to a considerable extent mitigated by the fact that in most cases its considerably milder substitute was available, and it was both socially and legally acceptable: exile. A person accused of a wrongdoing in a procedure where death penalty was either statutory or demanded by the prosecution, could simply leave Athens before the trial. Obviously, such a person thus forfeited the case which in turn resulted in a death sentence *in absentia*.[24] The defendant in a homicide trial (*dikē phonou*) had an even wider margin of liberty: he could choose voluntary exile up to any moment until his second defense speech (unlike most other cases, homicide trials required both sides to deliver two alternating speeches); even then, if we are to trust Antiphon's rhetorical exercises, he could have his friends or relatives deliver the last speech on his behalf.[25]

Though obviously a preferable alternative to death, exile was a very severe penalty in its own right. Usually followed by a confiscation of property, it deprived one of all means to live, and more importantly rendered him a social outcast, without a share in and protection of any community. And unless revoked through a special decree, it was lifelong (*aeiphygia*). Only the rich and influential, who owned property outside Athens (and therefore exempt from confiscation) and had friends or relatives abroad, could entertain the thought of living a normal life after exile. This perhaps explains why the defendants (or would-be defendants) in high-profile political trials chose this option rather than took their chances before the court.

Not everyone, however, was at liberty to choose exile, regardless of his economic status. Quite certainly it was not an option for those who awaited trial in prison (unless, of course, they managed to break out of confinement, which was neither impossible nor even exceptionally challenging).[26] This applied in the first place to those brought to court by means of *apagōgē* and *ephēgēsis* or *endeixis* followed by an arrest.[27] Perhaps also this applied to those accused of

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[24] Cf. for example S.C. Todd: *The Shape of Athenian Law…*, p. 140; a good instance of this are the cases of impeachment (*eisangelia*) enumerated by Hyperides (*Eux.* 1–2) – all forfeited by the accused.

[25] Cf. Ant. 4.4.1; 5.13; Dem. 23.69; D.M. MacDowell: *Athenian Homicide Law in the Age of the Orators…*, pp. 114–116.

[26] Cf. V.J. Hunter: "The Prison of Athens. A Comparative Perspective." *Phoenix* 1997, Vol. 51, no. 3–4, pp. 305–306, 310–311.

[27] *Apagōgē*, *endeixis* and *ephēgesis* are closely related public procedures used against "common criminals" (*kakourgoi*) such as burglars, thieves and adulterers, as well as disenfranchised or exiled citizens found in violation of their disenfranchisement and exile respectively; the first two presuppose an arrest, which is necessary in *apagōgē* (literally "arrest"), used against criminals caught *in flagrante delicto*; in *ephēgesis* the arrest is carried out by a magistrate; cf. M.H. Hansen: Apagoge, Endeixis *and* Ephegesis…, esp. pp. 21–28.

parricide, though the sources here are much less reliable,[28] and there is also positive evidence that no particular regulations against this sort of crime were ever introduced in Athens.[29]

On the other hand, capital punishment could also be subject to various embellishments. Two most frequently used were the confiscation of property (*dēmeusis*) and ban on burial in the Attic soil (*ataphia*). The former sometimes served as a penalty on its own, and frequently accompanied other forms of punishment such as "disenfranchisement" (*atimia*) or exile by sentence (*phygē*); it is uncertain whether there were any cases of death penalty without the additional confiscation.[30] The latter was usually associated with treason and sacrilege,[31] though it is uncertain whether it had any procedural specificity.[32] Quite obviously both confiscation and *ataphia* could and frequently were used against those who chose perpetual exile as a substitute for death penalty. Yet another possible embellishment to capital punishment was torture, usually in the form of binding (*streblein*) the convict to the wheel. It could accompany the execution of slaves and metics,[33] however, the evidence that it was applied to Athenian citizens is scant[34] and the only known instances are obviously linked with charges of grave crimes against the state.[35]

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[28] μετὰ δὲ τὸν πρότερον λόγον ἐξῆν φυγεῖν, πλὴν εἴ τις γονέας εἴη ἀπεκτονώς (Pol. 8.117); cf. E. *Or.* 444, 760.

[29] DL 1.59; Cic. *Rosc. Am*. 70 (= fr. 4a, 4b Ruschenbusch).

[30] Cf. A.R.W. Harrison: *The Law of Athens*…, p. 2.178; cf. J.H. Lipsius: *Das Attische Recht und Rechtsverfahren*…, pp. 931–932.

[31] X. *Hell*. 1.7.22; Dem. 24.7; Lyc. 1.24, 45, 78, 91; Aesch. 3.252; cf. also D. Allen: *The World of Prometheus. The Politics of Punishing in Democratic Athens*. Princeton 2000, pp. 217, 392–393, n. 77.

[32] According to J.H. Lipsius (*Das Attische Recht und Rechtsverfahren*…, p. 191) this applied chiefly to traitors prosecuted by *eisangelia*, which he thinks was an *agon atimētos* in the latter part of the 4th century; cf. however M.H. Hansen: Apagoge, Endeixis *and* Ephegesis…, pp. 17, 34; sacrilege (*hierosylia*) could also be prosecuted through a number of procedures (*graphē asebeias*; *eisangelia*), not only the crime-specific *graphē hierosylias*; cf. also A. Helmis: "La privation de sépulture dans l'antiquité grecque." In: *Symposion 2005. Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte*. Eds. E. Cantarella, J. Mélèze Modrzejewski, G. Thür. Wien 2007.

[33] V.J. Hunter: *Policing Athens. Social Control in the Attic Lawsuits, 420–320 BC*. Princeton 1994, pp. 154–162; cf. D.M. MacDowell: *The Law in Classical Athens*…, p. 246.

[34] The only instances of torture used as an actual embellishment of death penalty (and not for e.g. extraction of information) are: Antiphon (not the orator/sophist): στρεβλώσαντες αὐτὸν ἀπεκτείνατε (Dem. 18.133; cf. Din. 1.63) and Phocion: ὅπως καὶ στρεβλωθεὶς Φωκίων ἀποθάνοι (Plu. *Phoc.* 35); cf. V.J. Hunter: *Policing Athens. Social Control in the Attic Lawsuits*…, pp. 174–175.

[35] Antiphon acting as an agent of Philip was said to have tried to set fire to the Athenian docks (Dem. 18.132); Phocion was denounced as a traitor (*Phoc*. 33.3).

Execution I: The Good Way to Go

As for the execution itself – once it finally came to it – its most widely known form, owing its notoriety to Socrates, is that by hemlock. Referred to either as "drug/poison" (*pharmakon*) or simply "hemlock" (*kōneion*) it is, actually, a mixture based on plant extract from poison hemlock (*conium maculatum*) – which should not be confused with water hemlock (*cicuta verosa*), though the latter is also highly toxic. We do not know the details of its preparation; it was most likely pounded in a mortar (*thyeia*), the word used for it by the ancient authors being "to rub" (*tribein*).[36] The person responsible for it was a public slave referred to as *dēmios*, *dēmokoinos* or *dēmosios*,[37] and it was both prepared and administered in the Athenian prison (*dēsmoterion*), quite like as described in Plato's *Phaedo*.

The execution followed the death sentence immediately. The convicts were lead from the court to the prison, not infrequently perhaps, as in the case of Phokion, accompanied by insults and abuse from the crowd. Once in the prison, however, they may have enjoyed a measure of privacy, spending their last moments in the company of their friends and relatives. Only in exceptional cases as that of Socrates was the actual execution deferred, the particular reason here being of religious nature: it had to wait for the return of the sacred ship, dispatched to Delos the day before the trial itself took place.[38]

We do not know exactly when this particular method of execution was introduced in Athens. A *terminus ante quem* may be set in the rule of the Thirty (404–403), who forced many of their victims to drink hemlock, including one of their own, Theramenes, whose last moments have been vividly painted by Xenophon, and Polemarchus, the brother of the famous logographer Lysias, who also happened to be Socrates' interlocutor and host in *The Republic*. Both died in prison,[39] the former without even hearing any charges, the latter after a parody of trial by the Council.[40] In a morbid anecdote preserved by Xenophon, Theramenes is said

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[36] φάρμακον ἐν κύλικι φέροντα τετριμμένον… τοσοῦτον τρίβομεν ὅσον οἰόμεθα μέτριον εἶναι πιεῖν (Pl. *Phaed*. 117a, b); τὸ κώνειον ὁρῶν τριβόμενον… οὐκ ἔφη τρίψειν ἕτερον (Plu. *Phoc*. 36.2, 4); cf. Ar. *Ran*.123 below.

[37] Cf. J.H. Lipsius: *Das Attische Recht und Rechtsverfahren*…, p. 77, n. 101.

[38] *Phaed*. 58a–e; *Crit*. 43c–d.

[39] Lys. 12.16: λαβὼν εἰς τὸ δεμοτήριον ἀπαγάγοι; 12.18: ἀπεφέρετο ἐκ τοῦ δεσμωτηρίου τεθνεώς; X. *Hell*. 2.3.55–56: ἀπήγαγον τὸν ἄνδρα διὰ τῆς ἀγορᾶς – from the Bouleuterion most likely to the prison.

[40] X. *Hell*. 2.3.24–51; strictly speaking the issue on trial was to strike Theramenes out of the list of citizens; once deprived of his civic rights, the (remaining) Thirty had the power to put him to death without a trial (2.3.51).

to have spilled the remains of the poison "as if playing kottabos" and exclaimed "for the beautiful Critias."[41]

Did the Thirty actually introduce this particular method of execution?[42] This does not seem likely. In the first place, there are sources indicating that the hemlock was known to the Athenians before the short-lived oligarchy. A joke in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (405 BC):[43]

> **Dionysus**: [J]ust give me the directions, my quickest route down to Hades, and don't give me one that's too hot or too cold. **Heracles**: Let me see, which one shall I give you first. Hmm. Well, there's one via rope and bench: you hang yourself. **Dion**.: Stop it, that way's too stifling. **Her**.: Well, there's a shortcut that's well-beaten – in a mortar (*tetrimménē*). **Dion**.: You mean hemlock? **Her**.: Exactly. **Dion**.: That's a chill and wintry way! It quickly freezes your shins solid.

though not referring explicitly to execution, clearly suggests that the Athenian public was not only well-acquainted with the lethal effects of the poison, but also with the method of its obtaining (*tribein*). Furthermore it seems highly unlikely that the restored Athenian democracy (403 BC) would so easily have taken over the manner of executing convicts introduced by the shunned regime of the Thirty, which throughout the next century consistently served as a negative foil in the public discourse of classical Athens.

Death by hemlock seems to have been quite mild and humane, especially by the standards of the ancient world, where a great deal of thought and effort was put to make executions as painful and horrifying as possible. Perhaps, however, Plato's description of Socrates' death was selective in omitting the more unsavoury aspects of hemlock poisoning:[44] vomiting, salivation, tremor, seizures,[45] convulsions,[46] and

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[41] τὸ λειπόμενον ἔφασαν ἀποτοτταβίσαντα εἰπεῖν αὐτὸν· Κριτίαι τοῦτ' ἔστω τῶι καλῶι (X. *Hell*. 2.3.56); Critias as one of the most prominent among the Thirty, Theramenes being another one; the latter's execution was the result of a power-struggle the oligarchy.

[42] Thus J.H. Lipsius: *Das Attische Recht und Rechtsverfahren*…, p. 77, n. 101; cf S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens." In: *Law and Social Status in Classical Athens*. Eds. V. Hunter, J. Edmondson. Oxford 2000, pp. 39–40.

[43] **Διόνυσος**· μηδὲν ἔτι πρὸς ταῦτ', ἀλλὰ φράζε τῶν ὁδῶν ὅπηι τάχιστ ἀφίξομαι 'ς Ἅιδου κάτω· καὶ μήτε θερμὴν μήτ' ἄγαν ψυχρὰν φράσηις […] **Ἡράκλης**· ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἀτραπὸς ξύντομος τετριμμένη ἡ διὰ θυείας. **Διόνυσος**· ἆρα κώνειον λέγεις; **Ἡράκλης**· μάλιστά γε. **Διόνυσος**· ψυχράν γε καὶ δυσχείμερον· εὐθὺς γὰρ ἀποπήγνυσι τἀντικνήμια. (Aristophanes, *Frogs* 117–126; tr. J. Henderson).

[44] Ch. Gill: "The Death of Socrates." *CQ* 1973, Vol. 23, no. 1, p. 27; S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, p. 33.

[45] Perhaps hinted in: ψύχοιτό τε καὶ πήγνυτο (*Phaed* 118a).

[46] Perhaps hinted in: ὀλίγον χρόνον διαλιπὼν ἐκινήθη (*Phaed*. 118a); according to some authorities, however, convulsions are usually associated with water hemlock poisoning (D. Rizzi et al.: "Clinical Spectrum of Accidental Hemlock Poisoning: Neurotoxic Manifestations, Rhabdomyolysis,

choking.[47] Death in hemlock poisoning is usually due to respiratory failure: the toxic alkaloids from the plant (among them coniine) block the neuromuscular junction, which results in the paralysis of skeletal muscles, including the diaphragm and the intercostals.[48] Since coniine also affects the central nervous system, poisoning as a rule leads to a coma: the poisoned person is therefore unconscious when the respiratory failure develops.

We have therefore every reason to suppose that execution by hemlock provided the convict with a relatively good death, considered by the ancient Greeks a considerable "luxury."[49] Every luxury, however, has its price, and this was also the case of death by hemlock. Preparing a single lethal dose of the extract at the end of the 4th century cost twelve drachmas. Though not a prohibitive price, it was certainly far from symbolic: at that time the daily wage of a skilled labourer was two to three drachmas. We do not know exactly to what extent was the state ready to take on the financial burden of such costs. Plato's Socrates nonchalantly orders the *dēmios* to prepare him the double or even triple dosage, if necessary.[50] On the other hand, the experiences of Phocion in his last moments clearly illustrate the grim absurdity of the monetary side of hemlock execution. According to Plutarch, those of his friends sentenced to death along with him begged for the "privilege" of dying first. Phocion, the agreeable person he was, granted their wish, but in the end he himself was left with no more hemlock to drink. Upon this the *dēmosios* refused to prepare (*tribein*) another dose unless paid its worth: the twelve drachmas. The unfortunate Phocion was forced to summon one of his friends and ask him to provide the demanded sum.[51] We do not know, however, whether the first dose was also bought by Phocion himself, or perhaps provided by the state.

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and Acute Tubular Necrosis." *Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation* 1991, Vol. 12, no. 6; D.G. Barceloux: *Medical Toxicology of Natural Substances*. New Jersey (Wiley) 2008, p. 798).

[47] Cf. D. Rizzi et al.: "Clinical Spectrum of Accidental Hemlock Poisoning…"; J. Vetter: "Poison Hemlock (Conium Maculatum)." *Food and Chemical Toxicology* 2004, Vol. 42, pp. 1379–1380; D.G. Barceloux: *Medical Toxicology of Natural Substances*…, p. 798; see also Ch. Gill: *The Death of Socrates*…, pp. 25–26; many of these were already known to the ancients, cf. Nic. *Alex*. 186–194; Dsc. *De materia medica* 4.78 (Wellman); *Alex*. 11.

[48] The effects wear off after approximately 48 hours, provided that the patient is given artificial respiration; a full recovery is thus possible, unless renal failure develops as a complication after the possible disintegration of skeletal-muscle cells (rhabdomyolysis); cf. D. Rizzi et al.: "Clinical Spectrum of Accidental Hemlock Poisoning…"

[49] As the one given by the gods to Cleobis and Biton, who died in their sleep (Hdt 1.31; Plu. *Sol*. 27.7: τεθνηκότες ἀναλγῆ καὶ ἄλυπον… θάνατον).

[50] μόνον τὸ ἑαυτοῦ παρασκευαζέτω ὡς καὶ δὶς δώσων, ἐὰν δὲ δέηι, καὶ τρίς (Pl. *Phaed*. 63e); later on however (117b) the attendant explicitly says that they prepare no more than the necessary dosage.

[51] Plu. *Phoc*. 36.3–4.

Execution II: The Bad Way to Go

If execution by hemlock was indeed a luxury, what was the less attractive standard in classical Athens? What would have happened to someone who refused to drink the deadly potion? What might have awaited Phocion if he failed to procure the demanded twelve drachmas? Surely Athens would have provided him with an execution free of charge, however, there is reason to believe that it would have been much less pleasant. The only known alternative to hemlock poisoning was in that period execution by *apotympanismos*.

Initially it was assumed that this sinister term referred to death by cudgelling, quite like the Roman *fustuarium* meted out to soldiers caught neglecting on duty and deserters, described in greater detail by Polybius.[52] On this assumption, a morbid picture of a typically Athenian execution emerges with the convicts beaten to death with wooden clubs. Indeed, on the authority of late-antique and Byzantine lexicographers, the term *tympanon* itself was thought to denote a cudgel.[53] We have every reason to believe, however, that they were wrong. *Tympanon* is not so much the cudgel, that is the object which hits, but at the best that which is being hit (possibly with a cudgel), like a drum.[54] An alternative theory therefore sought the meaning of *apotympanismos* in a hypothetical device, to which the convict was fastened (the *tympanon*) – and subsequently beaten to death with clubs.[55] Now this is very close to the modern consensus, save the persistent resort to cudgelling. The fact that the latter seems to creep in through the back door in this modified definition is due not only to the possible etymological link between *tympanon* and *typtein* (to hit),[56] but chiefly based on the authority of Plutarch, or, to be more specific, the testimony of Duris of Samos which he quotes, not without criticism. According to Duris, after quashing the anti-Athenian rebellion of his native island (440), Pericles had the ringleaders fastened to planks (*sanides*) on

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[52] καθίσαντος δὲ παραχρῆμα συνεδρίου τῶν χιλιάρχων κρίνεται, κἂν καταδικασθῇ, ξυλοκοπεῖται. τὸ δὲ τῆς ξυλοκοπίας ἐστὶ τοιοῦτον. λαβὼν ξύλον ὁ χιλίαρχος τούτωι τοῦ κατακριθέντος οἷον ἥψατο μόνον, οὗ γενομένου πάντες οἱ τοῦ στρατοπέδου τύπτοντες τοῖς ξύλοις καὶ τοῖς λίθοις τοὺς μὲν πλείστους ἐν αὐτῆι τῆι στρατοπεδείαι καταβάλλουσι… (Pol. 6.37.1–3); on the approximation of *apotympanismos* and *fustuarium* cf. for instance J.H. Lipsius: *Das Attische Recht und Rechtsverfahren*…, p. 77 n. 101 (Tötung mit der Keule); E.M. Cope, J.E. Sandys: *The Rhetoric of Aristotle. With a Commentary*, Vols. 1–3, Cambridge 1877, p. 66.

[53] τύμπανον· τὸ τοῦ δημίου ξύλον, ὧι τοὺς παραδιδομένους διεχειρίζετο· καὶ το ἀποτυμπανίζειν ἐντεῦθεν (Phot. *Lex*, s.v.).

[54] LSV s.v. I.1: "kettle-drum"; II.3: "cudgel"; Suppl. "delete the section [3] transferring quotation to 1.".

[55] ἀποτυμπανισμός […] Die Bezeichnung kommt von dem τύμπανον, einer Maschine, auf welche die Verbrecher gebunden wurden […]. Die Hinrichtung aber vollzog sich nicht mit dem Schwert […] sondern durch Schlag mit der Keule. (RE s.v. ἀποτυμπανισμός).

[56] Questioned in the DELG (s.v. τύμπανον).

the main square, and after ten days of exposure cudgelled to death with wooden clubs (*xylois*).[57]

Contrary to Plutarch's criticism (*epitragōidei*), Duris's account may actually contain a grain of truth. At least insofar as the manner of executing the unfortunate Samians is concerned which, according to modern consensus, reflects to a considerable extent the actual Athenian practice, however, with the emphasis on the fastening itself rather than the cudgelling which, most likely was an optional embellishment, perhaps even a *coup de grâce*. Now the modern consensus dates back to the excavations conducted in Phaleron in the years 1911 and 1915, during which unearthed were seventeen skeletons, fastened with five metal collars (around the wrists, ankles, and the neck) to something which most likely was a wooden plank. Though the findings are dated back to the 7th century BC, there is a good reason to believe that we are dealing here with the same method of execution as the one described by Duris. The historian (and tyrant) of Samos, however, is not the only source which gives us the details of the peculiar execution by fastening. Much more information on this subject, though necessarily distorted by the comic convention, comes from Pericles' near contemporary Aristophanes:[58]

> Archer, take him inside and bind him on the plank (*sanidi*), then set him up right here and keep an eye on him. Don't let anybody get near him. If anybody tries to, take your whip and hit him.

The convict here is Mnesilochus, Euripides' inlaw, the unfortunate anti-hero of the *Thesmophoriazusae*, caught in the act as he transgresses (by transdressing) the strictly female character of the eponymous festival. Later on he is heard to complain that he has bonds "everywhere" (*pantōs*),[59] including the neck,[60] and that he is exposed for the birds to feed on.[61] Aristophanes' is not the only 5th-century account of such method of execution. In the concluding chapters of his *History* Herodotus tells us of the punishment meted out to Artayctes, the sacrilegious satrap of Sestus: the victorious Greeks, having captured the city, led him to the seashore, where they "fastened him (*prospassaleusantes*) to a plank

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[57] Δοῦρις δ' ὁ Σάμιος τούτοις ἐπιτραγωιδεῖ πολλὴν ὠμότητα τῶν Ἀθηναίων καὶ τοῦ Περικλέους κατηγορῶν […] ὡς ἄρα τοὺς τριηράρχους καὶ τοὺς ἐπιβάτας τῶν Σαμίων εἰς τὴν Μιλησίων ἀγορὰν καταγαγὼν καὶ σανίσι προσδήσας ἐφ' ἡμέρας δέκα κακῶς ἤδη διακειμένους προσέταξεν ἀνελεῖν, ξύλοις τὰς κεφαλὰς συγκόψαντας. Plutarch, *Pericles* 28. 1–3 (=BNJ 76F67).

[58] δῆσον αὐτὸν εἰσάγων, | ὦ τοξότ', ἐν τῆι σανίδι, κἄπειτ' ἐνθαδὶ | στήσας φύλαττε καὶ προσιέναι μηδένα | ἔα πρὸς αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ τὴν μάστιγ' ἔχων | παῖ', ἢν προσίηι τις. (Ar. *Thesm*. 930–934; tr. J. Henderson).

[59] πάντως δέ μοι τὰ δέσμ' ὑπάρχει. (Ar. *Thesm*. 1013).

[60] χάλασον τὸν ἅλον (*Thesm*. 1003 with Austin-Olson 2003: 310); λαιμότμητ' ἄχη δαιμόνι'[α] (1054).

[61] ἵνα μὴ… γέλωτα παρέχω τοῖς κόραξιν ἑστιῶν (*Thesm*. 941); ἐκρέμασέ με κόραξι δεῖπνον (1028n).

(*sanidas*)."[62] A much more famous instance of this practice (though yet again, generically adapted) is found in the *Prometheus*, where the eponymous Titan is, yet again, fastened (*prospassaleusō*) by Hephaestus to the mountain (*pagos*).[63]

All these classical sources, backed by archeological discoveries from the archaic period, seem to tell us one story: a story of bloodless crucifixion, where the convict is fastened to a wooden board and left to die of exposure, a feast for crows. The term "crucifixion" may however be misleading, as the victim most likely had his hands alongside his body. This is, most likely, what the term *apotympanismos* refers to:[64] "planking" as one might attempt to render the Greek literally, the eponymous *tympanon* being nothing else but the plank itself (referred to also as *sanis*) to which the victim was fastened.

As such, *apotympanismos* was certainly far from any idea of "good death." The convict, dying from exposure, may very well have been left hanging, perhaps on the neck-collar.[65] If he was lucky it may have been fastened tightly enough for him to die of asphyxiation. There may have also been optional embellishments in store for him. The Samians were eventually cudgelled to death, after ten days of exposure. Some others may have been "planked" in a sitting position: *sedet aeternumque sedebit*.[66] The tragic variation included yet another addition: the adamantite wedge driven through Prometheus' chest.[67] And all this leaving aside the terrible moral suffering of public humiliation and the prolonged exposure to insults and slurs from the mob[68] – a tribulation experienced by Phocion only for a brief while on his *via dolorosa* to the Athenian prison.

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[62] ἀπαγαγόντες δὲ αὐτὸν ἐς τὴν ἀκτὴν […] πρὸς σανίδας προσπασσαλεύσαντες ἀνεκρέμασαν (Hdt 9.120).

[63] ἄκοντα σ' ἄκων δυσλύτοις χαλκεύμασιν | προσπασσαλεύσω τῶιδ' ἀπανθρώπωι πάγωι (A. [*Prom*.] 19–20).

[64] Cf. Lys. 13.68; Dem. 8.61; 9.61; [10.63]; in the latter three wrongly translated by Trevett (J. Trevett: *Demosthenes. Speeches 1-17*. Austin 2011) as "cudgelling to death"; cf. A.D. Keramopoulos [Κεραμόπουλος Α. Δ.]: Ὁ ἀποτυμπανισμος. Αθήνα 1923; D.M. MacDowell: *The Law in Classical Athens*…, pp. 254–255; L. Gernet: *Droit et institutions en Grèce antique*. Paris 1982, pp. 175–211 (orig. in REG 37 (1924), 261–293); E. Cantarella: *I supplizi capitali in Grecia e a Roma*. Milano 1991, pp. 41–46; 34–35, 40–42; J. Mélèze Modrzejewski: *Droit et justice dans le monde grec et hellénistique*. Warsaw 2011, pp. 317–338.

[65] Hdt 9.120: προσπασσαλεύσαντες ἀνεκρέμασαν; Ar. *Thesm*. 1028: ἐκρέμασέ με κόραξι δεῖπνον; 1054: ὡς ἐκρεμάσθην, λαιμότμητ' ἄχη δαιμόνι'[α].

[66] καὶ Λυσίμαχον αὐτῆς ἀγαγούσης ὡς τὸν δήμιον, καθήμενον ἤδη μέλλοντα ἀποθνήισκειν Εὐμηλίδης ὁ Ἀλωπεκῆθεν ἀφείλετο, οὐ φάσκων δεῖν ἄνευ δικαστηρίου γνώσεως οὐδένα τῶν πολιτῶν ἀποθνήισκειν· καὶ κρίσεως ἐν δικαστηρίωι γενομένης, ὁ μὲν Λυσίμαχος ἀπέφυγεν καὶ ἐπωνυμίαν ἔσχεν ὁ ἀπὸ τοῦ τυμπάνου (*AP* 45.1).

[67] ἀδαμαντίνου νυν σφηνὸς αὐθάδη γνάθον | στέρνων διαμπὰξ πασσάλευ' ἐρρωμένως (64–65).

[68] It is uncertain whether indeed the *apotympanismos* took place out in the open or, perhaps, in prison; Ar. *Thesm*. 930 (εἰσάγων) may suggest the latter; quite certainly, however, some of the convict's enemies, perhaps the prosecutor himself, were allowed to witness his affliction, as explicitly stated by Aeschines: οὐ γὰρ ὁ θάνατος δεινόν, ἀλλ' ἡ περὶ τὴν τελευτὴν ὕβρις φοβερά. πῶς δὲ οὐκ οἰκτρὸν βλέπειν ἐχθροῦ πρόσωπον ἐπεγγελῶντος, καὶ ταῖς ὡσὶ τῶν ὀνειδῶν ἀκοῦσαι.

We do not know on what principle were the Athenian convicts qualified to one or another type of execution. The amount of twelve drachmas can hardly be the decisive argument: we do not know whether the first dose was provided gratis, and even if not, a three-days wage seems hardly a prohibitive price. An attractive hypothesis put forward by Gernet links the *apotympanismos* to the procedure of *apagōgē*, *ephēgēsis* and *endeixis*.[69] According to him the nastier way of execution was reserved for common criminals (*kakourgoi*) caught *in flagrante delicto*.[70] The much less unpleasant hemlock on the other hand was reserved for a "better class" of criminals, mostly those convicted in high-profile political trials. This elegant theory is, however, upset by the fact that our sources tell us in admittedly hypothetical of *apotympanismos* meted out to traitors.[71] A traitor was no common criminal, but instead a prominent "politician," in service of his country's enemies, in this case: Philip II. More problematic might seem the fact that Theramenes and Polemarchus, both most likely apprehended through *apagōgē*,[72] were put to death by means of hemlock. Admittedly the regime of the Thirty may not be an adequate illustration of standard democratic practice. The question however, seems to remain open, as the association of *apotympanismos* with *apagōgē*, as Todd puts it, "results less from conviction than from exhaustion".[73]

Epilogue: Some Other Ways

Our sources tell us of two other methods of executing people in ancient Athens, the legal status of which still remains debatable: precipitation and stoning. The latter, despite some highly suggestive tragic passages,[74] was never considered

(2.181–182; cf. Dem. 23.69); see also S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, pp. 47–49.

[69] L. Gernet: *Droit et institutions en Grèce antique*…, pp. 192–200; S. C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, pp. 43–44.

[70] Incidentally, Mnesilochus suffering *apotympanismos* in the *Thesmophoriazusae* (following a procedure highly resembling the *ephēgēsis*; S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, p. 43) is many times (*Thesm.* 762, 893, 899, 929, 944) referred to as πανοῦργος, which frequently was the poetic equivalent of the legal term κακοῦργος (cf. Olson-Austin 2003: 280–281).

[71] Dem. 8.61; 9.61; [9.63]; 19.137; S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, p. 42.

[72] Ἐρατοσθένης αὐτὸν ἐν τῇι ὁδῶι λαβὼν εἰς τὸ δεσμωτήριον ἀπαγάγοι (Lys. 12.17); οἱ ἀπήγαγον τὸν ἄνδρα (X. *Hell.* 2.3.56); S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, p. 44 ("both clearly arrested by *apagoge*").

[73] Ibidem.

[74] ψῆφος κατ' αὐτῶν ὀλεθρία βουλεύσεται | λευστῆρα δήμου δ' οὔ τι μὴ φύγηι μόρον (A. *Theb.* 198–199); κυρία δ' ἥδ' ἡμέρα | ἐν ἧι διοίσει ψῆφον Ἀργείων πόλις, | εἰ χρὴ θανεῖν νὼ λευσίμωι πετρώματι (E. *Or.* 48–50).

a legally sanctioned way of killing convicts. The only known historical examples are the killing of Lycides, followed shortly by his family (479 BC), who as a councillor during Xerxes' invasion suggested surrender;[75] and the execution of Alcibiades (the cousin and namesake of the famous Alcibiades, son of Cleinias, the *enfant terrible* of Athenian politics), caught onboard an enemy ship.[76] The latter seems more like summary justice during warfare, whereas the former has all the characteristics of mob-justice, even if it was eventually sanctioned by the state.

Precipitation, on the other hand, that is throwing the convict into a pit or orifice, referred to as *barathron* – seems to have been actually employed as a legal method of execution in classical Athens. So much at least may be gathered from the famous decree of Cannonus, according to which he "who harms the people" upon conviction must "die thrown into the *barathron*."[77] Such is, however, the meaning of the text as emended by the editors; the manuscripts on the other hand read: "be thrown into the *barathron* after he dies."[78] Perhaps therefore the decree refers simply to a method of disposing the bodies – of those who in addition to the death sentence were subject to the ban on burial (*ataphia*): they were simply thrown to a pit. The strongest evidence to such use of precipitation comes from Plato, who explicitly states that Miltiades, the victor from Marathon, was decreed to be thrown into the *barathron*,[79] and only afterwards did the Athenians have second thoughts. It seems therefore plausible that early in the 5th century BC precipitation was indeed employed as a method of execution. From the latter half of the century, however, we hear nothing of it,[80] apart from comic jokes.[81]

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[75] Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ αὐτίκα […] περιστάντες Λυκίδην κατέλευσαν βάλλοντες (Hdt 9.5); cf. V. Rosivach: "Execution by Stoning in Athens." *CA* 1987, Vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 236–237.

[76] καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους αἰχμαλώτους Θράσυλλος εἰς Ἀθήνας ἀπέπεμψε πάντας, Ἀλκιβιάδην δὲ Ἀθηναῖον, Ἀλκιβιάδου ὄντα ἀνεψιὸν καὶ συμφυγάδα, κατέλευσεν (X. *Hell.* 1.2.13); cf. V. Rosivach: "Execution by Stoning in Athens"…, pp. 245–247.

[77] ἵστε δέ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πάντες ὅτι τὸ Καννωνοῦ ψήφισμά ἐστιν ἰσχυρότατον, ὃ κελεύει, ἐάν τις τὸν τῶν Ἀθηναίων δῆμον ἀδικῆι, δεδεμένον ἀποδικεῖν ἐν τῶι δήμωι, καὶ ἐὰν καταγνωσθῆι ἀδικεῖν, ἀποθανεῖν εἰς τὸ βάραθρον ἐμβληθέντα (X. *Hell.* 1.7.20).

[78] ἀποθανεῖν … ἐμβληθέντα Dobree: ἀποθανόντα … ἐμβληθῆναι MSS; cf. S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, p. 38, n. 26; see also D. Allen: *The World of Prometheus*…, pp. 324–325.

[79] Μιλιτιάδην δὲ τὸν Μαραθῶνι εἰς τὸ βάραθρον ἐμβαλεῖν ἐψηφίσαντο, καὶ εἰ μὴ διὰ τὸν πρύτανιν, ἐνέπεσεν ἄν. (Pl. *Gorg.* 516e); cf. Hdt 7.133 (Persian envoys); Plu. *Arist*. 3 (half-jokingly: Aristides and Themistocles).

[80] Admittedly the decree of Cannonus cannot be dated, and therefore may come from a later period (cf. M. Ostwald: *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of Law. Law, Society and Politics in Fifth-Century Athens*. Berkeley 1986, p. 440).

[81] Ar. *Eq.* 1362–1363; *Nub.* 144–151; *Ran*. 574; *Plut*. 431; cf. S.C. Todd: "How to Execute People in Fourth-Century Athens"…, p. 38.

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THEOS EGENOU EX ANTROPOU
Dionysian and Aphrodisian Aspects of the Underworld

Abstract: One of the thematic threads in the vase painting of Southern Italy during the 4th century BC is the depiction of connotative images relating to the underworld and posthumous human existence. The painters made use of decorative motifs which can be perceived as a system of codes that are clear in the context of the local religious beliefs. Images of Dionysus and the chthonic Aphrodite, together with two figures connected with the goddess, Eros and Nike, entered the iconography of the scenes on vases intended as grave furnishings, as did a range of symbols related to the Dionysian-Aphrodisian sphere. Belief in divine protection and participation in the Dionysian, or Orphic, mysteries, which is borne out by the inscriptions on the gold tablets found by the dead, gave the deceased the hope of rebirth after death and the attainment of divine status.

Key words: Southern Italy, red-figure vase painting, classical and late classical period, Dionysus, Aphrodite, Eros, Elysian Fields, underworld

The collections held by the Princes Czartoryski Foundation contain a group of vessels created in the workshops of Apulia in Southern Italy in the final twenty-five years of the 4th century BC. Three of them are vases with plastic and polychrome decoration and they come from graves in the necropolis of Canosa.[1]

[1] Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-1254, MNK XI-2, MNK XI-3, see K. Bulas: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum: Pologne 2: Cracovie*. Varsovie–Cracovie 1935, pl. 17,2; 17,3;19,7; D. Gorzelany: "Die polychromierten Gefäße aus Canosa im Fürsten-Czartoryski-Museum zu Krakau." *Archeologia* 2003 [2004], Vol. LIV, pp. 35–41, pl. XII.1–3.

Given the excellent state of preservation of the remaining vases, they, too, could well have been grave furnishings. The use of vessels for representative purpose during burial ceremonies and as gifts for the deceased[2] determined their painted and figurative decoration, which expressed specific aspects of the local beliefs as regards the existence of the soul in the underworld. Not only the source texts, but also the numerous finds of richly decorated funerary vases in the region of Southern Italy allow for the meaning of the particular iconographic elements of the vases in the Krakow collection to be interpreted.

The ceramics found in Southern Italy were produced in local workshops from the end of the 5th century BC, initially by potters and painters who had come from Athens. Their work was bought by Greek immigrants, but first and foremost by the local population, whose requirements in terms of vase decoration differed from those dictated by Athenian customs.[3] Those intended as grave furnishings were adorned by scenes which diverged significantly from the Greek vision of a grim and murky Hades. Their predominant feature is the depiction of the Islands of the Blest, whereon the heroes were received and, as of the classical period, where all those initiated into the mysteries of the goddesses Demeter and Persephone, as well as Dionysus, enjoyed a blissful existence under the protection of the gods.[4]

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[2] H. Lohmann: "Zu technischen Besonderheiten apulischer Vasen." *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Institut* 1982, Vol. 97, pp. 191–249; K. Schauenburg: "Zur Grabsymbolik apulischer Vasen." *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Institut* 1989, Vol. 104, pp. 31, 60 (the author adopts a figure of approximately forty to forty-five per cent of vessel production as intended for sepulchral purposes). The use of monumental vases as grave monuments has been found at the Taranto necropolis; cf. A. Hoffmann: "Die Verwendung der unteritalische-rotfigurigen Keramik und die Funktion der Bilder." In: *Die Lebenden und die Seligen. Unteritalisch-rotfigurige Vasen der Dresdener Skulpturensammlung.* Eds. K. Knoll, R. Hurschmann, A. Hoffmann. Mainz 2003, p. 61.

[3] For the migration of Greek painters to Apulia and the manner in which not only motifs borrowed from Greek iconography, but also those alluding to literary writings were assimilated, cf. L. Giuliani: *Tragik, Trauer, Trost. Bildervasen für eine apulische Totenfest.* Berlin 1995, pp. 13–20.

[4] The notion of abiding in the Elysian part of Hades, which was guaranteed to the chosen, appears as far back as Homer, where it occurs in reference to Menelaus (*Od.* 4, 561–569) and Hercules (*Od.* 11, 601–604); as well as in Hesiod (*WD* 172). Plato speaks of the separate fates after death of the righteous and unrighteous, as presented in the Orphic teachings (*Rep.* 363 c); cf. also J. Dalfen: "Platons Jenseitsmythen: eine neue Mythologie?" In: *Platon als Mythologe. Neue Interpretationen zu den Mythen in Platons Dialogen*. Eds. M. Janka, Ch. Schäfer. Darmstadt 2002, pp. 214–230. For the Greek concept of the underworld and its topography, cf. A. Chaniotis: "Das Jenseits: Eine Gegenwelt?" In: *Gegenwelten zu den Kulturen der Griechen und der Römer in der Antike.* Ed. T. Hölscher. Munich–Leipzig 2000, pp. 159–181; R. Schlesier: "Dionysos in der Unterwelt. Zu den Jenseitskonstruktionen der bakchischen Mysterien." In: *Konstruktionen von Wirklichkeit. Bilder im Griechenland des 5. und 4. Jahrhunderts v. Ch.* Eds. R. von den Hoff, S. Schmidt. Stuttgart 2001, pp. 157–172; D. Zarewicz: "Platon – Muzajos – misteria. Antropologia śmierci i misteryjnego wyzwolenia w kontekście kilku fragmentów literatury greckiej." In: *Orfizm i jego koncepcja w literaturze, sztuce i filozofii*. Ed. K. Kołakowska. Kraków–Lublin 2011, pp. 51–69;

The essence of the promise of a better world beyond relates back to the divine origins of humankind already referred to by Hesiod[5] and also includes the Orphic theory, whereby humanity sprang from a union of the Titanic element and the divine,[6] while, in the texts inscribed on the gold tablets found in graves in Southern Italy, among others, the deceased describe themselves as a "child of Gaia and starry Uranus."[7] The texts on the tablets are linked to Orphism; however Dionysus and Persephone play a key role in them and they are an intrinsic voice harmonising with the substance of what is presented on the funerary ceramics. A person who partakes of the mysteries of these gods in their lifetime is expressing a desire to be released, after death, from their corporeal shell, from the Titanic human element.[8] It was owing to cleansing by Dionysus[9] that it was possible to join the divine sphere; "from man thou becam'st a god" (THEOS EGENOU EX ANTROPOU) announces the text on the gold tablets found, among others, in graves in the Lucania region, where they accompanied the deceased on their journey to Persephone's kingdom, "to the sacred meadows and to the groves."[10] Both excerpts have a long literary tradition[11] and contain the essence of the Southern Italian concepts of the existence of the deceased in the underworld, illustrated both realistically and symbolically in the vase paintings.

Participation in the Dionysian mysteries and the custom of gorging on wine, that divine gift which eases life's hardships and troubles,[12] had an influence on the spread of the image of the underworld already familiar in the Greek world,[13] where

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K. Sekita: *Złote tabliczki orfickie. Życie po śmierci w wierzeniach starożytnych Greków*. Warszawa 2011, pp. 25–48.

[5] Hes. *WD* 120.

[6] W. Lengauer: *Religijność starożytnych Greków*. Warszawa 1994, pp. 53–54; D. Zarewicz: "Platon – Muzajos – misteria…," In: *Orfizm*…, pp. 58–59; P. Świercz: "Mythos i logos w orfickiej koncepcji nieśmiertelności." In: *Orfizm*…, pp. 139–140; A.M. Lasek: "Elementy orfickie w *Dionysiaka* Nonnosa z Panopolis." In: *Orfizm*…, pp. 155–166; D. Zarewicz: "Platon – Muzajos – misteria…," pp. 58–59.

[7] Cf. the texts on the tablets found in the Calabria region, Hipponion and Petelia (S.G. Cole: "Landscapes of Dionysos and Elysian Fields." In: *Greek Mysteries. The Archaeology and Ritual of Ancient Greek Secret Cults*. Ed. M.B. Cosmopoulos. London–New York 2003, pp. 193–217; K. Sekita: *Złote*…, pp. 85–86, B 474 F and B 476 F).

[8] Cf. E.R. Dodds: *The Greeks and the Irrational*. Berkeley 1951, pp. 155 ff.

[9] Tablet B 485 F from Pelinna and B 487 F from Thurii in Lucania, both dating from the 4th century BC (K. Sekita: *Złote*…, p. 91); F. Graf: "Dionysian and Orphic Eschatology: New Texts and Old Questions." In: *Mask of Dionysos*. Eds. T.H. Carpenter, C.A. Faraone. New York 1993, pp. 239–258.

[10] K. Sekita: *Złote*…, B 487 F.

[11] The motif of meadows rampant with *Aspholedus* (lilies) traces as far back as Homer (*Od*. 11, 539 and 573; 24, 13) and Hesiod (*WD* 41).

[12] Hes. *WD* 614.

[13] O. Murray: "Death and the Symposion." *Annali. Sezione di archeologia e storia antica. Instituto universitario orientale di Napoli. Dipartimento di studi del mondo classico e del Mediterraneo antico* 1988, Vol. 10, pp. 239–257.

the symposium played a predominant role.[14] Elements of the domestic interiors typical of that kind of scene in Greek painting[15] replaced *flora*, pointing unequivocally to the intent to transpose ordinary, everyday banqueting to the created space of the underworld. On a Lucanian oinochoe by the Brooklyn-Budapest Painter (400–360 BC),[16] four men feast and make merry beneath the boughs of an exuberantly luxuriant grapevine, in the company of a woman with a tympanum and the focus of admiration from two of the men, a naked *hetairai*. Although, by nature, the scene alludes to the feasts and revels beneath the open skies attested to in the ancient sources,[17] the leopard skin with which the *klinai* are upholstered numbers amongst the attributes of the Dionysian symposium and permits the supposition that the figures are dwelling in the underworld.

The vases decorated with motifs depicting a symposium with the participation of Dionysus himself form a considerable larger group. Three types of scene can be distinguished here, combining the divine and human world within a different compass. On a volute krater by the Kadmos Painter,[18] who worked in the late 5th century BC, the centre features a portrayal of Dionysus reclining on a *klinē* with a thyrsus. He is surrounded by maenads, satyrs and personifications of feelings which, in principle, are related to the sphere of Aphrodite, but are also triggered by the action of wine; Himeros is shown unfastening the god's sandal and Eros and Pothos[19] are depicted in the upper corner of the scene. The space is enclosed from above by grapevine shoots.

The wishful initiation into the divine circle after death is shown in scenes on vases where the deceased is seen feasting and revelling in the company of Dionysus, a situation possible only in the mythic era of the golden age and in an imaginary, cosmic world. The composition, comprising the divine symposium and the deceased's banqueting on the two sides of the vessel, outwardly implies a division between the two spaces.[20] Yet, on a calyx krater by the Tarporley Painter

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[14] It should, however, be pointed out that symposium scenes depicting the deceased are only one of the thematic groups and do not predominate amongst the extant representations on the vases; cf. R. Hurschmann: *Symposionszenen auf unteritalischen Vasen*. Königshausen–Neumann 1985, pp. 14–63; H. Frielinghaus: *Einheimische in der apulischen Vasenmalerei*. Berlin 1995, pp. 117–139.

[15] K. Topper: *The Imagery of the Athenian Symposium*. Cambridge 2012.

[16] London, British Museum, inv. F 187; cf. A.D. Trendall: *The Red-Figured Vases of Lucania, Campania and Sicily.* Oxford 1967, p. 112, no. 577, pl. 57,3–4; R. Hurschmann: *Symposienszenen*…, pp. 56 f., 195 L 11, pl. 6.

[17] Athen. *Deip.* XV 675 a.

[18] The Jatta Collection, Ruvo, Inv. J 1093; cf. H. Sichtermann: *Griechische Vasen in Unteritalien aus der Sammlung Jatta in Ruvo*. Tübingen 1966, p. 20, no. 10, pl. 10, 17.

[19] On the topic of personifications of Himeros and Pothos, cf. H.A. Shapiro: *Personifications in Greek Art*. Zürich 1993, pp. 110–124.

[20] For instance, the dinos Varrese Painter (360–340 BC), British Museum, Inv. F 303; cf. A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured Vases of Apulia*. Oxford 1978 (Vol. I), 1982 (Vol. II), p. 334, no. 151, pl. 107, 1–5; R. Hurschmann: *Symposionszenen*…, p. 116, 177, A 54.

(5th/4th century BC),[21] Dionysus is portrayed on a *klinē* under spreading shrubbery of vine and ivy, reclining between a woman with a tympanum, an attribute of the maenads, and a man who is holding a kylix he is using for a game of *kottabos*[22] and wearing a fillet analogical to that of the god. Both figures belong to the world of the dead but, in using Dionysian attributes, they become the happy and fortunate companions of the god in the underworld. The message of the scene is confirmed by the krater of wine standing alongside the *klinē* and by the egg, a symbol of death overcome, of rebirth and of the power of life, being offered to the woman.[23] More eggs lie on the ground between pomegranate fruit, as fare intended for the deceased.[24] During a symposium, the consumption of eggs and pomegranates, which were planted on Cyprus by Aphrodite,[25] symbolised fertility and enduring marriage and, in addition, it merges Aphrodisian elements into the Dionysian sphere.

The scene presented on a Late Apulian situla[26] can be interpreted in a context similar to the aforementioned krater. The depiction of a woman in the company of Dionysus, who is seated at his ease in the centre with a stem of giant fennel (Gr. *narthex*; Lat. *ferula communis*) for a sceptre, is a representation of the deceased, who has already been taken into the sacred thiasus and, by the same token, is identified with the maenads. The louterion[27] and the alabastron lying on the ground bear witness to her former affiliation to the temporal world; both are typical attributes representing the feminine sphere and they are also connected with Aphrodisian sphere through the context of making one's toilet, beautifying and al-

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[21] The Jatta Collection, Ruvo, Inv. J 1495; cf. A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 51, no. 40; H. Sichtermann: *Griechische…*, p. 42, no. 52, pl. 85 (the style of the Dionysiac Painter). The author sees a satyr in the figure behind Dionysus, although the typical characteristics which would permit such an interpretation are missing; cf. R. Hurschmann: *Symposionszenen…*, pp. 95–97, 169, A 9 (Tarporley Painter).

[22] The game of *kottabos* was one played by those in love. As they flung the wine lees from their kylix into a dish, they would call out the name of their beloved, cf. Athen. *Deip.* X 427 d.

[23] M.P. Nilsson: "Das Ei im Totenkult der Alten." In: Idem: *Opuscula selecta linguis Anglica, Francogallica, Germanica conscripta.* Vol. I. Lund 1951, pp. 3–20; R. Hurschmann: *Symposionszenen…*, p. 97; H. Lohmann: *Grabmäler auf unteritalischen Vasen.* Berlin 1979, p. 129 f., 1051; L. Giuliani: *Tragik…*, pp. 82, 164 n. 107. In Athenaeus (*Deip.* II 65), Heraclides of Tarentum emphasises the excellent effect of onions, eggs and snails on the production of semen and in increasing sexual drive.

[24] Athen. *Deip.* X 427 e.

[25] Athen. *Deip.* III 84c; F. Muthmann: *Der Granatapfel. Symbol des Lebens in der alten Welt.* Fribourg 1982, pp. 39 f., 43 f., 48–50. For the connection between a pomegranate fruit and Dionysus, cf. C. Kerényi: *Eleusis. Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter.* Princeton 1991, pp. 130–144.

[26] The Jatta Collection, Ruvo, Inv. J 1326; cf. H. Sichtermann: *Griechische…*, p. 77, no. 77, pl. 135.

[27] Cf. G. Schneider-Herrmann: "Spuren eines Eroskultes in der italischen Vasenmalerei." *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving* 1970, Vol. 45, pp. 96–98, fig. 12. Louterions also appeared as grave monuments; cf. H. Lohmann: *Grabmäler…*, pp. 133–138.

lusions to the ritual bathing of a bride. The two phiales, one in the god's hand and the other lying on the ground, connote the sacred sphere.

For women, the fulfilment of their acceptance into the Dionysian world is the entry into a union with the god, which is symbolised by the appearance of figures of Eros in a symposium scene. On a volute krater closed to the Iliupersis Painter (380–370 BC),[28] there is a lack of attributes permitting the woman seated by Dionysus on the *klinē* to be identified with Ariadne,[29] even though she usually accompanied him in Athenian painting. Both the purpose of the vases and the context of the Greek motifs, which altered in the Southern Italian environment, permit this scene to be interpreted as the deceased's nuptials with the god and as a depiction of the raising of the human being to the divine sphere in an idyllic underworld, as assured in the religious writings.[30] After all, did not Ariadne herself attain immortality thanks to Dionysus,[31] becoming the much-desired model for eschatological representations? The Eros figures in this scene are typical companions to nuptial preparations. The objects they hold correspond to various attributes, Dionysian in the case of the kantharos and sacred in that of the phiale; they also belong not only with symposium and nuptial scenes, but with burials as well, in the instance of the wreath. The depictions of Eros himself in vase painting such as that seen on the Apulian hydria (340–330 BC, Fig. 1)[32] from the Princes Czartoryski Foundation collection, where he strides out with a wreath and branch, or as he rises upward with a thymiaterion[33] and tympanum on a polychrome oinochoe (4th/3rd century BC)[34] from the same holdings, connote the wide circle of action and influence exercised by Aphrodite's son, extending to the dead, as well. The attributes of Eros unequivocally place these vases amongst the group of grave gifts.

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[28] Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Inv. 521; cf. R. Hurschmann: *Symposionszenen*…, pp. 117 f. 428, 123 f. 463 A 45, pl. 14,2; Idem: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum Deutschland 76: Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Skulpturensammlung I*. München 2003, pl. 9.1; 11.3.

[29] This interpretation of the figure of the woman occurs, among others, in K. Knoll: *Alltag und Mythos. Griechische Gefäße der Skulpturensammlung*. Dresden 1998, p. 120. Cf. also the Lucanian volute krater by the Creusa Painter (400–380 BC), Toledo Museum of Art, Inv. 81.110; cf. M.E. Mayo: *The Art of South Italy; Vases from Magna Graecia*. Richmond 1982, pp. 63–66, cat. 6.

[30] Cf. R. Hurschmann: *Symposionszenen*…, p. 120 ff.; Idem: "Einswerden mit dem Gott: Dionysios der Erlöser." In: *Die Lebenden*…, p. 74.

[31] Hes. *Th*. 947–949.

[32] Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-1455, cf. K. Bulas: *CVA Cracovie*, pl. 16[60]3.

[33] Thymateria were also used to make offerings during nuptials; they numbered amongst the typical objects which introduced an Aphrodisian atmosphere into the painting of Southern Italy; cf. H. Lohmann: *Grabmäler*…, p. 80; R. Hurschmann: *Symposienszenen*…, pp. 110–111.

[34] Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-1254, por. K. Bulas: *CVA Cracovie*, pl. 19[63]7; D. Gorzelany: "Die polychromierten"…, p. 36, fig. 1.

Eros' presence in the Dionysian underworld scenes is an important supplementation of the concept underlying this notion. Furnishings of the feminine kind and Dionysian attributes alike[35] play a part in the nuptials and in the thiasus as a guarantee of the ecstasies of love; they work together both with Aphrodite and with Dionysus, assuring fertility and rebirth and this also pertains in the context of the deceased's expectations as regards full and blissful love and the joyful existence of the soul.

The task of Eros, directed by Aphrodite's will, is illustrated in fragments of Euripides' tragedies and in the third part of Aeschylus' *Danaid Tetralogy.*[36] The cyclical form of nature and the regeneration of *flora* after the winter period, as well as the earth's fertility, were dependent on the combined activities of the gods, inspired by the participation of Aphrodite, who was also worshipped in this context as Aphrodite of the Gardens (*en Kepois*).[37] This relationship with nature, plant life and flowers is depicted in the presentation of figures of Eros set amidst boughs and shoots, as on the neck of a volute krater by the Darius Painter,[38] where two such figures are presented, embracing and striding forth, holding stems of decoratively entwined flora. The aforementioned ornament is composed of oak branches, around which a garland of eggs decorated with geometric and plant designs is wrapped. A motif of Apulian origins, possibly drawn from the decorations created in response to the requirements of the funeral ceremony, it also occurs on Paestan, Campanian and Sicilian ceramics.[39] Like the evergreen ivy in Greece, the evergreen leaves of the cork oak, widespread in the south of Italy, became an inherent part of Dionysian symbolism and, by the same token, of funerary art.[40] The motif reinforces the meaning of the Eros figures and, in terms of subject matter, the scene

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[35] These, on the one hand, consist of grapes, branches of ivy and eggs, but, on the other hand, they also comprise the flowers, tympanum, mirror, fan, ribbons and chest of nuptial gifts, all of which belong to the Aphrodisian sphere. The range of these objects also had a vital sepulchral significance in Egyptian culture; cf. M. Lurker: *Bogowie i symbole starożytnych Egipcjan*. Warszawa 1995, pp. 104, 124, 233, 236–237.

[36] Athen. *Deip.* XIII 73–74. Cf. A. Greifenhagen: *Griechische Eroten*. Berlin 1957, pp. 24–26; C. Isler-Kerényi: "Boreade oder Eros?" *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1984, p. 384; A. Thompsen: *Die Wirkung der Götter.* Berlin–Boston 2011, pp. 268 f.

[37] Cf. Fr. 6 of the Cyprian Poem, Athen. *Deip.* XV 682 e–f; M. Maaskant-Kleibrink: "The Stuff of which Greek Heroines are Made." *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving* 1989, Vol. 64, pp. 23–26; for the cult of Aphrodite of the Gardens, cf. R. Rosenzweig: *Worshipping Aphrodite: Art and Cult in the Classical Athens.* Ann Arbor 2004, pp. 29–44.

[38] Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung, Inv. 1984.41; cf. L. Giuliani: *Tragik*…, pp. 26–31, cat. 1, fig. 1, pl. 2.1.

[39] Ibidem, p. 164, n. 107.

[40] In Greece, oak branches occur sporadically in a funerary context; cf. M. Blech: *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen*. Berlin 1982, p. 96. However, oak wreaths have been authenticated amongst the findings in graves in Macedonia; M. Andronikos: *Vergina. The Royal Tombs.* Athens 2004, pp. 172–173, 214–215, pl. 137, 184. For the use and symbolism of ivy, cf. M. Blech: *Studien*…, pp. 181–216.

ties in with the other side of the neck of the deceased's vessel. The young man sits, holding a thyrsus and a phiale into which the wine of the grape is flowing as it did in the times of plenty in the golden age;[41] in front of him stands the figure of a winged woman with a wreath and a fan and, behind him is a satyr. The figure of the deceased outwardly resembles Dionysus, but his short hair and the company of Nike bear witness to the fact that he is one of the dead, now admitted to the Dionysian underworld. The scene is surrounded by a bough of fruit-laden grapevine, a laurel branch and flowers in the background and at the feet of the satyr, with a branch of corymb-bearing ivy forming an ornament below the rim of the vessel. Together, they endow the image with a paradisiacal backdrop.

Plant motifs constitute a vital supplementation of the decoration on Southern Italian vases.[42] The painstakingly rendered leaves, the subtly wrought, twining stems, the exuberantly blossoming or fantastical flowers all depict the vitality of nature which guarantees the capability of annual rebirth. The symbolism of the plant shoots in the sepulchral context is clearly expressed in the representations depicting plants which fill the grave naiskoi.[43] Plants and flowers were used to decorate graves;[44] however, it might well be supposed that the replacement of *flora* with the figure of the deceased standing in the naiskos[45] was treated as an expression of hope for the rebirth of human beings in line with the cycle of vegetation and the laws of nature. An ornamental motif depicting a head emerging from the calyx of a flower,[46] seen in a reduced form adorning a plate painted by the T. P. S.

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[41] The miracle of wine numbers amongst the rituals of the Dionysian Theodosia celebrated in the temple at Elis, on the island of Andros (Paus. VI, 26,2; Plin. *Nat.* II 103 [231]) and on the island of Teos (Plin. *Nat.* 2.106, 31.13 [16]; Diod. 3.66.2). At Elis (Paus. VI, 26,1–2; Athen. *Deip.* I 61) the priests locked the empty vessels in a building of the sanctuary outside the town where the celebration of the festival in honour of Thyia was held and, in the morning, they were brimming with wine. On Naxos, on the other hand, the spot where the nuptials of Dionysus and Ariadne occurred was commemorated as the spring of wine (Steph. Byz. *Naxos*); cf. R. Merkelbach: *Die Hirten des Dionysos: die Dionysos-mysterien der römischen Kaiserzeit und der bukolische Roman von des Longus.* Stuttgart 1988, pp. 55, 109–110; W.F. Otto: *Dionysos*. Frankfurt am Main 1996, pp. 90 f.

[42] K. Schauenburg: "Zur Symbolik unteritalischer Rankenmotive." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Institut, Abteilung Rom* 1957, Vol. 64, pp. 198–221; H. Lohmann: *Grabmäler…*, pp. 117–130; L. Giuliani: *Tragik…*, pp. 81–87.

[43] H. Lohmann: *Grabmäler…*, pp. 115–117, 127–129; K. Schauenburg: "Zur Symbolik"…, pp. 198 ff.; A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 1288.

[44] Cf. Soph. *El*. 896; *Anth. Pal*. VII 657; H. Lohmann: *Grabmäler…*, pp. 123–125.

[45] Cf. H. Lohmann: *Grabmäler…*, pp. 52–85.

[46] In one instance, on a volute krater by the Iliupersis Painter, a woman's head is provided with an inscription reading *Aura*, British Museum, Inv. F 277 (370–350 BC); cf. A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 193. For other attributes, cf. K. Schauenburg: "Zur Symbolik…," pp. 204–221 and Idem: "Zu einer Hydria des Baltimoremalers in Kiel." *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 1984, Vol. 99, pp. 127–160; Idem: "Zur Grabsymbolik…," p. 36 f., n. 68, also in respect of other figures emerging from flowers and standing on a flower, a bough or a shoot; L. Giuliani: *Tragik…*, p. 85 f.

Group (330–300 BC, Fig. 2)[47] and held in the collections of the Princes Czartoryski Foundation, can be linked to this wish; here, only modest-sized leaves were placed on the two sides of the neck. The great frequency with which this motif occurs in relation to the chthonic meaning of plant shoots and boughs offers associations with the subterranean Aphrodite or with Persephone-Aphrodite; on the one hand, the blossoming flowers are the outcome of Aphrodite's influence, yet they are also linked with the springtime return of Persephone to the surface. In the background of that story, an opposite event paradoxically occurs; the plucking of a narcissus, symbol of the rebirth of springtime, given forth by the earth at the will of Zeus, led to Kore's abduction by Hades.[48] The flower unites the earth's progenitive power with the process of dying, a motif also contained in another mythological story, which tells the tale of the tragic outcome of Narcissus' unfulfilled love.[49]

To those buying the vases, the symbolism of a head represented emerging from a flower or of a bough or shoot was clear and required no explanatory inscription, just as occurred in the case of another frequent decorative motif on the vases of Southern Italy; the winged head of a woman depicted on an Apulian oinochoe by the Kantharos Group[50] (325–300 BC, Fig. 3) and on the body of a polychrome askos from Canosa[51] which is held in the collections of the Princes Czartoryski Foundation in Krakow. The motif, which arose as an abbreviated rendering of a figure, is most often interpreted with reference to the winged figure of Nike,[52] that adorns the second of the Krakow askoi.[53] That personification was usually a participant of scenes relating to nuptial preparations, but also appears in presentations of the apotheosis of Hercules, for instance. In the funeral context, his

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[47] Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-1248, see K. Bulas: *CVA Cracovie, pl.* 16[70]4; A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 664, no. 154, 666.

[48] *HH Dem*. II 8–19.

[49] Ov. *Met*. 339–510.

[50] Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-1454, cf. K. Bulas: *CVA Cracovie*, pl. 16[70] 2 a-b.; A. Cambitoglou: "Groups of Apulian Red-Figure Vases Decorated with Heads of Women or of Nike." *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 1954, Vol. 74, p. 118 no. 3; A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 964, no. 28. For other examples of heads with one wing, cf. K. Schauenburg: "Diesseits und Jenseits in der italischen Grabkunst." *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien* 1995, Vol. 64, p. 27 n. 7.

[51] Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-2, see K. Bulas: *CVA Cracovie*, pl. 17[71]2; D. Gorzelany: "Die polychromierten…," p. 36 f.

[52] A. Cambitoglou: "Groups…," p. 121; K. Schauenburg: *Diesseits…*, pp. 20–76; A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 648. For the topic of winged female figures in general, cf. A. Cambitoglou: "Groups…," p. 121; K. Schauenburg: *Diesseits…*, pp. 20–76; A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 648.

[53] Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-3, see K. Bulas: *CVA Cracovie*, pl. 17[71]3; D. Gorzelany: "Die polychromierten…," p. 37, fig. 3.

posthumous fate constitutes a wishful model for an ongoing existence, guaranteeing the deceased a private apotheosis. An iconographic model for the spreading of that theme might, for example, be the decoration of a Panathenaic amphora by the Talos Painter (circa 420 BC), which was found in a grave in the necropolis in Tarento.[54] The cohesive depiction on the vase in its entirety presents Hercules making his way up Mount Olympus in a quadriga driven by Iolaus on one side. On the second side, he is depicted seated before a *sacellum*, in conversation with Athena. The scenes are linked by the two figures of Nike which fill the field below the handles; one, with a wreath of ivy on her head, is rising above the harness, bearing a thymiaterion and phiale for the offering of a sacrifice, while the second is holding a laurel branch proclaiming the hero's apotheosis. Here, Nike is leading Hercules into the world of immortality. The very figure of the goddess connotes the belief in victory over death, as seen on the previously mentioned Krakow askos and the situla by the Painter of Dublin, related to the Lycurgos Painter (350–340 BC),[55] where, like Eros, she rises amidst the flowers in the meadows of Persephone. The motif of the winged head can also be considered in the context of representations of the sirens,[56] who appear either alone or in a thicket of plant shoots and play upon musical instruments to brighten the existence of the dead in the underworld. As distinct from earlier depictions, which were already present in Homer's epic poetry[57] and widespread in the archaic period, whereby their singing supposedly brought death to people, an absolutely contrary vision of these fantastical beings took shape with effect from the classical era. The singing and music-making sirens, the "muses of the underworld," were the guides to the soul and provided it with protection. They can be seen in the company of Eros and a swan, bringing an Aphrodisian aura[58] to the scene. They also step into the Dionysian sphere, as

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[54] Taranto, Museo Nazionale, Inv. 143544, see F. G. Lo Porto: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum Italia 70: Museo Nazionale di Taranto IV – Collezione Rotondo.* Roma 1998, pl. 27–32.

[55] The Jatta Collection, Ruvo, Inv. J 1372; see H. Sichtermann: *Griechische…*, p. 52, no. 75, pl. 133. In this instance, the author allows the description of the figure as a depiction of a soul in the Elysian Fields, but it would be a unique presentation as far as vase painting is concerned. Winged souls (*ker*, *psyche*) appear in black-figure painting; however, during the classical period, the deceased were usually depicted in human form. Hynos and Thanatos also occur as winged men (E. Peifer: *Eidola und andere mit dem Sterben verbundene Flügelwesen in der attischen Vasenmalerei in spätarchaischer und klassischer Zeit.* Frankfurt am Main 1989, pp. 33–212). K. Schauenburg makes reference to examples of sirens in: "Zur Grabsymbolik…," pp. 39 f.

[56] E. Buschor: *Die Musen des Jenseits.* München 1944. For sirens in the Geometric and Orientalising periods, cf. E. Kunze: "Sirenen." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Athen* 1931, Vol. 32, pp. 124–141; E. Peifer: *Eidola…*, pp. 267–280.

[57] Hom. *Od.* 12, 166–200.

[58] G. Schneider-Herrmann: "Spuren…," pp. 94 f.; K. Schauenburg: *Diesseits…*, pp. 35–37, fig. 15.

depicted on the Apulian lekythos in London (circa 320 BC),[59] which is decorated with a representation of a siren holding a thyrsus above which a bunch of grapes is visible. All three of the winged beings, the Siren and, in particular, Nike, as well as Eros, adorned with lady's jewellery and alluding to the Orphic concept of an androgynous appearance[60] relating to the vital powers of women and men, are presented in the abbreviated form of a winged head, demonstrating a considerable iconographic proximity,[61] which arouses doubts as regards any unequivocal understanding of this type of representation. All the figures are characterised by an essential, common feature which is crucial to the significance of the winged-head motif; they point to the cosmic sphere of the deceased's existence. However, when accepting both that a cohesive system of codes is at work in the painting of the region and the interpretation of the woman's head shown on the vases as an image of Aphrodite,[62] then the representation of the winged head can also be perceived as its semantic pendant with regard to Eros;[63] this pair of gods would syncretically express a belief in rebirth and the continuity of human existence as an element of nature.

In contrast to Eros, the figure of Aphrodite herself occurs infrequently. Her presence at a grave, as in the volute krater attributed to the Group of New York 17.120.240[64] (330–320 BC), implies the heroisation of the deceased and his blissful existence under divine protection in the underworld, just as the depiction of Eros[65] alongside it does. The goddess can also be seen in the representation of a woman's head between two kneeling figures of Eros on the neck of a volute krater

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[59] An Apulian lekythos in the British Museum, Inv. F 402; cf. A.H. Smith, F.N. Pryce: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum Great Britain 2: London, British Museum II*. London 1926, pl. IV E.a 11,7.

[60] G. Schneider-Herrmann: "Spuren…," p. 105; M. Bentz, F. Rumscheid: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum Deutschland 58: Göttingen I*. München 1989, pp. 17–18.

[61] For Eros and Nike, cf. K. Schauenburg: "Flügelgestalten auf unteritalischen Grabvasen." *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Institut* 1987, Vol. 102, pp. 199–232.

[62] A. Cambitoglou: "Groups…," p. 121; A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, pp. 648 f.; M. Bentz, F. Rumscheid: *CVA Göttingen I.…*, pp. 15–16.

[63] G. Schneider-Herrmann: "Spuren…," p. 98.

[64] Cf. the volute krater in Dresden, Antikensammlung, Inv. Dr. 519; cf.; A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured…*, p. 755; K. Schauenburg: "Zu Gottheiten und Heroen im und am Grab." *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien* 1994, Vol. 63, p. 74, fig. 4; R. Hurschmann: "Die Seligen in ihrer Welt im Reich der Götter." In: *Die Lebenden…*, p. 97.

[65] References to sculptural models for the representation of Eros in the naiskos fulfilling the function of a grave monument is also testimony to his cult in a funerary context; cf. G. Schneider-Herrmann: "Spuren…," pp. 86–117; K. Schauenburg: "Zu Götterstatuen auf unteritalischen Vasen." *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1977, pp. 285–297; Idem: "Eros im Tempel." *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1981, pp. 344–348; Idem: "Zur Grabsymbolik…," p. 49, n. 117; Idem: "Zu Gottheiten…," pp. 78 f.

from Ruvo.[66] This symbolic decoration clarifies the scene on the phiale closed to the Baltimore Painter[67]: two figures of Eros, or, perhaps, Eros and Himeros, rise amidst exuberantly rampant, flowering shoots of plants reminiscent of meadows, leading the figure of a woman. Just as with the previous representation, there is an absence of attributes permitting her to be unequivocally defined. However, a tangible closeness suggests the divine relationship of Aphrodite and her sons. After all, if a deceased man can become Dionysus, then may a deceased woman not be treated as Aphrodite? This depiction contains a powerful suggestion of the dead woman's deification, freed from her corporeal burden and rising above the meadows of Persephone. However, returning to the scene on the volute krater, it should be noted that the depiction of Aphrodite on the neck of the vessel has its justification in the context of a fragment presented on the body and reinforcing its erotic nature. In the upper left-hand corner, above the central portrayal of Dionysus in a chariot drawn by a panther, in the company of a maenads, a satyr and Silenus, is a scene crucial to the linking of both sections of the decoration of the krater and, at one and the same time, outstanding in terms of the iconography of Southern Italian painting: it depicts Eros raping a maenad, an act which, in Dionysian iconography, usually falls to the satyrs.

In summing up, it is necessary to emphasise that, in the vase painting of Southern Italy, the subject matter which predominated in the 4th century BC was connected with the depiction of, and hope for, a better lot in the underworld and that the decorative motifs constituted a code which was clear in the context of the widespread religious beliefs of the time. Participation in the Dionysian, or Orphic, mysteries,[68] which is borne out by the inscriptions on the gold tablets found by the dead, reinforced the hope of rebirth after death in the world surround by the divine protection of Dionysus and Persephone, a world into which Aphrodisian elements also percolated, as the examples of vase painting demonstrate. Despite the fact that the gods themselves rarely feature in the scenes portrayed, the divine atmosphere of the depictions was created by means of symbols and connotations. The deceased are always shown at a young age; like the Olympian gods, they enjoy eternal youth. The cares, sorrows and burdens of temporal life were to be replaced by a blissful existence in the underworld, in a world of plenty and of love, both of which are symbolised by a range of motifs that are often expressed in an abbreviated form. The representations on the vases can be included as part

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[66] The Jatta Collection, Ruvo, Inv. J. 1092, cf. H. Sichtermann: *Griechische*…, p. 47 f., no. 68, pl. 108. See also another examples in A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured*…, p. 1280.

[67] The Jatta Collection, Ruvo, Inv. J. 1613, cf. H. Sichtermann: *Griechische*…, p. 54, no. 79, pl. 138. Cf. also the Louvre loutrophoros, Inv. S 4047 (A.D. Trendall, A. Cambitoglou: *The Red-Figured*…, p. 506).

[68] R. Schlesier: "Dionysos…," pp. 166–172; R. Parker, M. Stamatopoulou: "A New Funerary Gold Leaf from Pherai." *Archaiologike Ephemeris* 2004, p. 24, particularly n. 89.

of the "pop art" of antiquity, addressed to a mass audience, because, in keeping with contemporary manifestations of religiousness, it should be accepted that the Aphrodisian and Dionysian motifs introduced into the context of the underworld could also be received by those who were "not practising," in that they did not partake of the mysteries and that a generally accepted image of that nether region would thus be evoked.

The popularity of the depictions of the ancient chthonic winged figure of Nike or Eros, even in the concise from of a winged head, became an enduring contribution to sepulchral art, a fact which is even borne out in the Christian cemeteries of our own times (Figs. 4 and 5). For those laid to rest in them, there is comfort in a biblical passage in the Dionysian spirit, which demonstrates a unity and universalism to the representation of the world beyond in religions which share common roots:

> And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the less well refined.[69]

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[69] *The Holy Bible*, the Book of Isaiah 25:6, Authorised King James Version.

The writing of Chapters 24 to 26 is dated as the 5th century or even later, in the 3rd to 2nd centuries BC; cf. W. Tyloch: *Dzieje Ksiąg Starego Testamentu*. Warszawa 1994, p. 120.



Fig. 1. Apulian hydria (340–330 BC). Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-1455. Photo by Marek Studnicki



Fig. 2. Apulian plate by the T.P.S. Group (330 to 300 BC). Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow, Inv. MNK XI-1248.
Photo by Marek Studnicki



Fig. 3. Apulian oinochoe by the Kantharos Group (325–300 BC).
Princes Czartoryski Foundation deposited with the National Museum in Krakow,
Inv. MNK XI-1454. Photo by Marek Studnicki





Figs. 4. and 5. The Cemetery of Podgórze, Krakow. Photos by the author

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What Was the Weight of Ancient Soul? Cicero and the Challenge of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura**

Abstract: Cicero's return to philosophical issues in 46 BC meant also a remarkable change in his preferences concerning philosophy. As in the 50s he was mainly interested in ethical and political problems, now, after a few years, the main subject-matter of his philosophical investigation became the question of the death and immorality of the soul. In the following article I would like to suggest that one of the crucial factors that contributed to this change was the appearance of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* – a splendid exposition of the Epicurean doctrines in the work where the ideas so absurd to Cicero were prompted in his native Latin language. The presence of this poem engaged Cicero in intellectual dispute with Lucretius, but without an open referring to the poet and his masterpiece. This secret rivalry remains for the modern reader somewhat more than a mere literary curiosity. Its importance is twofold: first, to a great degree it contributed to producing by Cicero excellent, inspiring philosophical dialogues; secondly, it reminds of a longtime meditation on the theme that ever will remain the greatest enigma of human life.

Key words: philosophy, Lucretius, Cicero, soul, immortality, Epicureans

* The idea of writing this paper has its exact origin: it appeared on Friday, January 24, 2014, after my course in Greek language at the Department of Classics. I am indebted to the participants of this course, especially Mss. Oliwia Sobolewska and Justyna Kuropatwa who are interested in the *De Rerum Natura* and called my attention to a highly acclaimed book by Stephen Greenblatt: *The Swerve. How the World Become Modern*. Cambridge, MA 2011 (I will quote this inspiring, but occasionally including simplified stereotypes book after the Polish translation by M. Słysz: *Zwrot. Jak zaczał się renesans*. Warszawa 2012).

Preliminary Remarks

As Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds remind us suggestively, "Death is not the end." But is it not really? Even if the Australian rock performers are right, an everlasting dilemma remains acute, pertinent and disturbing (you may choose what you wish): how can we get any sure knowledge of it? Through the centuries many generations of thinkers, philosophers and intellectuals have devoted their lives, efforts, health, and minds to approach adequately this old – and the most important – question. In the case of the Epicureans it took the form of the dilemma how a proper understanding of the nature and the surrounding world (an epistemological and ontological question) determine the man's ethics, that is, one's hierarchy of values, of which the worthiest was according to them the looking for happy life (εὐδαιμονία), and which, in turn, influenced actions, behaviour and attitude towards others.[1] To the people who are believers, to express the doubt, or reconsider the problem of immortality of the soul would certainly seem preposterous. In medieval times to express such dilemmas, or to deny afterlife and/or the Last Judgment would be, most probably, a blasphemy, so one may expect that Lucretius, had he been known then, would have been located by Dante in the lowest circle of his *Inferno*, in the good company of other ancient thinkers.

But the controversy is much older: it was long, very long time ago, at Rome, in the mid-1st century BC, when this fundamental, if not primal dilemma in the face of which mankind have stood since "ever" and still – now, on the eve of the 21st century – stands, became the subject of a fascinating, intellectual controversy. About 54/53 BC there appeared and was read (with a great amount of excitement, I guess) in the circles of Rome's educated men a great epic poem.[2]

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[1] So rightly M.R. Gale: "Lucretius." In: *A Companion to Ancient Epic*. Ed. J.M. Foley. Malden–Oxford 2005, p. 441. This has been perceptively observed by Hannah Arendt in her famous study *The Human Condition* (*Kondycja ludzka*. Polish edn. Trans. A. Łagodzka. Warszawa 2000, p. 212). Cf. M. Holowchak: *Happiness and Greek Ethical Thought*. London–New York 2004, pp. xi–xii, 36 f., and N. White: *Individual and Conflict in Greek Ethics*. Oxford 2002, pp. 301 f. and 330–345.

[2] On which see A. Corbeill: "Cicero and the Intellectual milieu of the Late Republic." In: *The Cambridge Companion to Cicero*. Ed. C. Steel. Cambridge 2011, pp. 9 f.

Coming to the Grips

On the Nature of Things, a magnificent intellectual and literary achievement by Titus Lucretius Carus (about 95–55 BC),[3] remains a unique literary masterpiece that came down to us from a distant past. It is the powerful, poetic exposition of the doctrines set out and taught by the Greek philosopher Epicurus (341–270 BC),[4] the founder of an influential (Epicurean) school of thought that flourished[5] – together with the ideas favoured by the adherents of the "Painted Colonnade" (ἡ ποικίλη στοά) – down to the Hellenistic and Roman times.[6] In the case of the republican Rome, it was entirely Lucretius who propagated the Epicurean philosophy among "the sons of she-wolf" on the Tiber, so, as a Polish expert has called him, one may really see in the author of this epic gem "a Roman apostle of Epicureanism."[7] Many of its readers, the members of the Roman elite, must have been enormously astonished both by its appearance and its form and contents.[8] And, let us repeat

[3] An interesting study on the *DRN* as an epic poem and the implication of this fact see M.R. Gale: *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius*. Cambridge 1994, pp. 99 f.

[4] On this see generally D. Clay: *Lucretius and Epicurus*. Ithaca 1983.

[5] On which there are innumerable modern accounts; see, for example, M. Erler, M. Schofield: "Epicurean Ethics." In: *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*. Eds. K. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld, M. Schofield. Cambridge 2002, pp. 642 f. An useful, "classic" compilation of the ancient sources in post-classical thought is to be found in A.A. Long, D.N. Sedley: *The Hellenistic Philosophers* II. *Greek and Latin Texts with Notes and Bibliography*. Cambridge 1987, pp. 18–162; also: A.A. Long: *Hellenistic Philosophy. Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*. Berkeley–Los Angeles 1986^2, pp. 14–74.

[6] Cf. H. Jones. "Epicurus and Epicureanism." In: *The Classical Tradition*. Eds. A. Grafton, G.W. Most, S. Settis. Cambridge Mass. 2010, pp. 320 f.

[7] J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz. Rzymski apostoł epikureizmu*. Wrocław 1991.

[8] R. Jenkyns in his "Introduction." In: *Lucretius, The Nature of Things*. Translation and notes by A.E. Stallings. London 2007, pp. xvi–xvii, thinks that the *DRN* was "a highly eccentric project, the loneliest of Latin poems," so "The oddity of Lucretius is confirmed by the extent to which other Roman philosophers ignored it." Yet, given the fact that there are practically no extant philosophical writings (which does not mean an absence of philosophical ideas in other types of the Latin writings) other than Cicero's, the latter statement is difficult to corroborate. Instead, as S.A. White reminds, there was "The Epicurean community outside Naples" ("Philosophy after Aristotle." In: *A Companion to Hellenistic Literature*. Eds. J.J. Clauss, M. Cuypers. Malden–Oxford 2010, pp. 377–378), with the eminent thinker Philodemus of Gadara, residing and teaching in Herculaneum. In fact, a familiarity and attractiveness of the Epicurean teaching reached Asia Minor (northern Lycia), as the famous Oenoanda inscriptions show, a work of Diogenes the Epicurean; cf. M.F. Smith: "Digging Up Diogenes: New Epicurean Texts from Oinoanda in Lycia." In: *Epikureismus in der späten Republik und der Kaiserzeit*. Ed. M. Erler. Stutgart 2000, pp. 64 f.; see especially his paper: "The Chisel and the Muse. Diogenes of Oeneanda and Lucretius." In: *Lucretius and His Intellectual Background*. Eds. K. Algra, M.H. Koenen, P.H. Schrijvers. Amsterdam–Oxford–New York–Tokyo 1997, pp. 67 f.; also Idem: *The Epicurean Inscription [of Diogenes of Oinoanda]*. Naples 1992. There is a convincing attempt of K. Kleve at identifying the Lucretian verses on the one of papyri from Herculaneum (K. Kleve: "Lucretius in Herculaneum." *Croniche Ercolanesi* 1989,

after a modern scholar, also by its "power and emotional force."[9] From this moment on, a wider circulation of the unusual epos and its "career" began. But there were also addressees disturbed by the contents of the *De Rerum Natura*, as was the title of the poem (hereinafter referred to as *DRN*[10]), and among them you might find an ambitious (perhaps: too ambitious) advocate, a man fond of flattery and, at the same time, full of various insecurities; an excellent orator, poet and a would-be politician (cf. Plutarch, *Cic*. 32). His name was Marcus Tullius Cicero.

The appearance of Lucretius' "majestic" masterpiece must have been a shock for the ardent defender and accuser who had since long rejected Epicurean doctrines, who himself translated literature from Greek, and even tried to compose some pieces in verses.[11] Although there is no hope for gaining a sure evidence, it was probably these two factors connected with the *DRN* which, I believe, ordered Cicero to return to philosophy in 46 BC: alongside other, tragic grounds he had,[12] the appearance of the great poem "has inspired" him for a dealing with the "old" problems more seriously and comprehensively (cf. *Epist*. 16. 3).[13]

Vol. 19, pp. 5–28); cf. M. Gigante: *Philodemus in Italy. The Books from Herculaneum*. Ann Arbor 1990, phot. 6; see R. Nünlist: "Zu den Lukrez-Buchrollen aus Herculaneum." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, Vol. 116 (1997), p. 119. In short: although there were many other teachers of the Epicurean doctrines, the impact of Lucretius' work for propagating among the Romans the ideas of the Garden must have been enormous. It may be compared to that of Posidonius in popularizing the Stoic precepts on the Tiber.

[9] A.D. Morrison: "*Nihil igitur mors est ad nos?* Iphianassa, the Athenian Plague, and Epicurean View of Death." In: *Lucretius. Poetry, Philosophy, Science*. Eds. D. Lehoux, A.D. Morrison, A. Sharrock. Oxford 2013, p. 211.

[10] Following C. Bailey: *Titi Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex* I–III. Oxford 1947; cf. E.J. Kenney: *Lucretius, De rerum natura, Book III* [Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics]. Cambridge 1984, pp. 2 f.

[11] The apt term "majestic" was used by J.E. Sandys: *A History of Classical Scholarship* I. Cambridge 1901, p. 268.

[12] Here the main was the death of the beloved Tullia in 45, cf. *Tusc. disp.* 5. 3; *De nat. deor.* 1. 7; see K. Morawski: *Zarys literatury rzymskiej*. Kraków 1922, p. 122.

[13] Naturally, an earlier acquaintance of Cicero with Greek philosophy (cf. *De nat. deor.* 1. 7) cannot be denied and I am as far as possible from forgetting or neglecting it. As a young adept he was in Athens (in 79/78: here he heard the Epicureans, Zeno, and Phaedrus – *Epist. fam.* 13. 1. 2; *De fin*. 1. 16); he visited in 77 Rhodes – then a famous centre of philosophical teaching; he mentions his former Greek masters (Diodotus, Philo, Antiochus, and Posidonius) who taught him various, not rarely mutually contradictory doctrines. But as far as it may be proven (here I do not forget the so-called *Somnium Scipionis*, see next footnote), a more elaborated exposition of the views Cicero held about immortality of the soul we know it from his *later* writings. What is unknown is the problem not how deeply was Cicero imbued in philosophical topics in his youth (*De nat. deor.* 1. 3. 6) but how serious was his engagement with anti-Epicurean polemics: although I assume that generally he remained critically oriented towards the doctrines of the Garden (for instance, already in 55 he accused the Epicurean Lucius Calpurnius Piso, the patron of Philodemus of Gadara), what I am suggesting here is that it was just the appearance of the *DRN* which has alerted him very seriously to hasten in presenting his own views in more concrete terms, that is, in a fixed, written form (or, to be more precise, to prompt these Greek views which he had accepted as more attractive and more probable,

Modern experts on the Arpinate's works bid us to believe that there were two "stages" in his literary career life when he wrote down his philosophical reflections. The first period encompassed the years 55–53, that is, the time when Lucretius' immense poem has begun its circulation. In these years Cicero devoted himself to political problems and he worked upon the two great exercises in ethical and political philosophy, namely *De republica* and *De legibus*.[14] Then came

for, as G. Striker has observed, for Cicero "philosophy" meant Greek philosophy, for "there was no other philosophy around" – "Cicero and Greek Philosophy." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 1995, Vol. 97, p. 53). For two main reasons the Lucretian poem was "a threat" for him, of course in an intellectual sense of this word: it was written in Latin and it had the form of epic, the noblest of literary forms then practiced (and Lucretius himself was aware of this fact: *DRN*, 1. 921–934; 4. 1–9; 5. 36; cf. E. Fantham: *Roman Literary Culture. From Plautus to Macrobius*. Baltimore 2013², p. 7). What was refreshing in the *DRN* was the author's idea to captivate and persuade cultural elites of Rome by means of the didactic poem. Cicero's own writings retained the dialogic form and in this he followed, as everyone agrees, Plato. But one may ask, why entirely? The answer is that the dialogues are the evidence for Cicero's approval of some basic lines of thought in Platonic philosophy: as a result, one argues, accepting the contents meant for the Arpinate accepting the attractive form of dialogue too (an additional factor might have been Cicero's acknowledgment of probability as a criterion of arbitrating. This being so, we must at ones reject a possibility that Cicero's decision to vest philosophy in dialogic form was *also* directed towards diminishing Lucretius' influences? Anyway, these two goals in Arpinate's calculations must not have been mutually exclusive. A second factor appears too: Cicero the poet's jealousy and his sense of literary competition with Lucretius. Many efforts have been made to do as much justice as possible in order to evaluate properly the remains of Cicero's poetry. Here, given the poor and scanty state of its preservation, opinions understandably vary. With regard to Lucretius, some scholars suggested (among them are such authorities as Karl Büchner and Enrica Malcovati) that Lucretius and Cicero had a common source for their poetic inspiration: it was the epic of Roman authority in the field of epic poetry – Ennius. They claim that the Ciceronian translation of the *Aratea* was used by Lucretius; cf. E. Gee: "Cicero's Poetry." In: *Cambr. Comp. Cicero*, pp. 88 f.). This is possible but, unfortunately, it proves nothing substantial and concrete, except the assumption that there might have been a great rivalry between the two men. On the other hand, there are clear testimonies to the highly derogatory accounts of Cicero's poetic efforts. Especially two of his (lost now) poems became the target of the critical remarks: *De consulatu suo* and *De temporibus suis* which were mercilessly (perhaps maliciously, too) ridiculed by contemporary and later authorities – including Sallust, Quintilian, and Juvenal – as the plain evidence for Cicero's own exaggerated megalomania. Be that as it may, one thing ought to be considered as certainly worth rethinking and reconsidering: for Cicero, beside the fact of carrying false ideas, the *DRN* was thus "challenging" in two other ways – very probably the poem was an insult for the Arpinate's personal pride as a poet; additionally, it must have been a kind of insult for Cicero that Lucretius has successfully realized what he failed to do: the Epicurean effectively put what was usually mere lecture (diatribe) into the great philosophical, spectacular poem, whereas *homo Arpinas* was unable to do so. Cicero's *Aratea* were a translation only, at best.

[14] As philosophical some scholars include also *De oratore*. J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, p. 171, rightly observes that *De republica* was written after Cicero had read the *DRN*. This would make certain that Cicero's reluctance towards Epicurean ideas has begun earlier, with the appearance of the Latin poem. Such observation makes probable the idea that the happily preserved end of the *De republica* (54–51 BC), a famous *Somnium Scipionis*, may have been a reaction to the disturbing Lucretian cosmology, a vision of the skies without any protection of the gods and with no divine

a hiatus of about seven years in Cicero's philosophical production.[15] But, we are told, Cicero returned to philosophy in the 46 (cf. *De nat. deor.* 1. 6), and within the two following years he produced all the rest of his excellent treatises, including such beautiful, landmark studies as the fine *Tusculanae disputationes* and a small masterpiece known from manuscripts as *Liber de senectute qui inscribitur Cato Maior.*[16] Such a view about the order of composing philosophical works by Cicero is held in our country by Kazimierz Kumaniecki in his renowned 1977 handbook.[17] Others either accept it too, or take it for granted. Naturally, this interval in Cicero's intellectual production does not mean that he totally abandoned philosophical issues, even if he really did not write anything substantial on this matter. Rather, the opposite seems to be true. These years, one may tentatively suppose, must have been spent by him very intensively, devoted to long meditations that embraced the main problems of the classical Greek and Hellenistic thought, and including of course the influential (but preposterous – in Cicero's conviction) views advertized by the disciples of the Garden school.[18] The final result is to be seen in the Ciceronian extant works that are crowded by plenty of

guidance (*DRN*, 5. 110–121). Also the Epicurean principle of seeking pleasure stood in the contradiction to the ideals dear to Cicero (see the discussion in *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, book 1). These ideals were popularized by the disciples of the "Painted Colonnade" (ἡ ποικίλη στοά); from its adherents they required fulfilling one's duty (*officium*), which included an activity in the service of *patria*, the Roman state (cf. *De off.* 1. 22); cf. J. Annas: *The Morality of Happiness*. Oxford 1993, ch. 13, pp. 334 f.; see the thoughtful analysis by A. Erskine: *The Hellenistic Stoa. Political Thought and Action*. London 1990, pp. 64–69; cf. M. Griffin: "Philosophy, Politics, and Politicians at Rome." In: *Philosophia Togata* I. *Essays in Philosophy and Roman Society.* Eds. M. Griffin, J. Barnes. Oxford 1997, pp. 1–37; cf. D. Konstan: *Some Aspects of Epicurean Psychology*. Leiden 1973, p. 3.

[15] Cf. G.B. Conte: *Latin Literature. A History.* Baltimore 1999, p. 158 (my knowledge of Conte's conclusions came after formulating my own observations, so I am glad to have found that this great scholar was of the same opinion).

[16] Cf. *De nat. deorum*, 1. 3. 6. See K. Kumaniecki's masterpiece of lively learning: *Cyceron i jego współcześni*. Warszawa 1959, p. 462. In these years he did not abandon to compose other rhetorical treatises, so, for instance, in 47–46 he wrote also *Brutus sive de claris oratoribus*, cf. M. Nowak: *Cyceron, Brutus czyli o sławnych mówcach*. Warszawa 2008, p. 19.

[17] K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska. Okres cyceroński*. Warszawa 1977, pp. 23 f.; cf. M. Schanz, C. Hosius: *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* I. München 1927, pp. 491 f.

[18] As I have mentioned, this should not be understood that personal calamities played no role in Cicero's motivation: the passing of his daughter was such a dramatic event for Cicero; certainly political turmoil and Caesar's unmasked dictatorship (a true end of the old *res publica*) contributed to this, too. But it is here of great importance to add that these personal dramas were analysed by Cicero through the lenses of philosophy (this is the case of his *Consolatio*, so admired in antiquity), that is, in a sense, also *in the shadow* of the Epicurean-Lucretian doctrine about materiality of the soul. Cicero's return to the most crucial philosophical topics surely provided him a kind of consolation in itself, so trying to refute some erroneous philosophical ideas of the Garden, including especially these concerning death and pain, the Arpinate has found a solace, even if the refutation of the damaging concepts could not have been fully successful for a man attracted by the philosophical rule that all judgments are probable, more or less.

"talking heads," a true bunch of the Stoics, Platonic, and Academics adherents. Among them were also, last but not least, the Epicureans. Concerning this last school of thought, let us observe that in his wonderful treatises Cicero never mentions Lucretius, having apparently taken the decision to remain olympically silent about the author of the *DRN*.[19] Instead, in the heated intellectual debates Cicero brilliantly constructs and makes the core of his dialogues, the name of Epicurus himself (or other Epicureans) is mentioned. There is no doubt that some of Epicurus' own works (fortunately, at least their list is preserved in his biography by Diogenes Laertius, 10. 27–28) must have been well known to the former Roman consul. But, to rely on Cicero himself (*Cat.*1. 8. 21), his later silence about the *DRN* remains a phenomenon revealing in itself: I think it was exactly him to whom his own famous oxymoron might be attributed, yet in a somewhat changed version: *cum tacet, clamat*.[20] Consequently, I am deeply convinced that several fundamental Epicurean topics, discussed (and rejected) by Cicero in his philosophical oeuvres owe not so much to his reading of the original writings from the representatives of the Garden school, but to a sudden impact that came after his very careful reading of the *DRN*.[21] For Cicero the experience of this lecture must have had the effect of a blow.[22] Among the most disturbing problems addressed by Lucretius two questions were clearly essential, as they remain such until now (and shall always be). The first is whether soul exists or not, and, as a conse-

[19] But it is difficult to stay with W.E. Leonard ("General Introduction." In: W.E. Leonard, S.B. Smith: *T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex*. Madison 1942, p. 11) when claiming that: "And Cicero's public silence, so long a puzzle to critics, may well have been due to discomfort, not as a philosopher but as a statesman and protagonist of the state cult, over his earlier connection with a work that in a very few years may well have been become politically disreputable." This scholar strangely fails to notice an obvious connection between philosophical claims of the Epicureans and the attitudes of the Roman disciples toward Roman political life and politics.

[20] G.B. Conte: *Latin Literature*…, p. 187, says of "so unusual a silence." This silence – what understandable – is also characteristic for early Christianity: one should not omit the information preserved by Clement of Alexandria (*Stromat.* 1. 50. 6) that St. Paul rejected the philosophy of the Garden. Is equally worth noticing that the mentioned Clement did not cite the Roman poet in his excellent *Stromateis*, although he was well acquainted with Epicurean doctrines.

[21] This is also the conclusion of a perceptive paper by T. Maslowski: "Cicero, Philodemus, Lucretius." *Eos* 1978, Vol. 66, p. 226.

[22] See the remarks in the subsection "The Presence of the Text, or the *DRN* as a Challenge," *infra*. Here one may agree with the view of M. Brożek (*Historia literatury łacińskiej w starożytności. Zarys*. Wrocław 1976², p. 176) that not so much earlier Latin Epicureans, Amafinius (although Cicero had no warm words for him: *Tusc. disp.* 4. 6; 5. 116) and Rabirius, but Lucretius was the main object of Cicero's polemics. M. von Albrecht: *A History of Roman Literature* I. Leiden–New York–Köln 1997, p. 271, adds that what was crucial with Lucretius was the form he had chosen to popularize Epicurean ideas: according to this expert Lucretius "gave to his didactic poem a universal significance"; in the same vein wrote L. Morgan: "Escapes from Orthodoxy: Poetry of the Late Republic." In: *Literature in the Greek and Roman Worlds. A New Perspective*. Ed. O. Taplin. Oxford 2000, p. 339; cf. also C.J. Classen: "Poetry and Rhetoric in Lucretius." *Transactions and Proceedings of American Philological Association* 1968, Vol. 99, p. 77.

quence, a problem strictly connected with it: what is "the nature" (so to speak) of death or dying.[23] The second question – also being to a great extent thematically close to the first enigma – concerns the gods themselves directly: granted that the gods exist (to be sure neither Epicurus, nor Lucretius formally denied their existence, as his introductory hymn to the *Aeneadum genetrix* proves[24]) but live happily somewhere, totally indifferent to mankind, devoid of care about humans,[25] a major problem appeared as a consequence and pertained to the question how to live honestly and happily?[26] This was a dilemma of ethical nature, and on this point the ways of Cicero and Epicureans sharply diverged.[27] The importance of

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[23] On this cf. Ch. Segal: *Lucretius on Death and Anxiety. Poetry and Philosophy in De Rerum Natura*. Princeton 1990, pp. 74 f. and 238–246. Cf. an outstanding treatment of this subject by M.C. Nussbaum: "Mortal Immortals: Lucretius on Death and the Voice of Nature." In: Eadem: *The Therapy of Desire. Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*. Princeton 1994, pp. 192–239; also J. Salem: *Lucrèce et l'éthique. La mort n'est rien pour nous*. Paris 1997, pp. 97 f.; see also P. Hadot: *Czym jest filozofia starożytna?*. Polish edn. Trans. P. Domański. Warszawa 2000, p. 157; also C.C.W. Taylor: "Democritus and Lucretius on Death and Dying." In: *Pleasure, Mind, and Soul. Selected Papers*. Oxford 2008, pp. 316 f.

[24] This is explicitly stated by Cicero himself, in the speech delivered by Velleius, in the first book of the *De natura deorum*, 1. 16; 1. 43–17; 1. 44; so rightly J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, pp. 51f.; cf. A.R. Dyck: *Cicero, De natura deorum, Book I* [Cambridge Greek and Latin Series]. Cambridge 2003, p. 5.

[25] A claim not so different from the famous skeptical *credo* of Protagoras, the sophist who confessed that nothing sure can be said of the gods. The reflections from *De nat. deor.* 1. 121 and 123 are especially revealing as showing that there is no piety without a consciousness that the gods care of men: such consciousness is a *conditio sine qua non* of piety.

[26] Cf. footnote 1, *supra*; see D. Konstan: "Epicurean 'Passions' and the Good Life." In: *The Virtuous Life in Greek Ethics*. Ed. J. Reis. Cambridge 2006, pp. 194 f.

[27] On the other hand, a *caveat* is needed: I am deeply convinced that – from the logical standpoint – for a pious Roman citizen (for instance, one may here think of Cato the Elder's ideal of *vir bonus*), engaged sincerely in performing repeated acts, that is rituals, and taking into account the practical dimension of "faith," to maintain that the gods exist somewhere far away and purportedly avoid to interfere with men and their affairs, made little difference than to claim that such deities do not exist at all (such argument against the Epicureans appears in *De nat. deor.* 1. 85; 1. 115; 1. 123): above all, both for the majority of Greeks and Romans (there were always more subtle views of what religion is, as Varro explained) as well, faith was not a pure, theoretical exercise in a perfect logic but a matter of social importance too: such claim about happy, quiet, and totally indifferent gods would simply lead to the rejecting of all the social machinery on which *res publica Romanorum* was based. This "earthly" dimension of the Roman religion, with its social manifestations, was despised by the Epicureans on ethical grounds (as the traditional gods did not to guarantee a comfort and wellness to an individual), so I think that, accordingly, the same did Lucretius who for moral reasons rejects (or: is at least indifferent to) many phenomena of the Roman political and social order (so E.J. Kenney: *Lucretius, De rerum natura, Book III* [Cambridge Greek and Roman Classics]. Cambridge 1984, p. 10). And it ought to be said that – logically – he has also little understanding for traditional cults, based on the idea of honouring the gods. So, accordingly, at *DRN*, 1.101, commenting famously upon the sacrifice of Iphigenia (1. 80–101) the poet expresses the thought that *tantum religio potuit suadere malorum* (indeed, a disturbing phrase for all the admirers of "religious" Lucretius). The same must be observed as true when he graphically depicts the "feelings" of a cow after her calf has been killed

these two main problems in Cicero's argumentation is clear enough; it conspicuously pervades his later philosophical treatises,[28] it makes them something ex-

in sacrifice (*DRN*, 2. 349–370). Above all, one must not omit his famous claim about his own poem that contains *impia rationis…elementa* (*DRN*, 1. 84) which proves quite clearly that although being ironic he was perfectly aware that his philosophy does not overlap with traditional faith – regardless of whether one speaks of *superstitio*, or *religio*. I am therefore not sure that what is actually Lucretius attempting to do is not to reject true forms of religious or cult practices but to fight down "superstition" only (see on this recently D. Hammer: *Roman Political Thought. From Cicero to Augustine*. Cambridge 2014, pp. 129–132). To claim so, one must explain why does the poet use the term *religio* instead to be consequent and to employ everywhere *superstitio* as a bad or erroneous form of religious belief. To remove fear and bestow hope on men was Lucretius' primary object, undoubtedly, so in this sense his goal was not to "remove" traditional forms of piety. But having made such assumption one is at risk of falling into logical inconsistency: how can one remain at the same time critical of superstition and lenient for practices (or institutions) which such superstition produced and fixed? Naturally, Lucretius was not a social reformer who planned to destroy the old foundations on which Roman society rested (cf. G. Wissowa: *Religion und Kultus der Römer.* München 1902, pp. 318 f.; see J. Scheid: *An Introduction to Roman Religion*. Bloomington 2003, p. 184), so in this sense he was not hostile to traditional forms of piety. He only thought that happiness comes to man through proper understanding of the nature and with regard of this the Epicureans did not differ from the Stoics. This being so, let us add that Lucretius follows his master in prompting the famous ideal of λάθε βιώσας (H. Usener: *Epicvrea*. Lipsiae 1887, fr. 551, pp. 326–327) which was an attitude that stood in a sharp contradiction to the traditional, agonistic values, so much appreciated by Roman elite (including naturally Cicero, who saw in them a manifestation of Roman piety). And it goes without saying that in the Roman hierarchy of virtues the *pietas* was placed on a highly estimated spot (see on this D.P. Fowler: "Lucretius and Politics." In: *Lucretius* [Oxford Readings in Classical Studies]. Ed. M.R. Gale. Oxford 2007, pp. 397 f.). The problem still remains acute and vital, not to mention – "controversial" (a meaningless word, yet nowadays enormously abused). It was perfectly recognized already by Plutarch who in his vehement diatribe *That Epicurus Actually Makes a Pleasant Life Impossible* (*Non posse suaviter*: *Mor.* 1086c–1107c) eagerly claims (§ 21 = 1101c) that Δεῖ μὲν γὰρ ἀμέλει τῆς περὶ θεῶν δόξης ὥσπερ ὄψεως λήμην ἀφαιρεῖν τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν· εἰ δὲ τοῦτ' ἀδύνατον, μὴ συνεκκόπτειν μηδὲ τυφλοῦν τὴν πίστιν, ἣν οἱ πλεῖστοι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν. αὕτη δ' ἐστὶν οὐ φοβερά τις οὐδὲ σκυθρωπή, καθάπερ οὗτοι πλάττουσι, διαβάλλοντες τὴν πρόνοιαν ὥσπερ παισὶν Ἐμπουσαν ἢ Ποινὴν ἀλιτηριώδη καὶ τραγικὴν ἐπικρεμαμένην. Plutarch then continues his defense of the traditional form of religious activities, refuting the Epicurean argument about an alleged ubiquitous fear that always follows practicing rituals, as the Garden exponents mistakenly believed (indeed, one may say of an Epicurean obsession with the topic – an obsession on which the *DRN* is based too). Especially strong is Plutarch's argument (§ 22 = *Mor.* 1103b; § 26 = *Mor.* 1104) that gods are not the source of fear but of goodness, too – a point purportedly omitted by the Epicureans; cf. B. Inwood, L.P. Gerson: *The Epicurus Reader. Selected Writings and Testimonia*. Indianapolis 1994, pp. 68–74; also E. Kechagia-Ovseiko: "Plutarch and Epicureanism." In: *A Companion to Plutarch*. Ed. M. Beck. Malden–Oxford 2014, pp. 104 f.

[28] This may be inferred from the Ciceronian treatises. While retaining Platonic form of dialogue in his major philosophical writings, Cicero usually makes an Epicurean one of the speakers. At this place let us only observe that in the two crucial dialogues that contain vivid disputes on the soul and gods (*Tusculanae disputationes* and *De natura deorum*) the Epicurean doctrines are set forth only in order to be refuted by the next interlocutor (although *Tusculanae disputationes* differ in this respect from *De natura deorum* as they take the form of a conversation between a master, M, and adept, A). Another form was employed in *De senectute* or in *De amicitia*). To be sure the writer

ceptional and sublime, and, let us even say, a heroic effort – especially if seen from the perspective of 2,000 years – to face the most topical conundrum before which every individual must stand.[29] What was Cicero there coping with, was Lucretius' brave and audacious vision of human existence without any divine protection. Now, a few words about this.

For Lucretius, whatever good or bad words one could say about him, was certainly a brave man, even in the Roman realities and "dialogic," polytheistic nature of ancient Roman religion.[30] I raise this aspect here as relevant, for – as I am inclined to imagine – only a brave man could write and issue an extensive[31] epic poem in a society that since ever "confessed" the existence of the gods intervening in human affairs,[32] built temples and altars to them, constantly sacrificed animals in the honour of the gods,[33] and that made the ideal of *pietas* (piety) an essential, irremovable element of its social and cultural identity – in the mode in which Scaevola and Varro Reatinus, *viri pii*, have characterized it.[34] If there was neither formal religious *pro* and *contra* nor dogmatic obstacles in Roman faith, it was equally obvious that religion remained a fundament of the Roman social framework (cf. Polybius, 6. 56. 6–14).[35]

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presents his arguments vigorously (e.g. Velleius in *De nat. deor.*) but subsequently the way of reasoning of the Epicurean speaker is denied or undermined by his adversary; on this see D. Konstan: "Epicurus on the Gods." In: *Epicurus and the Epicurean Tradition*. Eds. J. Fish, K.R. Sanders. Cambridge 2011, pp. 66 f.; cf. esp. R. Hirzel: *Untersuchungen zu Ciceros philosophischen Schriften* I. Leipzig 1877, pp. 4 f.

[29] Cf. J. Warren: *Facing Death. Epicurus and His Critics*. Oxford 2004; cf. the detailed commentary by B. Price Wallach: *Lucretius and the Diatribe against the Fear of Death. De rerum natura III. 830–1094*. Leiden 1976.

[30] See M. Beard: "Religion." In: *The Cambridge Ancient History* IX. Eds. J.A. Crook, A. Lintott, E. Rawson. Cambridge 1992[2], pp. 729 f.

[31] It is very probable to accept as proven that alongside the debt to Empedocles it was a homage to Epicurus whose main, immense work, called traditionally Περί φύσεως, contained 37 books; cf. D. Clay: "Recovering Originals: 'Peri Physeos' and 'De rerum natura'." *Apeiron* 2000, Vol. 33, pp. 259–271; above all D. Sedley: *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom*. Cambridge 1998, pp. 94–132.

[32] Although in the ways that often are difficult to understand by the modern reader. On the vexed problem of how the ancients "believed" (and whether did they at all, according to the modern understanding of this term) the gods and mythology, cf. P. Veyne's well known, small book: *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes? Essai sur l'imagination constituante*. Paris 1983.

[33] Cf. J. Rüpke: "Communicating with the Gods." In: *A Companion to the Roman Republic*. Eds. N. Rosensein, R. Morstein-Marx. Malden–Oxford 2006, pp. 215 f.

[34] Both theories of what was really Roman religion were discussed later by St. Augustine in his masterpiece *De Civitate Dei*, 4. 27; 6. 5; cf. M. Jaczynowska: *Religie świata rzymskiego*. Warszawa 1990, p. 88; see the papers in Part III (pp. 203–272) of the comprehensive *A Companion to Roman Religion*. Ed. J. Rüpke. Malden–Oxford 2007; also J. Rüpke: "Roman Religion." In: *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*. Ed. H. Flower. Cambridge 2014, pp. 213 f.

[35] See M. Beard, J. North, S. Price: *The Religions of Rome* I. *A History*. Cambridge 1996, pp. 114–166.

In the light of these factors the *DRN* must have appeared to many as a highly impious enterprise,[36] insofar as it invited the lecturer to the adopting of a radically different way of thinking about the physical world around and the place of man in it,[37] with an additional, strong claim that only such a "right" thinking can and will guarantee future happiness to the men.[38] Such and alike proposals coming from Epicurean school were for the majority of the members of the Roman, traditionally philistine society, with its hunger-mentality of predatory farmers, carnivorous shepherds,[39] and Italian landowners (always avid of land and prestige, and meticulously looking for *cursus honorum*[40]) something really new, if not revolutionary indeed.[41] As Monica Gale has perspicuously observed, the effect was that in Lucretius "Roman values are […] provocatively overturned."[42] The rejection by

[36] Cf. Constant Martha: *Poëme de Lucrèce. Morale – religion – science*. Paris 1885, pp. 58 f.; see the long analysis by J. Masson: *Lucretius. Epicurean and Poet* I. London 1907, pp. 259–292.

[37] Cf. K. Latte: *Römische Religionsgeschichte*. München 1960, p. 284.

[38] See J.M. Rist: *Epicurus. An Introduction*. Cambridge 1972, pp. 156 f., on "Right Religion"; also G.W. Most: "Philosophy and Religion." In: *Cambr. Comp. Greek and Roman Philosophy*…, pp. 305 f.; cf. P. Veyne: "Cesarstwo Rzymskie." In: *Historia życia prywatnego* I. *Od Cesarstwa Rzymskiego do roku tysięcznego*. Ed. Idem. Polish edn. Trans. K. Arustowicz, M. Rostworowska. Warszawa 2005, pp. 224 f.; see Ch. Gill: *Greek Thought* [Greece and Rome New Surveys in Classics 25]. Oxford 1995, p. 81.

[39] See N. Wood: *Cicero's Social and Political Thought*. Berkeley–Los Angeles 1988, p. 17; cf. A. Kamm: *The Romans. An Introduction*. London–New York 2008, p. 87.

[40] Cf. *DRN*, 2. 11–14; 5. 1123–1126; 5. 1423–1424; above all this is true in the case of the famous phrase *honorum caeca cupido – DRN*, 3. 59 that was used by some of the Enlightenment thinkers in order to prompt and exaggerate the claim about an inherent hostility between religious "feelings" and philosophical (rational) thinking.

[41] See generally M. Schofield: "The Sage and Politics." In: *Greek Thought. A Guide to Classical Knowledge*. Eds. J. Brunschwig, G.E.R. Lloyd, P. Pellegrin. Cambridge, MA–London 2000, pp. 180 f. On this ground Epicurus was criticized by Plutarch in his another famous diatribe: *Is "Live Unknown" a Wise Precept?* (Εἰ καλῶς εἴρηται τὸ λάθε βιώσας; *An recte dictum sit latenter esse vivendum*: *Mor.* 1128a–1130f); cf. Philostratus, *Vita Apol.* 8. 28. 12; see G. Roskam: *A Commentary on Plutarch's De latenter vivendo*. Leuven 2007, pp. 90 f. and his study *'Live Unnoticed' λάθε βιώσας. On the Vicissitudes of an Epicurean Doctrine*. Leiden 2007, pp. 83 f.

[42] "Didactic Epic." In: *A Companion to Latin Literature*. Ed. S. Harrison. Malden–Oxford 2005, p. 107; cf. J. Colman: *Lucretius as Theorist of Political Life*. New York 2012, pp. 115 f. On this old Aristotelian dilemma cf. generally M. Griffin: *Seneca. A Philosopher in Politics*. Oxford 1976, pp. 315 f. Professor Kenney: "Doctus Lucretius." In: *Lucretius [Oxford Readings]*…, p. 307, quotes a passage from the *DRN*, 1. 102 f. where the poet tries to show Memmius how dangerous are "the terrific utterances of priests" (*vatum / terriloquis victus dictis*). The case may be used as exemplary for an interpretation of religious attitude of Lucretius. It shows that there is some difficulty to separate in his thinking true forms of *religio* from what constituted a *superstitio* only. That is, if Lucretius (after Epicurus) stressed out fear of death and terrors, he must have been perfectly aware that such fear *also* stood behind the whole philosophy of worshiping the gods. Thus such a fear lay at roots of regular repeating the religious practices (rituals), with the participation of religious "personnel" like *vates* and their, necessary to stress out, *terriloqua dicta*. As a consequence, in our interpretation of Lucretius' attitude it is not always easy to distinguish between what represented *religio* and what was *superstitio*. If fear (either leading to superstition, or being in itself

the poet of what was perceived as a commonly accepted social "ladder" and order, is perfectly seen in a famous passage from the *DRN*, 5. 1127–1128, where one is learned that *ut satius multo iam sit parere quietum / quam regere imperio res velle et regna tenere.*[43] So Lucretius, one may add, perfectly knew that what he had written down will be understood as "impious" and, *is* in some sense written against the traditional set of ideas and expectations (again, see his statement at *DRN*, 1. 81: *impia… rationis… elementa*).[44] In effect, as it has been said, the importance of the ideas prompted by the poet around 54/53 BC relied on the fact that his poem constituted a true challenge to cultural men of the Roman elite circles who seriously considered the dilemmas concerning human life, fate, death and the place of the gods – in this respect one can only mention Cicero's vision of an ideal reli-

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a manifestation of it) was thus one of the innate causes of practicing cult rituals, it follows that, indirectly, Lucretius was a critic of the traditional Roman religion: in his view the external forms of Roman religious practices had their roots in the false presuppositions about the nature of the gods; these presuppositions were in turn based on fear and may have been called "superstition"; cf. C. Bailey: *T. Lucreti Cari* II…, pp. 615–616. This difficulty may be seen in the passage from the Book III, 52–54, where the connection between the communal ritual, sacrifice (that is, killing "black cattle"), and religion is as deep as possible; cf. R. Heinze: *Titus Lucretius Carus, De Rerum Natura Buch III.* Leipzig 1897, p. 57. C. Bailey: *T. Lucreti Cari* II, p. 999, compares it to 1. 62–63: *Humana… vita… opressa gravi sub religione* which term is translated in Loeb edn. as "Superstition." But *religio* of 1. 62 is of course the same *religio* of 1. 82–83 (*quod contra saepius illa / religio peperit scelerosa atque impia facta*). However, this latter sentence is translated by Alice E. Stallings as: "More often, on the contrary, it is Religion breeds Wickedness and that has given rise to wrongful deeds" (Lucretius, *The Nature of Things*, p. 240). In the notes she rightly observes that the poet abhors "the evils of organized religion"; cf. also R. Jenkyns: *God, Space, and City in the Roman Imagination*. Oxford 2013, p. 219, rightly concluding that it would be a paradox to call Lucretius a religious man, in the sense his Roman contemporaries gave to this word. Cicero's understanding of religion and the role of gods may be summarized by the words of J.P. Vernant who has said that " 'believing' cannot be separated from practice" ("Forms of Belief and Rationality in Greece." In: *Agon, Logos, Polis. The Greek Achievement and Its Aftermath*. Eds. J.P. Arnasson, P. Murphy. Stuttgart 2001, p. 119).

[43] Cf. Usener: *Epicvrea*, nos. 548 and 554; cf. the remarks of W.A. Merrill: *T. Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura libri sex*. New York–Cincinnati–Chicago 1907, pp. 714–715, referring to *DRN*, 3. 998; see also H.A.J. Munro: *T. Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura libri sex* II. London–Cambridge 1900, p. 337.

[44] With the notes of K. Lachmann: *Commentarius…*, p. 22; cf. C. Bailey: *Titi Lucreti Cari* II…, p. 613, and Munro: *T. Lucreti Cari* II…, pp. 38–39. This means, as the German scholars put it that "für seine Weltanschauung is die Religion belanglos" (W.S. Teuffel, W. Kroll, F. Skutsch: *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* I. Leipzig–Berlin 1916[6], p. 476). One may add, after A. Dalzell ("Lucretius." In: *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature* II. *Latin Literature*. Eds. E.J. Kenney, W.V. Clausen. Cambridge 1982, p. 211) that Lucretius was not friendly disposed toward "religious practices" too. One may remind enigmatic words of *insaniens sapientia*, used by a man who enlisted himself to the Epicurean "herd" – Horace (*Carm*. 1. 43. 2; cf. *Sat*. 2. 3. 32); see generally P.-M. Morel: "Epicureanism." In: *A Companion to Ancient Philosophy*. Eds. M.-L. Gill, P. Pellegrin. Malden–Oxford 2006, pp. 478 f.

gious state (*Legg*. 2. 19–22).[45] This may also be inferred from Vergil's later, very famous characterization of Lucretius in the *Georgics*, book II, verses 490–492, as it is traditionally referred to.[46] Here the Augustan court singer characterized the Epicurean bard by the famous words that reveal not only his admiration but a little awe which looks as if coming from a man who retained his traditional *pietas* – contrary to Lucretius: *Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscercere causas, / atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum / subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari* ("Happy is he who has discovered the causes of things and has cast beneath his feet all fears, unavoidable fate, and the din of the devouring Underworld").

The Presence of the Text, or the *DRN* as a Challenge

In the forerunning paragraphs I have pointed out that the *DRN* heavily influenced Cicero's choice of the philosophical themes (irrespective of the fact that it was a *negative* inspiration) and that it obliged the Arpinate to a more complex rethinking of the two fundamental philosophical issues. Naturally, one cannot play with mere guessing how exactly might Ciceronian philosophy look like without the appearance of the *DRN*, and here I am not going to insist that without the Lucretius' poem, the shape of Cicero's philosophical writings would likely have been quite different. To state this would mean just to go too far. However, in what follows I would like to suggest that by publishing his powerful exposition of the Epicurean ideas Lucretius incited Cicero in another respect. Not only urged the *DRN* the ambitious advocate to turn (to return, in fact) towards particular philosophical themes and forced him to sharpen his polemical arguments in an intellectual clash with the most dangerous adversary of the Garden, but to undertake a larger project: to write a complex "history of philosophy" in his native Latin language.

In this section I focus on the material – *nomen omen* – aspect of the *DRN*, taken quite literally as the rolls of papyrus which Cicero held in his hands, not only in daylight but by (one may imagine) evenings or nights, in a bleak light cast by candle or a torch.[47] Happily, a priceless information has been preserved

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[45] Cf. J.D. Minyard: *Lucretius and the Late Republic. An Essay in Roman Intellectual History*. Leiden 1985, pp. 33 f. On the Ciceronian passage – K. Galinsky: *Augustan Culture. An Interpretive Essay*. Princeton 1998, pp. 289–290.

[46] See the notes by R.F. Thomas: *Virgil, Georgics 1, Books I–II* [Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics]. Cambridge 1988, pp. 253–254. Thomas reminds, however, that the Virgilian phrase has its Greek antecedence in Aristotle's *PA*, 645a 5: *tois dynamenois tas aitias gnoridzein*; cf. M.F. Smith: "Introduction." In his *Lucretius, On the Nature of Things*. Indianapolis 2001, p. xvi.

[47] Among many accounts reconstructing the practical dimension of reading rolls in antiquity there is brief but fine passage by S. Morton Braund: *Latin Literature*. London–New York 2002,

about this act of reading and, as it is usually with classical scholars, in the modern times this information became a famous *crux Lucretiana et Ciceroniana*, so to speak. In a notorious letter dated by Marcus on February 54 BC, and addressed to his brother, Quintus (*Epist. Q. fr.* 2. 9. 3),[48] he makes a clear remark that *Lucretii poemata, ut scribis, ita sunt: multis luminibus ingenii, multae etiam artis* which should be understood that the *DRN* was highly appreciated by him both as a work of "great genius," and *also* "of great art."[49] Both parts of the Ciceronian sentence are thus undoubtedly a great praise of the talented Latin Epicurean which agrees with the opinion finely expressed later by Aulus Gellius in his *Noctes Atticae*, 1.21.5: *Lucreti… poetae ingenio et facundia praecellentis*.[50] But this laudatory statement apparently does not fit another, much later information of Lucretius and Cicero which has us to believe that the poem had been corrected by the famous tamer of Catilina. This second information was preserved by the influential Christian writer Jerome (Saint), whose *floruit* falls on the end of the 4th century AD. Jerome, the reverend *pater ecclesiae*, wrote in his *Chronicon* that the Roman poet *postea amatorio poculo in furorem versus, cum aliquot libros per intervalla insaniae conscripsisset* (p. 149; ed. R. Helm).[51] Then he adds that Lucretius *proprio se manu interfecit anno aetatis XLIV*.[52] Here the crucial is his remark about the

pp. 46–47. L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson (*Scribes and Scholars. A Guide to Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*. Oxford 1975², p. 22) observe that Cicero was, with a help of Atticus, a very avid collector of books.

[48] See D. Clay: *Paradosis and Survival. Three Chapters in the History of Lucretian Philosophy*. Ann Arbor 1998, p. 178.

[49] Here I follow the interpretation of P. Hardie: "Lucretius and Later Latin Literature in Antiquity." In: *The Cambridge Companion to Lucretius*. Eds. S. Gillespie, P. Hardie. Cambridge 2007, p. 113 (cf. also E. Gee: "Cicero's Poetry"…, p. 92: "The poems of Lucretius are as you write: they exhibit many flashes of genius, and yet show great mastership"; cf. D. Sedley: *Lucretius and the Transformation*…, pp. 1–2). The scholarly literature on this passage is vast, including also the valuable Polish contributions by M. Jezienicki: "Quaestiones Lucretianae." *Eos* 1894, Vol. 1, pp. 31–58, and J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, pp. 212–216. Korpanty stresses out the controversy concerning the meaning of the *multae*, as there were scholars who maintained that it carries a pejorative sense: "vulgar," "common" (so was an earlier interpretation of A. Krokiewicz: *Tytus Lukrecjusz Karus, O rzeczywistości ksiąg sześć*. Warszawa 2003, p. XXV). Others sought to offer another plausible explanations (as did also, for example, the American philologists – G.L. Hendrickson: "Cicero's Judgment of Lucretius." *American Journal of Philology* 1901, Vol. 22, pp. 438 f.; and H.W. Lichtfield: "Cicero's Judgment on Lucretius." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 1913, Vol. 24, pp. 147 f.).

[50] "A poet who excelled in talent and power of expression" (trans. J.C. Rolfe, Loeb). J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, p. 214, fairly rejects the emendation of L. Trencsenyi-Waldapfel ("Ciceron et Lucréce." *Acta Antiqua Acadamiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 1958, Vol. 6, pp. 321–383) who proposed to insert the negation before *multis luminibus* (I have not seen G. Jachmann's study in *Athenaeum* 1967, Vol. 45, pp. 89–118).

[51] See C. Giussani: *T. Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura libir sex* I. Torino 1896, p. xi.

[52] Cf. J. Mewaldt: "Lucretius (17)." In: *Paulys Realenzyklopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft* XIII. 2. Hrsg. G. Wissowa, W. Kroll. Stuttgart 1927, col. 1659.

DRN itself – it was to have been corrected by Cicero: *quot postea Cicero emendavit.*[53] In the Loeb translation of this passage, by W.H.D. Rouse (revised by Martin Ferguson Smith) the sentence reads: "He was driven mad by a love potion and, having composed in the intervals of his insanity several books which Cicero afterwards corrected, committed suicide in his forty fourth year."[54] These very few data constitute the part of a scanty tradition about the poet's *curriculum vitae*; they have become notorious, persistent and influential through many centuries; they also caused a lot of embarrassment among the modern Lucretian scholars, as looking for the modern eye suspiciously and melodramatically enough (especially the motif of love potion drunk by the lovesick bard[55]) to be accepted uncritically and without a lot of reservation. Accordingly, the majority of the students rejected the testimony as apparently spurious and mistaken.[56] Long ago the Polish scholar Michał Jezienicki,[57] followed by Konrat Ziegler,[58] expressed an opinion that it was St. Jerome himself who invented the sensational news about the alleged mental illness and suicide of the Epicurean disciple, reminding on this occasion that no classical writer mentions it. Neither the biographer Cornelius Nepos, nor Cicero himself, who was genuinely interested in Lucretius and Epicurean philosophy, made any brief allusion to the poet's psychical troubles. Here especially the silence of Lactantius (called by Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska*, p. 26, "a greatest enemy of Lucretius"[59]) in his *Divinae institutiones* is particularly striking. Certainly, we are not in a position to doubt that Lactantius knew very well the *DRN* too; to be sure, when discussing the problem of committing suicide (*Div. inst.* 3.18. 6) the learned apologist used Lucretius' own words from the *DRN*, 3. 1041, nevertheless no indication and allusion were made by him to Lucretius' alleged suicide. Additionally, as Korpanty (*Lukrecjusz*, pp. 30–31), rightly reminds us, elsewhere Lactantius employed a very harsh terminology towards the Roman admirer of Epicurus: in his eyes the Roman poet just fell into madness (*insanire*). Lactantius further argument runs that in his great poem Lucretius expressed obvious absurdities (*delirare*); also, a lot of stupidity and lack of clever-

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[53] See the notes of M.D. Donalson: *A Translation of Jerome's Chronicon with Historical Commentary*. Lewiston–New York 1996.

[54] M.F. Smith: "Introduction." In: *Lucretius, De rerum natura*. Trans. W.H.D. Rouse; revised M.F. Smith. Cambridge, MA– London 2006, p. x.

[55] P. Gordon: "Some Unseen Monster: Rereading Lucretius on Sex." In: *The Roman Gaze. Vision, Power, and the Body*. Ed. D. Fredrick. Baltimore 2002, p. 99, thinks it is to be connected with Lucretius' vehement attack on love in the Book IV and belonged to "biographer's revenge."

[56] C. Bailey, however, assumed it to be authentic, so did D.B. Gain: "The Life and Death of Lucretius." *Latomus* 1969, Vol. 28, pp. 545–553; cf. K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska*…, pp. 23 f.

[57] "Quaestiones Lucreatianae"…, pp. 31–58.

[58] "Der Tod des Lucretius." *Hermes* 1936, Vol. 71, pp. 421–440.

[59] Cf. T. Maslowski: "The Opponents of Lactantius [Inst. VII, 7, 7–13]." *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 1975, Vol. 7, pp. 187 f.

ness (*insania*) was the poet's innate features; last but not least, literally, Lactantius argued, Lucretius lacked reason (*non habuisse cerebrum*).

All these qualifications are revealing today for us as, strictly speaking, they do not refer to a true or imputed insanity of the Roman poet,[60] but should be understood as a kind of polemical strategy, used by his adversaries after the reading of the poem itself (particularly of the end of the book IV, maybe). It evidently looks as if in an effort to refute someone's views it would be the easiest way to call such a person "mad."[61] It was thus the philosophical contents of the work itself, coupled with an admiration for an enchanting vocabulary of the poem, in which Epicurean doctrines were expressed, that lay at roots of using such depreciating words and contributed to an invention of the legend about the insane, mad of love poet who committed suicide.[62]

So, eventually but inevitably we arrive at the conclusion that beneath the biographical controversy with Lucretius' alleged madness and his self-inflicted death, well pointed out by St. Jerome, something else should be understood: an indirect attack on the work itself and the dissemination of fallacious, erroneous ideas that could be a true menace for true Christian believers.[63] From the point of view of the Christian thinker, as St. Jerome was, it becomes clear that the attributing *insania* to Lucretius meant thus no more than to imply that he was a partisan of wrong ideas and his whole work – a set of erroneous views and a bad, morally dangerous and disastrous philosophy. So, we may conclude, Lucretius' *insania* was thus intended to lead the reader to acknowledge an ambiguous status of the poem itself: undoubtedly, it was the *DRN* which remained St. Jerome's main target, as the man who wrote such a poem must have been mentally troubled.

I have reminded this old discussion as I believe that the same must be true, however, with the second part of Jerome's information – about the alleged "emendation" of the poem by "Cicero." Here I agree with Karl Lachmann and Jezienicki[64]

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[60] For, although St. Jerome plausibly indicated that Lucretius wrote *per intervalla insaniae*, it is clear that his intention was to insist upon the readers that in a long perspective the *DRN* has been written by the author who suffered from mental illness over his entire life.

[61] Indeed, a highly dangerous and – regrettably – much abused practice, especially in the modern times by totalitarian regimes, as J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, p. 220, reminds.

[62] J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, p. 32, suggests that it is highly probable that Jerome may have erroneously ascribed to Lucretius the Lucullus' *maladie d'amour* and his suicide (described by Plutarch, after Cornelius Nepos, in his *Life of Lucullus*, 42–43); such a view was assumed also by K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska*…, p. 26.

[63] One cannot omit the information preserved by Clement of Alexandria (*Stromat.* 1. 50. 6) that St. Paul rejected (which is understandable) the philosophy of the Garden. For such reasons Epicureanism, as some hold, "was supressed once Christianity began to experience some success by the second century C.E." – T. Duvall: "Epicureanism." In: *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas* II. Ed. M. Horowitz. New York 2005, p. 685.

[64] K. Lachmann: *In T. Lucretii Cari De rerum natura libros commentarius*. Berolini 1882, p. 63; M. Jezienicki: "Quaestiones Lucretianae"…, p. 31. W.Y. Sellars: *The Roman Poets of the Republic*. Edinburgh 1863, pp. 203–204, and K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska*…, p. 28,

who have argued that the man who "corrected" the poem could not have been *Marcus* Cicero.[65] Truth be told, Quintus Cicero seems to be a much better candidate here. We may attribute an *emendatio* of the *DRN* to him rather than to his more famous brother. Such inference would stand in accord with the remarks I have already formulated: if accepted, it removes the difficulty that appears when one defends a notion that the author of the *De republica* "had prepared" a corrected text of the *DRN* for further copying. When holding the view that it was Marcus who *emendavit*, there arises an old difficulty – why? Why did Marcus Cicero do it if he saw in the poem a "menace"?[66] The whole tradition of Cicero as the *emendator* of the *DRN* looks thus suspiciously and is attributed to the Arpinate either erroneously or mistakenly. Here too many uncertainties appear to establish the facts in a solid, imperishable, and unquestionable way, but one indication to which it is time to return now must be adduced. Namely, why did Cicero fail to mention Lucretius at any passage of his masterly dialogues and diatribes from the years 46–44?[67]

An *argumentum ex silentio*, usually employed in order to strengthen one's particular reasoning is not always the luckiest and the most secure method to rely on without reservation, yet this particular case with Cicero's omitting both the name of Lucretius as well as the title of his poem is exceptionally strange. Was it on Cicero's part an effort to employ a literary *damnatio memoriae* of the poet and his enchanting *DRN*? The only passage, as it is believed, in Cicero's dialogues where an allusion to the *DRN* is made comes from *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, 2. 102. It reads: *qui innumerabilis mundos infinitasque regiones, quarum nulla esset ora, nulla extremitas, mente peragravisset*. This seems to be a paraphrase of the verse 74 from the first book of the *DRN* (*omne immen-*

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accept the traditional attributing the emendation of the *DRN* to Marcus, so does J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, pp. 210–211. The latter scholar argues that if Jerome omitted the name of Marcus, he did so because he apparently had in mind this one of the brothers who was more famous. This is possible, although it cannot be proven. He also suggests (J. Korpanty: *Lukrecjusz*…, p. 212) that for Cicero the *emendator* of the philosophical content of the Lucretian poem might have been less important than its form. Although there is much reason in the claim that Cicero – an aspiring poet himself (see footnote 13, *infra*) – remained under a great impression of the poem's "grandeur" (the term of R.W. Sharples: *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics. An Introduction to Hellenistic Philosophy.* London–New York 1995, p. xi), essentially it is a view contrary to that proposed in the present paper.

[65] Already admitted by an eminent philologist J. Bernays: "De emendatione Lucretii." *Rheinisches Museum* 1847, Vol. 5, esp. pp. 586–587.

[66] Cf. L. Holford-Strevens: "*Horror vacui* in Lucretian Biography." *Leeds International Classical Studies* 2002, Vol. 1, pp. 7–8 (an excellent study). This does not mean that Jerome himself meant Quintus Cicero. Obviously, it was *Marcus* who in the eyes of the learned Christian thinker had a great literary authority of the Roman past, so it was he whom the Reverend certainly had in mind (I am indebted to Professor Przemysław Nehring from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, who reminded me of this).

[67] See M. Beard, J. North, S. Price: *Religions of Rome I*…, pp. 116 f.

sum peragravit mente animoque),[68] but it is quoted without mentioning the name of Lucretius himself.[69] If in 54 Cicero praised so enthusiastically the quality of the Lucretian epic (the mentioned letter to his brother), it allows to address the question: how can one explain his astonishing silence a few years later, when he began a decisive engagement with Epicureans and rebutted their doctrines concerning fundamental problems of the meaning of life, death, and immortality of the soul?

My own scenario, whose some items have already been tentatively mentioned, should rely on Cicero's own remarks and statements made in his two crucial, profoundly anti-Epicurean in character (that is, anti-Lucretian, in fact[70]) works, with the additional reflections appearing in *De finibus bonorum et malorum*. The picture that emerges from the remarks made by Cicero is worth reconsidering.

In a recent book Sean McConnell distinguishes three main reasons for which Cicero has suddenly returned to composing philosophical treatises in his mid-forties.[71] These were: a wish to serve *res publica* by propagating philosophy among the Roman citizens, which meant that Cicero regarded the practical dimension of philosophical enquiry as important; a personal consolation after the loss of Tullia; and the effort to "create" a Roman reader and connoisseur of philosophy who has of course the knowledge of Greek language but, nonetheless, can appreciate the beauty of Latin language.

The two first reasons are quite understandable (although I am less sure about Cicero's alleged aim in 46 at helping, first and foremost, *respublica*[72]) and one

[68] "He traversed the immeasurable universe in thought and imagination" (Rouse and Smith's Loeb trans.).

[69] C. Bailey: *Titi Lucreti Cari* II…, p. 612, *ad loc.*, does not discuss this connection.

[70] See T. Maslowski: "Cicero, Philodemus, Lucretius"…, p. 226.

[71] S. McConnel: *Philosophical Life in Cicero's Letters*. Cambridge 2014, p. 33. Earlier on, these factors were set out by K. Leśniak in his introduction to the Polish translation of the Ciceronian *Academics* (Warszawa 1961, p. 9).

[72] As Camille Thiaucourt put it long ago: "Cicéron n'était pas un philosophe de profession qui cherche le vrai pour lui-, mème, mais un home d'État qui ne perd jamais de vue la politique. Ses traités philosophiques étaient destinés à agir sur l'opinion de la société la plus polie et la plus instruite, comme ses discours s'adressaient directement au peuple et au sénat" (*Essai sur les traités philosophiques de Cicéron et leur sources grecques.* Paris 1885, p. VI). This statement still remains valid in general, but in this peculiar case I would prefer to follow Cicero himself who stated that now (that is, in 45) he veers in indulging what is worthiest thing to do: *hanc enim perfectam philosophiam semper iudicavi, quae de maximis quaestionibus copiose posset ornateque dicere* (*Tusc. disp.* 1. 4. 7). Among these selected issues, I think, the problem of afterlife has become for the Arpinate the most crucial and far more pertinent than the earlier dilemma of participating in political life – important as it was for Cicero in the 50s of the 1st century BC as his early treatises – *De republica* and *De legibus* – prove. But the gap of several years (within which Cicero had witnessed both the death of Tullia and an amazing, I think, success of the *DRN*) meant a deep change in Cicero's philosophical priorities: now, as he himself stated this eloquently by quoting Plato: in *Tusc. disp.* 1. 74–75, the life of a wise man should be spent as worthily as it was possible. So Cicero famously expounds what he has understood as the most important goal of human existence (see also *Tusc. disp.* 1. 7). The whole

would certainly make a great mistake to underestimate them. No one can ever write – as the New Historicism teaches us – in a perfect isolation from external circumstances, no ideal "inner citadel" is possible to be raised while composing any literary piece;[73] political and social situation always somewhat matter, although how exactly these factors determine the way in which particular arguments are presented in a work and how such work is written is not easy to estimate in each case. Concerning the first reason, scholars prefer to explain Cicero's return to philosophy with his compulsory withdrawal from politics:[74] in some sense Cicero, *homo in rebus publicis capessendis semper ambitiosus,* took up writing down philosophical issues because of his *otium* and Caesar's rise to power.[75] The works of the Arpinate, written in the shadow of the Caesarian dictatorship which did not remind Ciceronian ideal of a mysterious *moderator rei publicae* (advanced in *De republica*, 5. 6. 8; 5. 7. 9 – of Pompeius maybe), were meant by Cicero, however, to be an useful guide in practical ethics.

But the third argument that refers to the frequent repeating by Cicero the necessity of present Greek philosophical achievements in Latin language, remains perhaps the most intriguing. In fact in raising this point Cicero went even further: his goal was to offer the Roman intellectual a kind of a complete "companion to philosophy."[76] In its essentials such a philosophical "guide" was, of course, based on Greek thought but it should not have been regarded as mere exposition of Greek intellectual accomplishments.[77] Many scholars emphasize this fact recently, rightly indicating the Cicero's great cultural design: it would be therefore unfair to see in the Ciceronian beautiful dialogues and diatribes second-hand repetitions of what the Greek masters, in more or less remote past, had once

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life of a philosopher, he asserts now, should be a *commentatio mortis* which remains the translation of the Platonic phrase μελέτη θανάτου (*Phaed.* 80e).

[73] The title of the Pierre Hadot's famous study of Marcus Aurelius.

[74] Holford-Strevens: "*Horror vacui* in Lucretian Biography"…, p. 7.

[75] See *Acad.* 1. 3. 10: *Ego autem Varro (dicam enim ut res est), dum me ambitio dum honores dum causae dum rei publicae non solum cura sed quaedam etiam procuratio multis officiis implicatum et constrictum tenebat aninno haec inclusa habebam et ne obsolescerent renovabam cum licebat legendo; nunc vero et fortunae gravissimo percussus vulnere et administratione rei publicae liberatus doloris medicinam a philosophia peto et otii oblectationem hanc honestissmam iudico. aut enim huic aetati hoc maxime aptum est, aut his rebus si quas dignas laude gessimus hoc in primis consentaneum, aut etiam ad nostros cives erudiendos nihil utilius, aut si haec ita non sunt nihil aliud video quod agere possimus*; cf. K. Kumaniecki: *Cyceron i jego współcześni*…, p. 427; also R. Syme: *The Augustan Aristocracy*. Oxford 1986, p. 442. See Plutarch's statement (*Cic.* 40): Ἐκ τούτου Κικέρων, εἰς μοναρχίαν τῆς πολιτείας μεθεστώσης, ἀφέμενος τοῦ τὰ κοινὰ πράττειν ἐσχόλαζε τοῖς βουλομένοις φιλοσοφεῖν τῶν νέων; with the commentary by A. Lintott: *Plutarch: Demosthenes and Cicero*. Oxford 2013, p. 195. He claims that Cicero "is portrayed as another Socrates."

[76] Cf. D. Sedley: "Philosophy." In: *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*. Eds. A. Barchiesi, W. Scheidel. Oxford 2010, p. 702.

[77] So K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska*…, pp. 320–321.

already said. The dialogues were Cicero's justified subject of pride (very close to megalomania; cf. Plutarch, *Cic.* 24) as far as they were meant to have been the Roman "companion to philosophy" throughout, to be used by a new elite of the Romans, educated in philosophical training.[78] His great merit, a true monument to the intellectual history of ancient Rome (pompous words, I am aware of it, but, nevertheless, not without reason), was to create Latin philosophical terminology on his own.[79]

Such reconstruction of Cicero's motifs is today accepted as the truest, or nearest to reality. While not denying a general rightness of such line of thinking, it may be worth observing that there was one exception to this rule: this was of course Lucretius' Latin philosophical masterpiece. I believe in what it has already been said, that despite the great amount of Greek philosophical production available to Cicero it was the presence of the *DRN* and influence on Cicero's which caused his great comeback to philosophical studies.[80] The effect the *DRN* had was like that of an accelerator. Lucretius' poem may be helpful in explaining not only Cicero's frequent remarks about the necessity of writing in Latin but – more generally – be also very useful in looking at his whole philosophical production from the years 46–44 in the light of his secret rivalry with Lucretius. Whereas not diminishing the importance of Cicero's family tragedy and a dire (from the point of view of the defenders of the republic) political situation, an additional factor that contributed to the fact that Cicero took up the pen again must have been the proud (and irritating by the same[81]) epic poem. This opinion by a writer of next generation, Vitruvius, gives some idea of the importance of Lucretius' Epicurean adventure.[82] To this we may add Nepos's earlier emphatic suggestion (*Att.* 12. 4) that in their times Lucretius and Catullus were *elegantissimi poetae*. In short: the gorgeous poem provocatively encouraged Cicero to prepare a response, it led to emulation, so the

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[78] See W. Batstone: "Literature." In: *Comp. Roman Republic*…, pp. 560 f. He rightly points that the two men "share the same urgent need for a therapeutic philosophy."

[79] Cf. Plutarch, *Cic.* 40; interestingly, K. Kumaniecki: *Cyceron i jego współcześni*…, p. 450, mentions only in passing that it was Lucretius alone who besides Cicero established at that time such philosophical terminology in Latin. This, in itself, is telling; cf. A.A. Long: "Roman Philosophy." In: *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Philosophy.* Ed. D. Sedley. Cambridge 2003, p. 187.

[80] Cf. the thoughtful study by T. Maslowski: "The Chronology of Cicero's Anti-Epicureanism." *Eos* 1974, Vol. 62, pp. 55–78.

[81] There are many valuable things to read in G.B. Conte's paper: "Empirical and Theoretical Approaches to Literary Genre." In: *The Interpretation of Roman Poetry. Empiricism or Hermeneutics?* Ed. K. Galinsky. Frankfurt am Main 1992, p. 115. Among others, Conte argues that didactic character of the poem means that one ought not to see in it a "peaceful genre," chosen to offer mere "encyclopaedic" lecture on the nature of the universe. Rather, it is an example of highly polemical work which demands "an agonistic interpretation of the didactic experience." If true, Cicero perfectly understood such agonistic aspect of the poem.

[82] E. Fantham: "Literature and Criticism at Rome." In: *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* I: *Classical Criticism*. Ed. G.A. Kennedy. Cambridge 1989, p. 231.

ambitious advocate (one might have expected) could not remain silent to quietly and indifferently – in a Stoic-like manner – pass by.

Three times Lucretius explicitly says of the difficulties when it came to expound his Epicurean message: at 1.139 we hear of "poverty of the language" (*propter egestatem linguae*); the same sentiment appears at 1. 832 ("the poverty of our mother speech": *patrii sermonis egestas*) and at 3. 260: *patrii sermonis egestas* ("the poverty of our mother tongue"). Thus Latin language, he argues, appears sometimes insufficient to render adequately what elsewhere Lucretius calls *Graiorum obscura reperta* ("the dark discoveries of the Greeks"), as "it is difficult to make clear" Greek theories "in Latin verses" (*difficile inlustrare Latinis versibus esse*: 1. 137). These three cases of the poet's complaint must be complemented by another three important, authorial statements which, I suspect, might irritate Cicero the poet. At 1. 921–950, in a long and famous passage, called by Bailey "Lucretius' mission," or "second premium,"[83] the poet introduces himself as a real pioneer in displaying Epicurean *obscura*; he does not deny that his aim was *laudis spes magna* ("the high hope of renown"). He confesses that looking for fame made the poet an admirer of Muses (*in pectus amorem / Musarum*) who is "thrilled" by them to "traverse pathless tracts of the Pierides, never yet trodden by any foot" (*avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante / trita solo*). He proudly (conceitedly, indeed) asserts that he loves "to seek an illustrious chaplet for my head from fields whence before this the Muses have crowned the brows of none" (1. 928–930: *iuvatque novos decerpere flores / insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam / unde prius nulli velarint tempora Musae*). The reason is that he instructs about "high matters" (*magnis doceo de rebus*) and that he writes clearly about the dark subject thanks to a divine touch "with Muses' grace" (*obscura de re tam lucida pango / carmina, musaeo contingens cuncta lepore*). In a famous comparison he therefore calls his poem "sweet-speaking Pierian song" (*suaviloquenti / carmine Pierio*: 1. 945–946) and equates it to "the Muses' delicious honey" (*musaeo dulci…melle*); it is the beauty of this "honey" that enables him "to deceive" the hearers' minds by his verses (*animum tali ratione tenere / versibus in nostris possem*).

The same line of thought is repeated, almost literally,[84] at 4. 1–9, so for a long time the controversy is whether the author's intentional repetition (so Bailey), or the verses were inserted by an unknown reader (interpolator). In the third passage (5. 336–337) the lofty tone is recalled boastfully (in any case, in this way Cicero might receive it), too: *denique natura haec rerum ratioque repertast / nuper, et hanc primus cum primis ipse repertus / nunc ego sum in patrias qui possim vertere voces*.[85]

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[83] *Titi Lucreti Cari* II…, p. 756.

[84] Cf. C. Bailey: *Titi Lucreti Cari* II…, p. 757; J. Korpanty: *Lucretius…*, p. 47.

[85] "Again this nature and system of the world has been discovered but lately, and I myself am now found the very first to be able to describe it in our own mother tongue." Smith in the note to these verses (in his Loeb edn., pp. 404–405) wonders why did Lucretius call himself "the first" and

It was these authorial statements which, I would cautiously suggest, might have motivated Cicero to undertaking an ambitious plan of preparing the said comprehensive philosophical "guide" in Latin; in other words – a silent purpose of Cicero was, in some sense, to reduce the influence of the *DRN* and replace the poem with his own writings. Bearing in mind Lucretian comments, let us try look at Cicero's obsession to furnish his Roman fellow-countrymen with a complete, own "guide" to philosophy. His declarations seem very interesting – only if we keep in mind what Lucretius had declared earlier.

In the *Academics* (written in 45) the Arpinate asserts (1. 1. 3) that he wants to teach the Romans philosophy in their native language, so he writes in Latin such a book on "old philosophy," for posterity.[86] He also wants his compatriots got to know Greek intellectual achievements in the native tongue to the same extent as they read poetry – for instance that of Ennius or Pacuvius (1. 3. 10).[87] Until that moment, Cicero's argument goes, he had been distracted from the study of philosophy (that is, from writing philosophical works) by many duties, but now, as the fate hit him and he became free from political service (1. 3. 11), Cicero decided to return to the meditations and composing books.[88] On a practical level, these books might have contained Latin neologisms, if needed, that are so important for philosophical disputes. Accordingly, the Ciceronian Varro agrees to speak in Latin only, giving thus (that is, creating) new vocabulary (1. 7. 25).[89]

A similar thought can one read in the *Tusculanae disputationes*, where the author announces his goal as a wish to explain the wisdom of the Greeks in Latin (1. 1. 1). In this context especially important is the remark (a part of what may be called "a brief history of Greek culture") that until his days philosophy was neglected by the Romans (who excelled the Greeks in other matters), as there was no Roman work which brought a deserved splendor to it: such brightness will be brought by his own production (1. 3. 5–6).[90] Here meaningful are Cicero's remarks

omitted Amafinius, whom Cicero (*Tusc. disp.* 4. 3. 6–7) regarded as a successful author of the Latin books on Epicurean philosophy before the *DRN* (cf. C. Bailey: *Titi Lucreti Cari* III…, p. 1371; see footnote 22, *supra*). He surmises that Amafinius wrote on ethic while Lucretius' subject was physics. But I think it was rather Lucretius' exaggerated self-esteem and the conviction of his didactic poetry's extraordinary quality that mattered.

[86] Here Cicero's Varro gives a critique of Amafinius and Rabirius whose literary output was very bad.

[87] This might be an allusion to Lucretius – a programmatic statement to discuss philosophical problems in prose. Here worth noticing is the opposition: Latin poetry (which, by implication, is non-philosophical) – philosophy (which in his version will be in particular significant).

[88] But at 1. 3. 12 Cicero adds that already Brutus wrote fine books on philosophical themes: one may ask, then, what motivation stood behind the Arpinate's decision to do the same, if *fine* Latin books already existed. On the one hand, it may be inferred that Cicero's aim was to write in a more complex way, discussing the topics overall (cf. *Tusc. disp.* 2. 1. 1). But it cannot be excluded that in particular Brutus's works devoted an insufficient attention to the Epicurean thoughts.

[89] Perhaps a further allusion to Lucretius' *patrii sermonis egestas*.

[90] At 2. 2. 5 he gravely calls all "to tear out" the Greeks the fame of best philosophers.

that it is extremely important to write on philosophical matters clearly and attractively: Cicero proudly asserts that his rhetorical training will be here of great help (cf. 1. 4. 7).[91] Rhetorical versatility is his great advantage but the question that remains is whom exactly he is arguing against? In this context the observation from book II may be useful too. At 2. 3. 7 a notably ponderous reflection is found:

> Est enim quoddam genus eorum qui se philosophos appellari volunt, quorum dicuntur esse Latini sane multi libri; quos non contemno equidem, quippe quos numquam legerim; sed quia profitentur ipsi illi qui eos scribunt se neque distincte neque distribute neque eleganter neque ornate scribere, lectionem sine ulla delectatione neglego. Quid enim dicant et quid sentiant ii qui sunt ab ea disciplina, nemo ne mediocriter quidem doctus ignorat. Quam ob rem, quoniam quem ad modum dicant ipsi non laborant, cur legendi sint nisi ipsi inter se qui idem sentiunt, non intellego.[92]

Apparently, this censure did not refer directly to Lucretius, given especially Cicero's enthusiastic judgment of the poem in a previous letter to his brother. Yet, as the Arpinate certainly strikes Epicurus (2. 3. 8; but see *De fin.* 1. 5. 15), one cannot easily reject the possibility that occasionally the author of the *De senectute* minded Lucretius' confession of his difficulties with Latin language.

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[91] Again, this looks as a hint to what he has read in the *DRN* about *sermonis egestas.*

[92] Cf. also *De fin.* 1. 3. 8.

Aeternitas: Are We All "the Lucretians" Now, or "a Heroic Lie"?[93]

In the previous section I advanced the view that for Cicero the *DRN* was "a challenge," as it constituted a kind of "menace" which must have been sturdily refuted. But were we not exaggerating the whole problem, one would object, in stressing out, or (what even worse) in "inventing" such powerful (yet alleged) influence of the poem on Cicero?

Certainly, as Stephen Greenblatt seeks to prove in his amazing *The Swerve*, such a great influence the rediscovered Epicurean poem had on its readers since its happy finding by the learned Poggio Bracciolini in 1417[94] – that is, from the later Middle Ages, through Renaissance and later[95] – was an undeniable social phenomenon. But, here one may rightly protest, this was not surely the case in the intellectual climate of the late Roman republic and Augustan principate. If the ancient opponents of the Lucretius saw any "menace" in the poem, it constituted a totally different kind of "threat" for them: not that it strongly reminded a disquieting possibility that there might be something true in the atomist theory but in realizing the fact that there is an innate difficulty in refuting Epicurean notions as totally unreliable. So, whereas agreeing with this claim, I would insist that in the time when Cicero wrote down his dialogues the *DRN* was perceived by the Epicurean adversaries as an intellectual challenge. Hence the thesis that I have tried to argue here: that it was the powerful, "majestic" poem in the long shadow of which

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[93] The idea of "heroic lie" in the *DRN w*as used by the great Italian scholar Ettore Bignione in his *Epicuro. Opere, frammenti, testimonianze sulla vita*. Torino 1960 (*non vidi*). It was accepted and upheld by G. Reale in his influential handbook, written from Christian perspective: *Historia filozofii starożytnej* III. Trans. E.I. Zieliński. Polish edn. Lublin 1999, p. 310. The idea had much in common with an older, long scholarly debate of whether there was in Lucretius' poem "an Anti-Lucretius" (see esp. M. Patin: *Études sur la poésie latine* I. Paris 1885, chapter VII, pp. 117–137; cf. the useful discussion in K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska*…, pp. 39–40). On this view Lucretius, to be sure, agreed doctrinally with Epicurus but had in fact many doubts and the poem itself would be a perfect exposition of the author's deep, human anxiety, his inner torment and fears, in fact. Although the claim of the "two authors" in the work has been fortunately abandoned today, a further elaboration of this idea still remains alive, though: namely that there is a profound pessimism that pervades the whole poem. So, according to Reale, the *DRN* would be a testimony to a noble, heroic "lie" by adopting of which man seeks to fight the fate and destiny: in this way Lucretius bravely tried "to deceive" himself and deny all fears mankind, and he personally, experiences every day; also P. Toohey: *Epic Lessons. An Introduction to Ancient Didactic Poetry.* London–New York 1996, pp. 103 f. We may be sure, however, that Lucretius, if it was possible, would disagree with such interpretation.

[94] C. Wilson: *Epicureanism and the Origins of Modernity*. Oxford 2008, p. 2.

[95] Cf. the essays by Dobbs, Osler, and Lennon in: *Atoms, Pneuma, and Tranquillity. Epicurean and Stoic Themes in European Thought*. Ed. M.J. Osler. Cambridge 1991.

Cicero went on his fascinating intellectual campaign against the material vision of human existence, so advertized by the Roman most eminent representative of the Garden. This being so, the question we arrive at is: what about this ancient controversy now?

At the very end of his dialogue *On Old Age*,[96] Cicero has expresses through his protagonist, Cato the Elder, a memorable, indeed touching confession. It is this confession which reveals the author's deep awareness of how weak are his arguments in an intellectual boxing match with Lucretius and how ineffective his persuasion may have been in the eyes of his Roman readers. Yet, by the same token, it is this very confession that makes Cicero a great and really tragic figure.[97] So, it may be argued that one year after the publication of the *Tusculanae disputationes* (summer 45) Cicero repeated the same arguments. They reveal his serious doubt but nevertheless he vigorously defends them, repeating the thesis about immortality of the soul.[98] His homage (based in this case on the famous passage from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, 8. 7. 17–22[99]) left to the posterity, if one is allowed to use "great words," is presented as something like a true *credo*,[100] given that this term may be appropriate in this context. The aging Cato says:

> Quod si in hoc erro, qui animos hominum inmortalis esse credam, libenter erro; nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo; sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti philosophi censent, nihil sentiam, non vereor, ne hunc errorem meum philosophi mortui irrideant. Quod si non sumus inmortales futuri, tamen exstingui homini suo tempore optabile est. (*Cat.* 85)[101]

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[96] On which cf. recently A. Lintott: *Cicero as Evidence. A Historian's Companion*. Oxford 2008, pp. 438–439.

[97] Rightly observed by K. Morawski: *Zarys*…, p. 125.

[98] Cf. *Tusc. disp.* 1. 11. 23; see T. Zielinski: *Cicero in Wandel der Jahrhunderte*. Leipzig–Berlin 1902², pp. 55–68; cf. R. Hirzel: *Untersuchungen zu Ciceros philosophische Schriften* III. Leipzig 1883, pp. 342–405.

[99] So says the dying Cyrus to his sons in Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8. 7. 17: οὐ γὰρ δήπου τοῦτό γε σαφῶς δοκεῖτε εἰδέναι ὡς οὐδὲν ἔτι ἐγὼ ἔσομαι, ἐπειδὰν τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου τελευτήσω (ed. W. Gemoll, Teubner).

[100] To this noble statement a commentary could be Cicero's own words from the *Consolatio*, as he himself quotes them in *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1. 66. At its roots it is, of course, the Platonic *credo*, whom Cicero followed closely in this respect; cf. K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska*…, p. 319; see W. Burkert: "Cicero als Platoniker und Skeptiker." In: Idem: *Kleine Schriften* VIII. *Philosophica*. Göttingen 2008, p. 189.

[101] Cf. Plato, *Apol.* 40c; *Phaed.* 68a; *Resp.* 331a; cf. *Tusc. disp.* 1. 39–40; 1. 49; cf. J. Rüpke: *Religion in Republican Rome. Rationalization and Ritual Change*. Philadelphia 2012, pp. 186–207. Also Plutarch, *Non posse suaviter*, 26 (= *Mor.* 1104c) who quotes Homer's *Iliad* and Euripides. Cicero's doubts and his human uneasiness may be contrasted to what the eminent Polish historian of ancient philosophy, Adam Krokiewicz, has said of Lucretius. Krokiewicz sees in the poet a man quite indifferent to human fears (which entirely make a man human being), an arrogant with no empathy, a cynic with a cold sense of reality (*Tytus Lukrecjusz Karus*…, p. xxxix).

Taking it logically, the concept of "eternity" has a sense only if one previously assumes that the human soul exists after leaving the mortal body – irrespective of whether its weight was "21 grams" or not[102] – that is, if it is, in fact, *inmortalis* (cf. *Cat.* 77: *est enim animus caelestis*). Since Cicero still has here no firm evidence for his claim, it therefore means that the only thing he leaves the reader with is hope, or, rather, a strong wish. It is in fact a continuation of his earlier intellectual "politics" of *errare cum Platone* (*Tusc. disp.* 1. 39–40; 49). Cicero, himself a very honest man (which is hardly contradicted by the statement about his megalomaniac nature), especially when philosophical matters were at stake, could not prove that in his promoting Epicurean claims about the gods and soul Lucretius was totally wrong. One could perhaps see a lot of irony in this, yet there is something noble in his choice to remain in an error.

To sum up: it is less surprising than it might seem that a true importance of the *DRN* is not that it was so substantial for Cicero (which seems to be obvious and which in itself would bear a stamp of the antiquarian inquiry) but that it still works in such a way for us. And this observation retains its validity, I think, despite the fact that we live now, as Professor Greenblatt rightly indicates, in a "post-Lucretian" world whose inherent feature is, essentially, its secularity – a phenomenon which very often is, in turn, associated by many thinkers with the idea of progress, and therefore embraced by another catchword – "modernity."[103]

Indeed, one must concede that the importance of the "crusade" Cicero led against Lucretius and his Epicurean offer to the Romans relies on a conviction that the Arpinate's engagement with the most dreadful believer in the material vision of the world transcends historical or literary (merely antiquarian) curiosity. By no means it belongs only to an outdated controversy from the field of "the history of philosophy" – a potential subject of interest for few experts. When reading it today we are not distant from the problems of the modern world and actual dilemmas one meets with and tries to resolve in everyday life.[104] So, a true challenge the *DRN* brings is still valid nowadays. If any philosophical issue vigorously debated in the

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[102] The title of the widely known 2003 movie by Alejandro González Iñárritu.

[103] On this see C. Wilson in her book: *Epicureanism*…, pp. 108 f.

[104] Geert Roskam: *Comm. Plut*…, p. 49, thinks not without reason that Cicero had no personal quarrels with Epicureans (Phaedrus was one of his earliest tutors: *Epist. fam.* 13. 1. 2; cf. *De fin.* 1. 5. 15). Above all, one should not to forget that his old friend Atticus was, to quote Horace, *Epicuri de grege porcus.* Cicero's attitude towards divination also was no different from that of the Garden and the same is true with his attitude toward the Stoic thesis about the fate: both his treatises on the topics prove it. On the other hand, the case of Lucius Calpurnius Piso is a famous exception. Cicero's speech against this patron of the famous Epicurean thinker Philodemus of Gadara, operating in the cities on the Bay of Naples, was delivered in 55. Here the orator is brutal and malicious, he calls Piso "Epicurus from a sty" which at that time must have been a popular stereotype, associated with the Epicurean hedonism (*Paradoxa Stoic.* 14; *Acad. priora*, 6; *De amicitia*, 32; cf. also Sallust, *BC*, 1. 1–4). So Roskam acutely raises the fact that Cicero focused on selected issues in Epicurean thought.

circles of ancient intellectuals was to become familiar to us (since, according to common parlance, "antiquity is always vivid"), it would be: is the soul immortal? We did not liberate ourselves from it and nobody can ever hope for it. On the contrary: again and again, we still realize the topicality thereof as beings situated in the middle of this ethical dilemma. So, Cicero's debate with Lucretius still remains with each reader. It always will. This is what one may call a really true legacy of this ancient dispute – the "inheritance" which is both Hellenistic as Lucretian.[105] If this legacy is not yet so much troubling today as it once (that is in the early modern Europe) was, it constitutes, though, a puzzle which sooner or later shall appear to be both inevitable and unavoidable.[106]

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[105] See footnote 29, *supra*; also A.A. Long: "Hellenistic Ethic as the Art of Life." *Lampas* 2003, Vol. 36, p. 29; see the two recent contributions by P. Mitsis: "Epicurus: Freedom, Death, and Hedonism." In: *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Ethics*. Ed. R. Crisp. Oxford 2013, pp. 73–92; and "When Death Is There, We Are Not: Epicurus on Pleasure and Death." In: *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Death*. Eds. B. Bradley, F. Feldman, J. Johansson. Oxford 2014, pp. 200–217.

[106] Cf. D. Furley: "Nothing to Us?" In: *The Norms of Nature. Studies in Hellenistic Ethics*. Eds. M. Schofield, G. Striker. Cambridge 1986, pp. 75 f.

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Was Cicero's Audience Aware of How Orpheus Died (*Arch*. 19)?

Abstract: Greek myth in the *Speeches* remains an insufficiently studied aspect of Cicero's literary output. Similarly, the mythological *exemplum* as a part of rhetorical theory has never been carefully examined. The scholarly controversy concerning the connotations carried by the myth of Orpheus in the *Pro Archia poeta* might be an opportunity to contribute briefly to both subjects in question. The author of the latest edition of the speech has rejected the hypothesis of C.E.W. Steel, who holds that in the text the allusion to the poet's death can be found. The following study aims above all at supporting the view, according to which the *exemplum* serves as a reminder of what fate Orpheus met at the hands of the Thracian maenads.

Key words: Cicero, myth, *exemplum*, Orpheus, *Pro Archia*

It is beyond doubt that in his speech *Pro Archia poeta* Cicero, as he addresses the jury reminding them of the sanctity of the poet's name, evokes the myth of Orpheus when he says that "the very rocks of the wilderness give back a sympathetic echo to [his] voice […] (trans. by N. H. Watts, slightly modified)." If analysed only through connotations with "the master singer," this mythological allusion would simply serve an illustrative end, barely contributing to the general line of argumentation. Recently it was suggested, however, that *Arch*. 8 (19) might bring to mind yet another episode from the same story, namely the poet's death by dismemberment.[1] Although this view was rejected by the latest editor and com-

[1] See C.E.W. Steel: *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire*. Oxford 2001, pp. 94 f.

mentator of the speech,[2] in our opinion, his objections do leave a space for further investigation. The main purpose of this paper, therefore, is to look at the issue in question from a somewhat different angle, and to argue in support of the former interpretation. Additionally, the discussion could yield us an opportunity for making some general remarks on the nature of the *exemplum* deriving its material from myth.

The ancients themselves did not have much to say about the mythological *exemplum* as such. Some general notions can be summarized in the following way: it furnished the speech with embellishment (*exornatio*, κόσμος), and bestowed pleasure (ήδονή, γλυκύτης) on hearers, but as a matter outside of the case itself (τὸ ἴδιον πρᾶγμα) it had to be handled cautiously. Best mythological examples (*ficta fabula*, *fabula poetica*) ought to rely on the authority of appreciated poets of the past (*doctissimi homines*, *clariores poetae*), or otherwise being too vague (οὐ γνώριμα) they could fail to be recognized by the audience.[3]

Modern theoretical reflections on myth, on the other hand, fit in well with our objectives. Taking into consideration the nature of the literary genre we are dealing with, the most adequate way of inquiry seems to be the so-called law of metamorphosis, a term coined by Ernst Cassirer in his discussions of myths in symbolical reality. The governing principle behind this law was, that every single idea expressed in a myth could denote almost *anything* in language.[4] Responding to this claim directly, the Canadian literary critic Northrop Frye extended Cassirer's theory into broadly conceived literature, as he held that the mind of a reader/listener can unconsciously become imbued with some suggestions carried by myth. He has also roughly divided literature into two branches – fictional and thematic. The former can derive its subject matter and internal characters from myth, while in the latter, which is our main interest, no characters are involved except for the author and his audience. As a result, the third parties are only alluded to for specific reasons, that are sometimes given by the author explicitly. Mythical matters (e.g. the name of a hero, detail from a journey, etc.) included in some pieces of

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[2] See A. Coşkun: *Cicero und das römische Bürgerrecht. Die Verteidigung des Dichters Archias*. Göttingen 2010, p. 120.

[3] For further details see e.g. Arist. *Rhet*. 1418ª 1–4; Hermog. *Id*. 2.4.1–22; *Rhet. Her.* 1.8.12 f.; Cic. *Inv.* 1.49, *Clu*. 48 (133 f.), *Mil*. 3 (8); [Hermog.] *Inv.* 3.15.60 ff. Rabe, *Prog.* 2.11–14; Aps. *Rh*. p. 376 Sp.; Quint. *Inst*. 1.8.10 ff., 5.11.6, 5.11.17–21, 12.4.1; Minuc. p. 341 Sp. For a general overview cf. R. Volkmann: *Die Rhetorik der Griechen und Römer in systematischer Übersicht*. Leipzig ²1885, pp. 233–239; H. Lausberg: *Handbook of Literary Rhetorik. A Foundation for Literary Study*. Eds. D.E. Orton, R.D. Anderson. Leiden 1998, §§ 410–426 (pp. 196–202).

[4] See E. Cassirer: *Language and Myth*. Trans. S.K. Langer. New York ²1953, pp. 4 ff., 14 f., 24; Idem: *An Essay on Man. An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture*. New York 1944, p. 93; Idem: *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen* II: *Das mythische Denken*. Ed. C. Rosenkranz. Hamburg 2010, p. 47: "Das »Bild« stellt die »Sache« nicht dar – es ist die Sache; es vertritt sie nicht nur, sondern es wirkt gleich ihr, so daß es sie in ihrer unmittelbaren Gegenwart ersetzt."; Idem: *Die Begrieffsform im mythischen Denken*. Leipzig–Berlin 1922, p. 20.

thematic literature serve as points of reference, denoting what the speaker wanted to convey.[5] The function of myth in the text, therefore, is a reference, which aims either at identification of the point of reference ("A") with a designate ("B") ("A" = "B", metaphor), or at suggesting their resemblance ("A" ~ "B", metonymy). Within the confines of the law of metamorphosis, then, the *illustrans* interacts with the *illustrandum* constituting respectively a "relation of equality," or a "relation of similarity." It is unnecessary to dwell at length on the subject, especially since I deal with it elsewhere.[6] Just for the sake of the argument, however, I shall illustrate with one brief example how the law works.

In the *Second Philippic* Cicero recounts how Antony won a great deal of goods previously belonging to Pompey at a public auction. He lost this newly assembled fortune the same way as he came into possession of it – quickly and shamelessly. Cicero points out (*Phil*. 2.27 [67]) his being in semblance of Charybdis ("A" ~ "B" = the relation of similarity as described above), at the same time remarking that even the Ocean could not have devoured so much wine as he had consumed, in such short period of time. Quintilian (*Inst*. 8.6.70) identifies this practice as hyperbole, with which the speaker exaggerates the whole situation. Either way, what matters here is that the author is able to project a trait commonly ascribed to a mythological character into a living person, thereby playing upon his audience's feelings.

The story of how Orpheus died may be regarded as highly *canonical* by the time of the Late Republic, inasmuch as we perceive the idea more or less like G.S. Kirk did,[7] for it was known already to Aeschylus (*Bassarids*), and in Rome of the Augustan Age it assumed the form of a refined narration both in Vergil's *Georgics*, and in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. According to those poets the sage, after irrevocably losing Eurydice, was driven to such a state of despair, that he kept rejecting the advances of all women. The Thracian maids of the Ciconian tribe felt

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[5] See N. Frye: *Anatomy of Criticism. Four Essays*. Princeton–Oxford [15]2000, pp. 123, 188, 215; Idem: "Myth as Information." *The Hudson Review* 1954, Vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 234 f.; Idem: "Myth, Fiction, and Displacement." *Daedalus* 1961, Vol. 90, no. 3, p. 299.

[6] See D. Pierzak: "The Case of Apollo and Hyacinth in the *Second Tetralogy* Attributed to Antiphon." In: *Scripta Classica*, Vol. 10. Ed. A. Kucz. Katowice 2013, pp. 54 ff.; Idem: "A Reading of Greek Myth in Cicero's *Speeches*. The Case of Medea." In: *Ancient Myths in the Making of Culture*. Eds. M. Budzowska, J. Czerwińska. Frankfurt a. M. 2015, pp. 57 f.

[7] See G.S. Kirk: "Greek Mythology: Some New Perspectives." *JHS* 1972, Vol. 92, pp. 75, 77; Idem: *The Nature of Greek Myths*. Harmondsworth [8]1985, pp. 27 f. Cf. J. Gould: "On Making Sense of Greek Religion." In: *Greek Religion and Society*. Eds. P. Easterling, J.V. Muir. Cambridge 1985, pp. 1–33; C. Calame: "The Abduction of Helen and the Greek Poetic Tradition: Politics, Reinterpretations and Controversies." Trans. J. Lloyd. In: *Antike Mythen. Medien, Transformationen und Konstruktionen*. Eds. C. Walde, U. Dill. Berlin–New York 2009, p. 658: "The multiple versions of what we believe we can indentify as a myth are constanly produced and recast in shifting enunciative conditions, as they change, that confer upon the myth its particular meaning as a signifier."

insulted by his behaviour and, as punishment, he was torn by them to pieces during some ecstatic rites.[8] We need not focus on the details of this well-known story – it suffices to keep in mind the picture of frenzied maenads tearing the poet apart.

Let us now direct our attention to the main subject of the inquiry. The central section of the so-called epideictic part of the speech *Pro Archia poeta* is devoted to the praise of literature, particularly poetry (§§ 12–30). Cicero claims that, whatever has been achieved in a given discipline, we ought to respect and hold in admiration even if we lack abilities therein ourselves. So it was with the late comic actor Roscius, whose movements and gestures on stage delighted the crowds. Should it not be the same then with Archias, capable of composing amazing lines anytime *ex tempore*, and of rearranging them in a completely different configuration when asked for? His writings match the works of the poets of old, which deserve the highest appreciation, especially when one realizes that unlike other arts, where it is learning and technique that count, poetry requires a kind of divine inspiration (*poetam natura ipsa valere et mentis viribus excitari et quasi divino quodam spiritu inflari*). That is why Ennius called poets *sancti* (§ 8 [17 f.]).[9] Having thus prepared his audience, and in order to stir up emotions in the jury, Cicero indirectly conjures the mythical Orpheus, who made even stones and wild beasts answer his call (Cic. *Arch*. 8 [19]):

> Saxa atque solitudines voci respondent, bestiae saepe immanes cantu flectuntur atque consistunt; nos instituti rebus optimis non poetarum voce moveamur?

Neither the name of the protagonist nor any *specific* detail of the story appears, yet it is clear who the speaker is alluding to. The reference to a Greek mythological character in this passage must have been much more conspicuous to Cicero's contemporaries than it is to a modern reader.[10] Although the figure of Orpheus did

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[8] See for instance Verg. *G*. 516–522; Ps. Apollod. *Bibl*. 1.3.2 f. Frazer.

[9] Enn. *inc*. 19 Vahlen. Cf. Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.88: *Ennium sicut sacros vetustate lucos adoremus, in quibus grandia et antiqua robora iam non tantam habent speciem quantam religionem*; C.E.W. Steel: *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire*…, pp. 86 f., 91.

[10] The allusion escaped some scholars' notice, and others seem not to attach importance to it. See e.g. M. von Albrecht: "Das Prooemium von Ciceros Rede pro Archia poeta und das Problem der Zweckmäßigkeit der *argumentatio extra causam*." *Gymnasium* 1969, Vol. 76, pp. 419–429 = "*Digressio* versus *Prooemium*: The *Pro Archia*: The Relevance of an Excursus." In: Idem: *Cicero's Style. A Synopsis*. Leiden–Boston 2003, pp. 198–205; P.R. Murphy: "Cicero's *Pro Archia* and the Periclean *Epitaphios*." *TAPhA* 1958, Vol. 89, pp. 100 f. (although he quotes a part of the sentence in question); F. Heubner: "Agitatorische Redundanz als Mittel der politischen Argumentation in Ciceros Rede *Pro Archia Poeta*." *Klio* 1985, Vol. 67, no. 2, pp. 487 f.; B.P. Wallach: "Cicero's *Pro Archia* and the *Topics*." *RhM* 1989, Vol. 132 (3–4), pp. 313–331 (the whole sentence on p. 324); D.H. Berry: "Literature and Persuasion in *Pro Archia*." In: *Cicero the Advocate*. Eds. J. Powell, J. Paterson. New York 2004, p. 308. Moreover, neither is this passage recorded by all the lexicons (omitted e. g. by O. Gruppe: "Orpheus." In: *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen*

not occur in Latin poetry until Vergil's *Eclogues*, there he is "already a symbol of artistic perfection, represented by the power of his singing over nature."[11] Cicero remembers to mention that the trial is led by the praetor highly educated (*nota bene* Q. Tullius), and in front of the sophisticated audience (§ 2 [3]): […] *cum res agatur apud praetorem populi Romani, lectissimum virum*, […] *hoc concursu hominum litteratissimorum*. The decipherment of the exact point of reference, therefore, should not have caused any effort on their part.

The fact that Quintilian, a famous Roman rhetorician, paid so much attention to this passage, comes as an advantage. *Arch*. 8 (19) occurs five times in the *Institutio oratoria*, and this alone should speak for itself. First, making a general remark, he deliberates (*Inst*. 11.1.31–36) on which means of expression befits whom (*cui decet*). The main criterion here is the age of the speaker, and another his profession. It would be improper, say, for a philosopher, to utter the phrase quoted above, for it is too refined (*exquisitiora*) and embellished (*laetiora*), though it suits well a statesman (*vir civilis*), for whom it is due to resort to any available "stratagem" in order to convince an audience, provided that his intentions are decent (*honestum*).[12] The author of the *Education of an Orator* regards Cicero's device as *similitudo*, which heightens the level of adornment and renders the speech more elevated, elegant, delightful, and surprising. The tenor underlying the comparison increases whenever one employs it in the way unexpected to one's audience (Quint. *Inst*. 8.3.74 f.). He mentions as well (9.4.44) that given the overtone of the following items, we would benefit more, had we put stones (*saxa*) and wild animals (*bestiae*) in reversed order, because it presents a far greater challenge to awake feelings in rocks. Here, however, such advantage of sequence yielded the palm to the ornamentation (*nam plus est saxa quam bestias commoveri; vicit tamen compositionis decor*).

Some aspects of the myth need to be outlined before we move on to the heart of the matter. The Orphic movement and its alleged founder – Orpheus himself, do not form part of a particularly ancient Greek past. On the contrary – he appears nowhere in the pre-Alexandrian epic tradition. Although the first mentions trace back as far as lyric poetry of the archaic period (Simon. fr. 40 = 567 Page), and the beginnings of tragedy (A. *Ag*. 1628–1632), the motif we are investigating does not show any sign of elaboration until the works of Euripides (E. *Ba*. 561–564), where

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Mythologie, Vol. III. Ed. W.H. Roscher. Leipzig 1897–1902, coll. 1115 ff.; D.R. Shackleton Bailey: *Onomasticon to Cicero's* Speeches, Stuttgart–Leipzig 1992) nor commented upon by the author of the *scholia Bobiensia*. Quintilian, quoting the sentence several times (cf. below), although he does not provide the name of the character explicitly, seems to do so in accordance with his regular practice. Cf. his comment on Cic. *Mur.* 29 (60), a passage in which there is no way of knowing for sure who is Cicero alluding to (*Inst*. 8.6.30): *neutrum enim nomen est positum et utrumque intellegitur.*

[11] P.E. Knox: *Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Traditions of Augustan Poetry*. Cambridge 1986, p. 48. Quotation after: C.E.W. Steel: *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire*…, p. 93, n. 59. Cf. W. Clausen: *A Commentary on Vergil's* Eclogues. Oxford 1994, ad 3.46 (p. 103).

[12] Cf. Cic. *Off.* 1.20 f. (66–73).

we hear that "he once moved the trees by his singing, he moved the untamed creatures." As for this "archetypal" poet in general, an assumption can be made that his ability to influence the wild nature by singing or playing on instrument (apparently a lyre) is among the earliest characteristics attested.[13] As evidence for a familiarity with this motif among the Roman higher classes comes Varro's anecdote (*R.R.* 3.13.2 f.). According to it, Q. Hortensius had once arranged a "picnic" in his game-preserve (*therotrophium*) in Laurentum, where a sort of mythological enactment took place. A slave dressed-up as Orpheus was ordered to play a curved-trumpet (*bucina*) and by doing so he is said to have allured a multitude of various animals.[14]

While analysing the *exemplum* we have to take into consideration all the implications deriving from the extant versions of the myth. For as C.E.W. Steel has rightly noticed, at the first glimpse Cicero commits a mistake in bringing up a character, whose fate at the hands of the human kind was known to be disastrous. According to the scholar, however, his doing so can be understood in the following way: the speaker, who is aware that the hidden message will reveal itself to the audience as he intended, resorts to their *humanitas*. The Roman people have an opportunity to avoid the mistreatment of a poet, who is *sanctus*, and thereby to act superior to the so cultivated Greeks.[15] A. Coşkun disagrees with such interpretation chiefly on two grounds. He claims that the maenads should be linked with Thrace alone and one cannot associate those barbarians with the Greeks. Moreover, he maintains that the jury could not have picked up so far-fetched a metaphor altogether.[16] In spite of the law of metamorphosis, however, this sort of combination is acknowledgeable in that each constituent of the narration submits itself to identification with a point of reference suggested by the speaker, and moreover, the present interpretation gains further support in the antithetical arrangement of the sentence (*saxa* […] *respondent*… *nos* […] *non* […] *moveamur?*). The pur-

[13] See e.g. C. Segal: *Orpheus. The Myth of the Poet*. Baltimore–London 1989, p. 1; F. Graf: "Orpheus: A Poet Among Men." In: *Interpretations of Greek Mythology*. Ed. J. Bremmer. London [2]1990, p. 84; O. Gruppe: "Orpheus…," col. 1115. Cf. E. *Med*. 542 ff.; *Alc*. 357–362; Ps. Apollod. 1.14 Wagner; Paus. 6.20.18, 9.17.7; T. Gantz: *Early Greek Myth. A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, Vol. 2. Baltimore–London 1996, pp. 721 f.: "With Euripides at the end of the century we find both trees […] and rocks […] following the singer as well, and one suspects that by this time such magical powers were commonplace for Orpheus."

[14] See A. Cameron: *Greek Mythography in the Roman World*. Oxford–New York 2004, p. 233. Cf. Mart. *Sp.* 21 with K.M. Coleman: "Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Enactments." *JRS* 1990, Vol. 80, pp. 62 f.

[15] See C.E.W. Steel: *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire*…, p. 94: "Unlike the Thracian maenads, the Roman governing classes, in the microcosm of a jury, know how to treat a poet." Cf. F. Heubner: "Agitatorische Redundanz…," p. 487.

[16] See A. Coşkun: *Cicero und das römische Bürgerrecht*…, p. 120: "Doch ist es irrig, ‚barbarische' Thraker mit Griechen gleichzusetzen. […] Steel fährt fort, dass sich die Geschworenen alternativ (bzw. ihren Staat) auch mit *barbaria* hätten identifizieren können; als *barbari* hätten sie aber dennoch gewusst, ‚how to behave justly'."

pose of the whole *digressio* (§§ 12–30) is, among other things, to reduce the jury's prejudices against a poet from the East. Cicero therefore flatters them by drawing a picture of their group as intellectuals. Had they passed judgment unfavourable to A. Licinius, it would certainly undo this picture.[17]

The word *barbaria* has to be taken here both as primitive, uneducated part of the society, to which Archias does *not* belong, and as the wild nature, yielding itself only to the charms of inspired poets.[18] The two sentences (8 [19] 1 f.]) were indeed interwoven into the context unexpectedly, but it is only through the third part of our passage (*nos instituti rebus optimis non poetarum voce moveamur?*) that we are allowed to fully recognize and appreciate the mythological allusion.[19] Moreover, it cannot be excluded that the sentence was pronounced in a vigorous way, with a high range of rhetorical gestures employed.[20] This question carries a considerable amount of the emotional appeal, for had the judgment be an unfavourable, the jury would have been perceived as less compassionate than the wild beasts, and even stones, if we are to accept the sequence preferred by Quintilian (*Inst*. 1.10.9): *quorum utrumque* [sc. *Orpheum et Linum*] *dis genitum, alterum vero, quia rudes quoque atque agrestes animos admiratione mulceret, non feras modo, sed saxa etiam silvasque duxisse posteritatis memoriae traditum est*.

The good name of Archias, whom Cicero compares to Ennius as regards *auctoritas*, and even to Homer himself, considering its rank (*sanctum*) should therefore remain untouched (*Sit igitur iudices sanctum apud vos, humanissimos homines, hoc poetae nomen quod nulla umquam barbaria violavit*.). In consent with Quintilian's statement presented above we shall regard the *exemplum* in question as constituting a relation of similarity ("A" ~ "B"), since it is clear from what we have discussed above, that Archias is not meant to share Orpheus' fate at human (i.e. at the jury's) hands.[21] In order to reinforce his argument Cicero went on, unjust

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[17] See D.H. Berry: "Literature and Persuasion…," p. 304. Cf. Quint. *Inst*. 6.1.22: *referenda pars haec quoque ad utilitatem rei publicae, ad iudicum gloriam, ad exemplum, ad memoriam posteritatis*.

[18] Cf. Cic. *Phil*. 11.2 (6).

[19] See H.C. Gotoff: *Cicero's Elegant Style. An Analysis of the* Pro Archia. Urbana–Chicago–London 1979, pp. 176 f. It is worth noting that H. Gotoff understands the passage as a reference to either Amphion or Orpheus ("Cicero evokes the myths of Orpheus and Amphion"), with which we cannot agree in the light of the present interpretation. The ambiguity was noted already by M. Radin: "Literary References in Cicero's Orations." *CJ* 1911, Vol. 6, no. 5, p. 210 and more recently by J. Dugan: "How to Make (and Break) a Cicero: *Epideixis*, Textuality, and Self-Fashioning in the *Pro Archia* and *In Pisonem*." *CA* 2001, Vol. 1, p. 47, n. 46. Cf. however H. u. K. Vretska (eds.): *Marcus Tullius Cicero. Pro Archia poeta*. Darmstadt 1979, *ad loc*. (p. 144): "eine für den gebildeten Römer klare Anspielung auf Orpheus, auch an Amphion (so Reid), für den aber die *solitudines* und *bestiae* nicht passen […]."

[20] See Quint. *Inst*. 11.3.84: *at cum speciosius quid uberiusque dicendum est, ut illud 'saxa atque solitudines voci respondent', expatiatur in latus et ipsa quodam modo se cum gestu fundit oratio*.

[21] Cf. B.P. Wallach: "Cicero's *Pro Archia*…," p. 324, n. 26. Elsewhere (*Verr*. 2.5.67 [171]) Cicero juxtaposes himself with Orpheus, suggesting that the horrible things, that had been said, would

though it was, to suggest Aulus Licinius' resemblance with other great *sacerdotes Musarum*.

There are two separate conclusions to be drawn from our examination: one general, the other concerning "the main assumption" that was stated at the outset. It seems obvious that in the light of the supported interpretation the mythological *exemplum*, in addition to providing the speech with embellishment, possesses a certain persuasive force, and cannot be reduced to a sheer refreshment, unless we regard the whole digression (§§ 12–30), of which the *Zweckmäßigkeit* was established fairly enough by M. von Albrecht, as such. As to the scholarly discussion set out by C.E.W. Steel, the employment of the law of metamorphosis clearly tips the scales in her favour.

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have moved even beasts and deserts: *Si haec non ad civis Romanos, non ad aliquos amicos nostrae civitatis, non ad eos qui populi Romani nomen audissent, denique si non ad homines verum ad bestias, aut etiam, ut longius progrediar, si in aliqua desertissima solitudine ad saxa et ad scopulos haec conqueri ac deplorare vellem, tamen omnia muta atque inanima tanta et tam indigna rerum acerbitate commoverentur*. See also C.E.W. Steel: *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire*…, p. 94, n. 61.

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Osiris and Attis in Firmicus Maternus's *De errore profanarum religionum*

Abstract: This article presents the analysis of three chapters of Firmicus Maternus's speech entitled *De errore profanarum religionum* containing informations about myths and cult of Osiris and Attis. The main focus will be on what Firmicus's work can tell us about role of these two oriental gods in theological pagan discourse in the Later Roman Empire.

Key words: Firmicus Maternus, Roman religion, mystery cults, Attis, Osiris

The works of Iulius Firmicus Maternus (4th century AD), both a pagan author and, after his conversion, a Christian apologist, was not broadly considered as an intellectual and a good writer among scholars interested in the late antique literature and culture.[1] Maternus is commonly recognized as the author of a highly rhetorical treatise on astrology, namely *Matheseos libri VIII* (the only so extensive work on the subject, that has survived to the present day).[2] However, the second work by Firmicus, *De errore profanarum religionum*, written just after his conversion to Christianity, being an ardent speech addressed to co-emperors Constans and Constantinus against pagan religions and mystery cults, was virtu-

[1] D.P. Quinn: "In the Names of God and His Christ: Evil Daemons, Exorcism, and Conversion in Firmicus Maternus." In: *Studia Patristica*, Vol. LXIX. Ed. M. Vinzent. Leuven–Paris–Walpole, MA 2013, p. 4.

[2] L. Thorndike: "A Roman Astrologer as a Historical Source: Julius Firmicus Maternus." *Classical Philology* 1913, Vol. 8, pp. 419–420.

ally unmentioned by later Christian writers.[3] Some researchers argue that *De errore* was written for utilitarian reasons, particularly Firmicus wanted to enter the structure of the imperial administration, and in order to achieve this goal he had to prove to the Christian emperors that he had renounced old religion for good.[4] In my opinion, the motives of Firmicus's converstion to Christianity may be of a different kind. For if we look at his ideas on the nature of divinity presented in *Mathesis* (especially in the *proemium* to liber V), which are influenced by neo-Platonism, hermeticism and stoicism, we may suspect that his road from paganism to Christianity was a rather complex process.

De errore profanarum religionum – the work essential for this paper – although filled with aggressive rhetoric against worshipers of Oriental divinities, may constitute a rich source for the researcher interested in religious life of the Roman Empire in 4th century AD. Firmicus's speech is of particular importance as a source. It allow us to draw many interesting conclusions concerning religious and cultural changes that occurred during the Later Roman Empire. When Firmicus Maternus wants to depreciate the Oriental and other polytheistic religions (e.g. the cult of Isis and Osiris, Cybele and Attis, Mithras, Demeter and Proserpina, Liber-Bacchus), he, at the same time, gives us many unique information about their origin, rituals and, in some cases, the forms of organization.

In this paper I would like to describe the figures of the two gods, whose cult is the subject of Firmicus's theological reflection, namely Osiris and Attis. I will focus on the chapters II, III and VIII of *De errore* in which the apologist discusses the myths and cult of Attis and Osiris. The analysis of these chapters may shed the light on what could have been the role of Attis and Osiris in the late-pagan theological discourse and how both the oriental gods functioned in public religion of the Later Roman Empire.

We have yet to answer the question, how can we trust the information provided by the Christian apologist who was openly hostile towards the described cults. On this occasion, we may quote the words of Walter Burkert, who, despite postulating skepticism towards Christian polemicists, noted that "effective polemics must contain at least a kernel of the truth."[5] Firmicus, as I believe, wanted to demonstrate the vanity of the pagan cults which have many features in common with Christianity. Thus, the facts given by the apologist were not intentionally fabricated, but Firmicus's one-sided interpretations have to be called into question.

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[3] *Firmicus Maternus: The Error of The Pagan Religions*. Trans. C.A. Forbes. New York 1970, p. 37.

[4] H. Drake: "Firmicus Maternus and the Politics of Conversion." In: *Qui Mascvit Vtile Dvlci: Festschrift Essays for Paul Lahlan Mackendrick*. Eds. G. Schmeling, J.D. Mikalson. Wauconda 1998, pp. 141—142.

[5] W. Burkert: "Eleusis." In: Idem: *Homo Necans*: *the Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth.* Trans. P. Bing. London 1983, p. 251.

Discussing one of the *errores* of pagan religions, that is worshiping elements (water in Egipt and earth in Phyrgia), which should be treated as the creation of God – Firmicus presents the most important, according to him, parts of myths of Osiris and Attis.

Firmicus states that Egyptians *in sacris suis quae mysteria vocant addunt tragica funera et funesta calamitatis metuendae certamina*,[6] which are inspired by the story of Isis, Osiris and Typhon (Seth).[7]

Typhon, the husband of Isis, learned that his wife had a sexual intercourse with her brother Osiris. Typhon killed Osiris, dismembered his body and then spilled his limbs on the banks of the Nile. After divorcing Typhon, Isis accompanied and assisted by Nephtys (her sister) and Anubis, founded the body parts of Osiris and buried them.

The Phrygians decided to commemorate the tragic love of their queen, and wanted by establishing the annual rites in honour of the earth, the mother of all things,[8] who took revenge on his young lover named Attis for unspecified *festus* (pride) by castrating and as a result of killing him. Then the queen's subjects, seeing her grief reported that Attis, whom they recently buried, has risen from the dead. After the incident, the queen ordered to erect temples in the honour of Attis, and the priests of his cult had to suffer in the same way as he did.

It is not known from what kind of sources Firmicus derived knowledge about content of Egyptian and Phrygian myths. The version of Osiridian myth invoked by the apologist differs from the one presented by Plutarch in *De Iside et Osiride* (according to Plutarch, Osiris brother and husband of Isis, had intercourse with Nephtys, who was Typhon's wife[9]). Frimicus could have drawn the Phrygian myth of Cybele and Attis from *Adversus nationes* by Arnobius, who originally adopted it from a theologian Timotheus, who, in turn, had dug it up *ex reconditis antiquitatum libris et ex intimis* […] *mysteriis*.[10]

Firmicus Maternus states that there were two very similar *physicae rationes* – allegorical interpretations that referred both to Osiridian and Phrygian myth:

> Defensores eorum volunt addere physicam rationem, frugum semina Osyrim dicentes esse, Isim terram Tyfonem calore. Et quia maturatae fruges calore ad vitam hominum colliguntur, et divisae a terrae consortio separantur, et

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[6] Mat., *De errore.*, 2: "But in their cults which they call mysteries they add tragical funerals and [fear-inspiring struggles]." Unless otherwise specified all English translations are quoted from Firmicus Maternus: *The Error of the Pagan Religions*. Translated and annotated by Clarence A. Forbes. New York 1970.

[7] Firmicus, in order to discredit and desacralize pagan beliefs, uses the favourite method of an apologist – euhemerism, according to which the pagan gods and goddesses were apotheosized kings and queens.

[8] Mat., *De errore.*, 3; Cybele is not referred to by name in Firmicus's speech.

[9] Plut., *De Isid.*, 12, 14.

[10] Arnob., *Adv.*, V, 1.

> rursus adpropinquante hieme seminantu, hanc volunt esse mortem Osyridis cum fruges recondunt, inventionem vero cum fruges genitalis terrae fomento conceptae annua rursus coeperint procreatione generari[11]

And in the case of Cybele and Attis:

> Amare terram volunt fruges, Attin vero hoc ipsum volunt esse, quod ex frugibus nascitur, poenam autem quam sustinuit hoc volunt esse, quod falce messor maturis frugibus facit. Mortem ipsum dicunt, quod semina collecta conduntur, vitam rursus quod iacta semina annuis vicibus reconduntur.[12]

We should not consider these interpretations as reducing the stories of Osiris and Attis only to a merely sort of protoscientific or etiological myth explaining the processes of vegetation, that were intentionally transcribed by Firmicus from other works, in order to reveal the futility of mysteries. Plutarch wrote about the role of Osiris as a fertility god, and his knowledge was based on the opinion of judicious priests.[13] However, there are also images from the period of New Kingdom, in which the body of Osiris grow cereal ears (so-called Grain-Osiris) symbolizing the newborn god.[14] These images are much more closer to the interpretation given by Firmicus, in which Osiris himself is described as "grain" (*frugum semina*). As for Attis, we can recall the testimony of Plutarch,[15] on which James G. Frazer based his interpretation of the myth of Attis.[16]

I suggest that the explanation of the myths cited by Firmicus should be seen in the historical context of religious change. It was the formation of specific, as we may call it – "pagan" monotheism on the basis of traditional and Oriental deities worship, which in the 4th century had already been highly developed. Multiple gods had acquired one face, the face of the sun-god. We can find the echoes of such a theology in *De errore*.

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[11] Mat., *De errore*., 2, 6–7: "[…] apologists insist on adding a Scientific Theory, saying that Osiris is the seed of growing things, Isis the earth, Typhon heat. And because growing things matured by heat are harvested to support the life of man, thus being separated and taken away from the companionship of the earth, and are sowed again as winter draws near, they maintain that it is the death of Osiris when they store away the produce, and it is the finding of Osiris when growing things, conceived by the fostering warmth of mother earth, again begin to be produce by the annual procreation."

[12] Ibidem, 3, 2–2: "The earth, they maintain, loves the corps, Attis is the very thing that grows from the crops, and the punishment which he suffered is what a harvester with his sickle does to the ripened crops. His death they interpret as the storing away of the collected seeds, his resurrection as the sprouting of the scattered seeds in the annual turn of the seasons."

[13] Plut., *De Isid*., 33.

[14] A. Niwiński: *Mity i symbole religijne Starożytnego Egiptu*. Warszawa 1984, p. 202.

[15] Plut., *De Isid*., 69.

[16] J. Alvar: *Romanising Oriental Gods: Myth, Salvation, and Ethics in the Cults of Cybele, Isis and Mithras*. Trans. R. Gordon. Leiden 2008, p. 68.

In chapter VIII of *De errore* Firmicus Maternus invokes the Sun that calls *omne genus humanum* to assembly. The purpose of the council is to explain to people meaninglessness of the heliolatry. The Sun in his speech complains about the fact that people fabricate many absurd stories about him:

> Quis vos caduci homines et per dies singulos summo deo variis generibus rebellantes, ad hoc tantum facinus impegit, ut profano nefariae cupiditatis errore et mori me dicatis arbitrio et vivere? Atque utinam usitato more vel uno genere vaesanae cogitationis vestrae figmenta procederent.[17]

Firmicus Maternus here indicates the susceptibility of solar cult to syncretism. In the first sentence, in which the Sun complains that people present him as the one who dies and lives is not likely for any specific deity. But a general tendency to equate, in the eastern cults, the god of vegetation who dies and is born again, which refers to the annual "return" of the sun and rebirth of life on earth instigated by him.

Then apologist indicates these gods who, in his opinion, are equated with the solar deities – Osiris, Attis and Dionisos:

> Alii me aput Aegyptum undis Nili et rapidis verticibus obstinato mentis furore submergunt, alii amputatis viribus plangunt, alii crudeli morte caesum aut in olla decoquunt, aut septem veribus corporis mei membra lacerata sub figunt. Qui paululum mihi placida fuerit oratione blanditus, quadriiugi currus aurigam me esse confingit.[18]

The identification of Osiris with the Sun began in ancient Egypt. According to Franz Cumont, Osiris as a solar deity, was worshipped in the Egyptian city of Abydos.[19] But this god was not likely associated with the annual cycle of the sun, but with its daily course across the sky. Also Mircea Eliade mentions about solarization of Osiris in the times of New Kingdom and that he was equated with the young Re.[20] Plutarch was aware that Osiris had been called the Sun (εἰσὶ γὰρ οἱ τὸν Ὄσιριν ἄντικρυς ἥλιον εἶναι).[21] He also describes the Searching of Osiris festival

[17] Mat., *De errore*., 8, 1: "Mortal men, rebellious in sundry ways every single day against the Supreme Deity – who has impelled you to such a height of wickedness as to assert willfully in your pagan error of sinful passion that I both die and live? If the figments of your insane thinking would just develop in an ordinary way or in one fashion only."

[18] Ibidem, 8, 2: "Some in obstinate frenzy of mind drown me in the waves and rapid eddies of the Nile in Egypt, others cut out my manhood and mourn the loss, others kill me with a cruel death and either cook me in a pot or fix the sundered limbs of my body on seven spits. One who has flattered me a little with winsome talk thereupon makes up the story that I am the driver of a chariot and four."

[19] F. Cumont: *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*. Charleston 2007, p. 98.

[20] M. Eliade: *Historia wierzeń i idei religijnych*, Vol. 1: *Od epoki kamienia do misteriów eleuzyńskich*. Warszawa 2007, pp. 126–129.

[21] Plut., *De Isid.*, 52.

(ζήτησις Ὀσίριδος), which was celebrated during the winter solstice, and had been connected to the cycle of the sun. It is interesting, that Firmicus Maternus refers to another festivity, the Finding of Osiris (*Inventio Osiridis*), which he surely may have witnessed in Rome. The apologist relates that during the ceremony *in aditis habent idolum Osyridis sepultum, hoc annuis luctibus plangunt, radunt capita* […] *lacerant lacertos veterum vulnerum resecant cicatrices.*[22] After that the believers *fingunt se lacerati corporis reliquias quaerere, et cum invenerint quasi sopitis luctibus gaudent*,[23] exclamating: εὑρήκαμεν, συγχαίρομεν.[24] The rituals described were a part of the public mystery cult of Osiris, we also know that there were the hidden mysteries and during them, the initiates – as we may suspect – acquired arcane knowledge concerning the true meaning of the Osirisian myth.[25] But what if someone did not have access to the secret chambers of the temple. What kind of massage could he get from the public ceremonies related with *Inventio*? We can imagine that at this stage (and if Osiris was commonly recognized as a solar deity), *cultor* could be illuminated with the light of new hope. It is possible that he could have been taught about Isis/the Earth that was fertilized by the sunrays of Osiris/the Sun, thus beginning the new cycle of life-giving.

In the case of identifying Attis with the Sun, we have less sources at our disposal. Associating the Phrygian adolescent with the sun god Sol was a concept born in the Roman culture in the 4th century AD. In the inscription from 374 AD, made by the order of Clodius Hermoganius Caesarius, the god Attis is named by an agnomen traditionally associated with the sun deities, *invictus* (*Attidi Menotyranno Invicto*).[26] We may find some traces, on how the solar theology was created and associated with Attis in Firmicus Maternus. First, it is noteworthy that the apologist is the only ancient author that speaks about bringing Attis back to life (*revivere*[27]). Secondly, the Sun in his speech found in the chapter VIII, emphasizes the fact of god's castration. The emperor Julian, in his *Hymn to the mother of gods*, associates Attis with Helios. Attis is portrayed there as a demiurge, who creates the material world. However, he must castrate himself in order to prevent chaos caused by an excess of matter from happening. In Julian's hymn, however, Helios is the god responsible for maintenance of restored order.[28]

Sun in his speech indicates who is to blame for misrepresenting facts about his role in the universe created by God:

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[22] Mat. *De errore.*, 2, 3: "Buried in their shrines they keep an image of Osiris, over which they mourn in anniversary lamentations, wherein they shave their heads […]. Also they […] tear their upper arms, and break open the scars of old wounds."

[23] Ibidem: "They feign that they are questing for the remains of the mutilated corpse, and rejoice on finding them, as if their sorrows were lulled."

[24] Ibidem, 1, 9.

[25] F. Cumont: *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*…, pp. 104–105.

[26] *Corpvs Monvmentorvm Religionis Dei Menis*. Ed. E. Lane. Leiden 1971, p. 15.

[27] Mat., *De errore.*

[28] J. Alvar: *Romanising Oriental Gods*…, p. 73.

> Inimicus dei est qui haec aut cogitavit aut fincxit, nec facinus eius simplex aut usitata poena comitatur, qui secreta profanis persuasionibus polluit, qui de praeclaro opere dei tanta confingit.[29]

There is agreement among scholars that expression *inimicus Dei* refers to Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry, who wrote treatise about solar syncretism entitled Περὶ Ἡλίου. Although the mentioned book is lost, on the basis of the works of other Neoplatonists including Firmicus Maternus' *Mathesis*,[30] we can reconstruct its content. The Sun-god, according to the Neoplatonist,[31] is hypostasy of Suprime Diety – the One (ἄρρητος δύναμις), and he occupies the highest position in the hierarchy of cosmic gods (ἐγκόσμιοι), who are responsible for creation, animation and harmonization of the world.

In conclusion, if we bring together chapters II, III (myth of Osiris and myth of Attis) and chapter VIII (speech of the Sun) of *De errore*, we see how these two gods – Osiris and Attis – were incorporated into theological system of the new Roman public religion in the making. For today we are aware that solar religion based on the Neoplatonic theology had a theoretical basis but never became public.

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[29] Mat., *De errore.*, 8, 2: "A foe of God is he who either thought up or dreamed up these ideas, and no simple or ordinary punishment attends the crime of the person who pollutes [holy] secrets by profane notions, making up such lies about glorious work of God."

[30] Mat., *Math.*, 5 proem., 3; 8, 1–3.

[31] Julian Oratio IV; Sallustios Περὶ Θεῶν καὶ Κόσμου.

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Fatifer, mortifer, and *letalis* in the Roman Culture

Abstract: The aim of this article is to reveal how the adjectives *fatifer*, *mortifer*, and *letalis* function in the ancient Roman literature. Interpretative problems as well as etymology of the title adjectives were discussed on the basis of selected fragments of texts. The significant emphasis was put on the collocations with nouns such as *ensis* (a sword), *ferrum* (a sword, an iron), *iaculum* (a javelin), *arcus* (a bow) and *harundo* (an arrow) in order to create a catalogue of the weapons described with epithet "lethal."

Key words: death, lethal, Roman literature

The variety of ancient texts that are fortunately extant, as well as all research carried out by literature enthusiasts and experts, allow us not only to discover the history of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, but also get to know a wide array of both grammatical and lexical structures typical of that times.

Studying the fragments of ancient texts, we come across the adjectives (apart from other linguistic forms) which not only highlighted the features of the described objects, but were also a confirmation of authors' unquestionable talent and ingeniousness. Besides the adjectives which describe the appearance of weapon quite literally, for instance *longus* (long), *brevis* (short), *acutus* (sharp), *uncus* (curved), it is worth pointing out to these which carry metaphoric meaning. Their role is to make the descriptions more vivid and, at the same time, to draw attention even of the most sophisticated readers. Furthermore, it should be stressed that adjectives carrying negative connotations make it easy for a reader to feel a prickle of excitement.

The first adjective worth mentioning herein is *fatifer.* According to the dictionary definition, it means something lethal, fatal or disastrous. Therefore, at first glance, the negative connotations are obvious. If we make an effort to uncover its etymological foundation, we find the verb *ferre* (to carry, to hold) and the noun *fatum* (fate). For the ancients *Fatum* was a divinity of destiny and was directly connected with a belief in inevitability of future events. Nevertheless, in the Roman culture there was also a particular margin for cases defined as *fortuna* or *casus*.[1] The word itself is also etymologically linked with the verb *fari* and initially meant "the word of god," that was understood as irreversible god's will.[2] However, it is necessary to stress that the mentioned god's will was not always fatal. That is the reason why the adjective *fatifer* can be interpreted simply as carrying destiny and does not necessarily pertain to death – *mors.* The negative meaning of the adjective in a military context results from the person who wields a weapon and whose task was to annihilate an enemy and take opponent's life. A fragment of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* describing a fierce combat between Centeus (the son of Elatus) and centaurs exemplifies the above:

> Capuloque tenus demisit in armos
> **ensem fatiferum** caecamque in viscera movit
> versavitque manum vulnusque in vulnere fecit.[3]

In the preceding verses of this work Ovid mentions that five centaurs had already died at the hands of Centeus. Meanwhile, he – much to his enemies' surprise – came out of the skirmish unscathed. He was forced by his insolent word to deal a final, deadly blow to Latreus (the last one from centaurs, who decided to fight with him). The furious centaurs came running soon after. They chose as their main priority to avenge their companion's death and kill his murderer. They joined forces to crush Centeus by a huge pile of trees. The term *fatifer ensis* can undoubtedly be translated as a "deadly sword." Each blow given by fighting Centeus turned out to be fatal one for his enemies.

The adjective *fatalis*, used by Statius in the books 6 and 11 of *The Thebaid*, has the same etymological origin. In the first instance it was collocated with the noun *harundo*:

> Campum emensa breui **fatalis** ab arbore tacta,
> horrendum uisu, per quas modo fugerat auras,

[1] S. Śnieżewski: *Wojna, pokój i bogowie w starożytnym Rzymie.* Kraków 2006, p. 174.

[2] P. Grimal: "Fatum." In: Idem: *Słownik mitologii greckiej i rzymskiej.* Wrocław 1990, p. 98.

[3] Ov. *Met.* 12, 492–494: "He drove his deadly sword in the other's side, and there in his vitals twisted and turned the buried weapon, inflicting wound within wound" (trans. F.J. Miller).

uenit **harundo** retro uersumque a fine tenorem
pertulit, et notae iuxta ruit ora pharetrae.[4]

The main character of the quoted fragment is Adrastus, who commanded the Argive forces in the military expedition against Thebes. He was encouraged to take part in funeral games for the dead Opheltes killed by a snake. Adrastus's task during the competition was to shoot an arrow and hit the target placed on a particular tree. *Fatifer harundo* turned out not to be a fatal arrow in this case, but rather ominous one. While leaders put the blame for the failed arrow flight on unfavourable weather conditions (a fog or a adverse wind), others regarded it as an omen foretelling the commander's sad return from the war.

We deal with a completely different situation in book 11, that is a turning point in the epic. It is a depiction of duel between brothers – Polyneices and Eteocles – who were acting under the influence of the Furies' (Megaera and Tisiphone's) persuasion. The immediate context here is the following: Polyneices has just said goodbye to his wife, father-in-law, and Mycenae, and now he decides to take a steed and an armour from the Fury:

Coeperat et leni senior mulcere furentem
adloquio: scidit orsa nouo terrore cruenta
Eumenis, alipedemque citum **fataliaque arma**
protinus, Inachii uultus expressa Pherecli,
obtulit ac fidas exclusit casside uoces.[5]

Fatalia arma means here fatal, disastrous arms. The duel was instigated by Polyneices, who struck his brother. Eteocles fell to the ground and while pretending dead stubbed Polyneices with a sword when the latter bent in order to defeat the enemy definitely. Both brothers were killed in the fight and Oedipus' curse came true in that way.

In the book 6 of *Metamorphoses* Ovid used the adjective *fatifer* in collocation with the noun *ferrum* (which, in numerous cases in the Roman literature, is an equivalent for terms *gladius* and *ensis*, meaning a sword). This book contains the myths in which a metamorphosis is a punishment sent by gods. In every case it was inflicted on humans for their insolence. Apart from Ariadne, Marsyas, and the Lycian peasants, also Niobe was penalized. She boasted that because of having such numerous offspring (most frequently recurring information says about seven sons and seven

[4] Stat. *Theb.* 6, 938–941: "The fateful arrow in a moment measured the plain and struck the tree, and then – awful to behold! – came back through the air it but now had traversed and turning homeward from the goal kept on its way, and fell by the mouth of its well-known quiver" (trans. J.H. Mozley).

[5] Stat. *Theb.* 11, 196–200: "And the aged king had begun to soothe his rage with gentle words: but the cruel Fury broke off his speech with new terrors, and straightway, in the shape of Inachian Phereclus, brought his swift wing-footed steed and fatal arms, and with his helmet closed his ears to trusty counsels" (trans. J.H. Mozley).

daughters), she was better than Leto. That was the reason why the goddess demanded of Apollo and Artemis that they took vengeance and slayed Niobe's children. After the death of Ismenus, Sipylus Phaedimus, and Tantalus, it was Alphenor's turn:

> Adspicit Alphenor laniataque pectora plangens
> advolat, ut gelidos conplexibus adlevet artus,
> inque pio cadit officio; nam Delius illi
> intima **fatifero** rupit praecordia **ferro**.[6]

Alphenor is killed by the death-dealing steel, the arrowhead shot by Apollo. Reading the Silius Italicus's work, we can find the same noun collocated with the adjective *mortifer* this time. In book 10 of *Punica* the author describes the story of the Moorish hunters who surrounded a den of lion cubs, which were not strong enough to defend themselves. At the very beginning Hannibal was parrying the attack by his shield, but later decided to kill the warriors:

> **Mortiferum** inde manu properantem uellere **ferrum**
> pilo Volsonem namque hoc de strage iacentum
> fors dabat adfixa sternit per tegmina nare.[7]

Volso died of a javelin blow, a fatal steel – *mortifero ferro* – dealt by Hannibal. The etymological source of the adjective *mortifer* need to be discerned in the noun *mors* (a death, an extermination) and in the verb *ferre.* It is also worth stressing the fact that this adjective is very often collocated by ancient authors with the nouns such as: *bellum* (a war), *poculum* (a glass, a beverage), *aestus* (a heat) and *morbum* (an illness). In each case the meaning of the adjective is determined by its situational context. Furthermore, it is very often used in a collocation with the noun *vulnus*. We can find the engaging example in Livy's *The History of Rome*:

> Prima excepta a circumstantibus tela; sustineri deinde uis nequit;
> consul **mortifero uulnere** ictus cadit, fusique circa omnes.[8]

In book 2 of his work Livy describes a clash with the Etruscans' army, during which Gnaeus Manlius died. In spite of the eventual Romans' victory, they deplored the death of the two outstanding consuls: Manlius and Quintus Fabius.

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[6] Ov. *Met.* 6, 248–251: "Alphenor saw them die, and beating his breast in agony, he ran to lift up their cold bodies in his arms; and in this pious duty he fell; for Apollo pierced him through the midriff with death-dealing steel" (trans. F.J. Miller).

[7] Sil. 10, 142–144: "Volso's turn came next. He was trying to pluck forth the fatal steel, when Hannibal laid him low, piercing his nostrils through his shield with a *pilum* which he had chanced to pick up from a heap of corpses" (trans. J.D. Duff).

[8] Liv. 2, 47, 3: "Their first discharge of javelins was parried by the soldiers who surrounded him, but after that there was no withstanding their violence. The consul fell, mortally wounded, and all about him fled" (trans. B.O. Foster).

The adjectives *letifer* and *letalis* are also etymologically connected with death. They are derived from the Latin term *letum*, which means death, damage, or destruction. The examples of its usage can be found, among others, in Virgil. In book 4 of the *Aeneid* he tells us the story of Dido and Aeneas, who fell in love with each other by gods' will. The author interestingly compares the female lover to a deer stabbed by a lethal arrow:

> Uritur infelix Dido totaque uagatur
> urbe furens, qualis coniecta cerua sagitta,
> quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit
> pastor agens telis liquitque uolatile ferrum
> nescius: illa fuga siluas saltusque peragrat
> Dictaeos; haeret lateri **letalis harundo**.[9]

Their love story ended tragically. Aeneas, who wanted to obey the gods' will, left Carthage. The distraught woman committed suicide. She had ordered to build a stake and threw herself into the flames.

In book 10 Vergil used in turn the adjective *letifer. Letifer arcus* (a deadly bow) was a part of Clusium and the city of Cosae inhabitants' weaponry:

> Massicus aerata princeps secat aequora Tigri,
> sub quo mille manus iuuenum, qui moenia Clusi
> quique urbem liquere Cosas, quis tela sagittae
> gorytique leues umeris et **letifer arcus**.[10]

Another fragment with the adjective *letalis* can be found in book 3 of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*. There we find a description of a clash between crews during a naval battle:

> Multi inopes teli **iaculum letale** reuolsum
> uolneribus traxere suis et uiscera laeua
> oppressere manu, ualidos dum praebeat ictus
> sanguis et, hostilem cum torserit, exeat, hastam.[11]

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[9] Verg. *A*. 4, 68–73: "Wretched Dido burns, and wanders frenzied through the city, like an unwary deer struck by an arrow, that a shepherd hunting with his bow has fired at from a distance, in the Cretan woods, leaving the winged steel in her, without knowing. She runs through the woods and glades of Dicte: the lethal shaft hangs in her side" (trans. A.S. Kline).

[10] Verg. *A*. 10, 166–169: "Massicus cut the waters at their head, in the bronze-armoured Tiger, a band of a thousand warriors under him, leaving the walls of Clusium, and the city of Cosae, whose weapons are arrows, held in light quivers over their shoulders, and deadly bows" (trans. A.S. Kline).

[11] Luc. 3, 676–679: "Many a man, for want of a missile, plucked forth the fatal javelin from his own wounds and clutched his vitals with the left hand, that the blood might have time to deal a sturdy and hurl back the enemy's spear before it flowed forth" (trans. J.D. Duff).

Iaculum letale in this case is a fatal shell or a javelin, which was disastrous for the opponents.

The adjective *letalis*, similarly to previously mentioned *fatifer*, not always means "lethal." Its connotations with death very often depend on numerous factors, also cultural ones. The nouns which are preceded with that adjective more than once become harbingers of unhappy events as well as unpredictable difficulties. The example can be a fragment of *The Golden Ass* (or *Metamorphoses*), where Apuleius used the adjective *letalis* in collocation with the noun *difficultas* (difficulty):

> Sed cum primum praedicti iugi conterminos locos appulit, videt rei vastae **letalem difficultatem**.[12]

Psyche was sent by Venus for a bottle of water from a dark stream, which had its source on the top of a steep mountain. The peak turned out to be very slippery, therefore a moment's inattention or any sudden move could lead to death. Despite the imminent danger Psyche completed the task. In that case the adjective *letalis* did not concern difficulty that leads to death, but rather emphasised a possibility of a tragic end.

The similar interpretative problem occurs in book 10 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Its main character is Myrrha, Adonis' mother. The child was born as a result of the incestuous relationship of Myrrha with her father, king Cinyras. She was torn apart by contradictory emotions and doubts to the bitter end, but the love to her father turned out to be stronger:

> Ter pedis offensi signo est revecata, ter omen
> Funereus bubo **letali carmine** fecit.[13]

In the quoted fragment the adjective *letalis* is used in collocation with the noun *carmen* (a song). However, in this context it does not mean a lethal song, but an ominous one. It is worth taking into consideration the fact that a screech-owl was regarded as an ominous bird in Roman culture. That undoubtedly could explain the usage of the adjective *letalis.* Myrrha, feeling a deep aversion to her emotions and passions, was trying to commit suicide. Yet she was brought back to life by her minder, whom she confided her problems. Thanks to a plotted intrigue Myrrha – while the Cinyras' wife was absent – spent a few nights with her father. One night the king felt a desire to know who his mistress was. Having recognized his own daughter, got hold of a sword ready to kill her. Myrrha escaped and a divinity answered her request for rescue. She was metamorphosed into a tree.

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[12] Apul. *Met.* 6, 14, 1: "When she was come up to the ridge of the hill, she perceived that it was very deadly and impossible to bring it to pass" (trans. W. Adlington).

[13] Ov. *Met.* 10, 452–454: "Thrice was Myrrha stopped by the omen of the stumbling foot; thrice did the funeral screech-owl warn her by his uncanny cry" (trans. F.J. Miller).

The epithets *fattier, mortifer*, and *letalis*, which are willingly used by the ancient authors, undoubtedly deserve readers' attention. Thanks to their negative connotations they capture the imagination illustrating both, war reality and terror of the events at the same time. Moreover, they reveal authors' aspiration to originality as well as to uniqueness. That is why metaphors in texts acquire not only instrumental but also aesthetic significance. According to Aristotle's theory it becomes a form of noticing (typical of bright people) a resemblance between words meaning and objects which are described by these terms. Using the terms and views which are unattainable for human senses, it creates curiosities, which express author's feelings. What is more, it is a valuable instrument of intellectual in-depth understanding of the world and achieving of its contemporary ideals.

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Tuffarsi nel fiume dell'oblio
La percezione metaforica della morte nell'antichità greco-romana

> Dimenticanza assoluta e duratura: involve tutte le cose l'obblio nella sua notte.
>
> Ugo Foscolo

Abstract: This analysis of selected fragments of classical Greek and Latin literature in the linguistic and historical perspective presents the tradition of comprehending death with the help of conceptual metaphors in opposition to an aware choice for unconventional poetic and philosophic solutions. The subject is the evolution of some real definitions of death and the etymological interpretation of its poetic counterparts, especially those related to oblivion (λήθη; oblīvĭo, etc.).

Key words: death, oblivion, metaphor

La morte rappresenta una fine che nel nostro mondo è riservata a ogni essere vivente, senza proroga né scampo. Non c'è da meravigliarsi quindi che questo fenomeno, come gli altri ugualmente importanti aspetti della civiltà, accompagna l'umanità sin dai tempi immemorabili in tutte le sue possibili accezioni, trovando riflessione in filosofia, teologia, letteratura, arte e in altre aree ad esso collegate. Sia manifestazione della morte, sia la sua percezione universale si condiziona da appartenenze culturali e sacre non solo del singolo individuo umano, ma di intere civiltà e cambiamenti storico-geografici formano una specie di sfondo aggiungendo elementi mancanti all'intera immagine.

Qui di seguito sarà presentata un'analisi abbastanza generica di brani scelti degli autori greci e romani in termini storico-linguistici. Essa mostra una palese vi-

sione della percezione tradizionale della morte attraverso le metafore concettuali, ponendola in contrasto con una scelta consapevole a favore di soluzioni poetico-filosofiche non convenzionali. L'oggetto dello studio è pertanto l'evoluzione della definizione specifica della morte e l'interpretazione etimologica degli equivalenti poetici, soprattutto quelli associati con la *dimenticanza* (λήθη; oblīvĭo, ecc.).

Per una migliore comprensione del tema è necessario esporre un elenco di principali definizioni convenzionali della morte, che si sono formate nel corso di un'evoluzione storica e intellettuale delle culture nel Mediterraneo. In particolare, la nostra attenzione si concentrerà su due aree geografiche e culturali, ossia sull'antica Grecia e l'Impero Romano, a causa della loro determinante influenza esercitata sulle successive tradizioni culturali del vecchio continente. Parlando delle definizioni convenzionali, si intuiscono piuttosto chiari esempi di denominazione, derivanti dall'esperienza umana o da descrizione della realtà. Per tracciare un dettaglio più preciso alla specificità di ciascuna delle voci, esse saranno analizzate nei seguenti gruppi tematici:

– i segni della morte – mancanza del *battito* di cuore o del *respiro*, *rigidità* del corpo (*rigor mortis*), *raffreddamento* (*frigor mortis*) e il *pallore* (*palor mortis*);
– i generi di morte – *morte naturale* (θάνατος, *mors*) e *morte violenta* (*nex*, *occisio*, *interficio*).

Il passo successivo rappresenta una sequenza di esempi che mostrano la visione metaforica della morte alla luce delle principali teorie sulla metafora, tra le quali la terminologia specialistica, incominciando da Aristotele per arrivare poi agli autori contemporanei, come Lakoff e Johnson.

Nel condurre questa ricerca uno strumento molto prezioso e un punto di partenza è stato lo studio di Carl D. Buck *A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages*, che non solo fornisce un elenco dettagliato delle parole chiave che descrivono la morte, ma offre anche un quadro generale di simbologia della morte che compare nelle lingue indo-europee: la morte come *caduta*, *fine*, *dimenticanza*; la morte come *il buio*, *l'abisso*; la morte come *il sonno* (ὕπνος, *lethargus*, *sopor*, *somnus*) e con altre metafore ancora. Attenzione particolare si focalizza innanzitutto su tre emergenti aspetti della morte – viaggio, oblio e sonno.

Confrontando le definizioni della morte generali provenienti dalle fonti classiche e dai dizionari etimologici e attingendo da esempi concreti, ci avviciniamo lentamente all'apice di questo lavoro – la percezione universale della morte, ricostruendo la trasformazione di terminologia stereotipica nelle simboliche forme poetiche precisamente espresse. In modo particolare, porremo attenzione sulla transitoria esternazione della morte dell'individuo, nell'attesa di metempsicosi, poiché solamente destinando all'*oblio* la vecchia esistenza si può rinascere.

Il primo gruppo di parole concernenti l'accertamento della morte più spesso si riscontra nel vocabolario medico. L'esperienza offerta dalla medicina tradizionale ci insegna che il corpo dell'individuo morto debba essere fermo, rigido e pallido.

In termini medici questa condizione è nota come *rigor mortis* (rigidità della morte) che assieme all'assenza del battito cardiaco e del respiro appartiene ai segni più evidenti della morte. Questo termine però non sempre si applica esclusivamente a un corpo morto. La nozione "catalessi", ossia specifica e particolare rigidità muscolare, proviene dal lemma tardo latino *catalepsis*, derivante dalla parola greca κατάληψις[1] 'inabilità', che a sua volta deriva dal καταλαμβάνω 'prendere possesso di qualcosa'. Si tratta della cosiddetta paralisi temporanea, in cui una persona improvvisamente diventa insensibile, non risponde a stimoli esterni, avendo gli occhi aperti o chiusi. Molto spesso è una manifestazione di epilessia o di schizofrenia ma può anche essere provocata da un'ipnosi profonda. Da un punto di vista medico, la catalessi a volte viene interpretata come una morte apparente, ma la medesima radice compare ugualmente nelle opere dei rappresentanti della filosofia stoica[2], in cui la nozione di φαντασία καταληπτική, 'immaginazione percettiva', si basa su un approccio razionale di un oggetto e sulla sua manifesta conformità con se stesso. Per gli Stoici rappresentava il criterio della verità, che in seguito è stato contestato dagli scettici. In etologia riscontriamo il comportamento mimetico degli animali (*tanatosi*)[3], i quali per mezzo di uno stato catalettico volontario si difendono dai predatori fingendosi morti. Questa idea di rigidità ci conduce alle parole latine provenienti dalla radice IE **ster*-, che definisce la paralisi temporanea o permanente – ex. lat. *torpĕre* 'essere rigido, non sentire nulla, morire', che ha un suo equivalente nel greco στερεός 'rigido, duro'[4]; e dalla collaterale radice **(s)teup*- 'colpire, picchiare' da cui si diramano il lemma greco ἐτύπη (aoristo pass. 3 ss.) da τύπτω 'colpire', il latino *stupeo* 'essere colpito, pietrificarsi' e la sua forma sostantivale *stupor* 'stupore, torpore'. Un esempio di paralisi, pietrificazione dell'essere umano, si presenta nelle *Metamorfosi* di Ovidio[5], nel frammento seguente: «devorat ipse dolor, duroque simillima saxo / torpet», in cui Ecuba, colpita da un dolore enorme si è pietrificata a causa della morte dei propri figli. In questo modo intorpidimento, rigidità, bassa temperatura corporea e pallore diventano l'equivalente del morire o di morte apparente, simulata, oppure di stato transitorio somigliante alla morte (*stupor*).

In greco abbiamo un vasto ventaglio di termini affini per definire la morte: verbo (ἀπο)θνήσκω (aor. ἔθανον) – 'morire, perire' e 'ρεθνεώς, ρεθνηκώς, part. perf. derivante da esso e il sostantivo θάνατος che designa la 'morte' sia naturale sia violenta. È un gruppo di parole che presenta il decesso come una caduta,

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[1] Hippokrates: *De officina medici* 9, LCL 1928; Isocrates: *Evagoras* 9,69; cfr. Galenus: *De pulsibus ad tirones* 12 (VIII 485 Kühn): Οί δὲ τῶν κατόχων σφυγμοὶ, κατόχους γὰρ καὶ κατεχομένους ἐκάλουν αὐτοὺς οἱ παλαιοί, κατοχὴν δὲ καὶ κατά-ληψιν οἱ νεώτεροι τὸ πάθος ὀνομάζουσιν […].

[2] Cfr. H. Von Arnim: *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (= SVF), III, fr. 544–656.

[3] S. Milius: "Why play dead?". *Science News* 2006, Vol. 170 (18), p. 280–282.

[4] J. Pokorny: *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (= IEW), 2.632, Bern–München, 1959–1969.

[5] Ovid., *Met*. XIII 540–541.

una dipartita. In Omero (*Il*. 1.243), leggiamo la descrizione di una morte simile: «πολλοὶ ὑφ᾽Ἕκτορος … θνήσκοντες πίπτωσι», 'molti *cadranno, uccisi* da Ettore'. La parola θνήσκω 'sparire, morire' la incontriamo nel suo significato simbolico in Eschilo[6]: «δειματούμενοι λόγοι πεδάρσιοι θχρώσκουσι θνήσκοντες μάτεν» – 'espressioni timide si sollevavano in alto, scomparendo inutilmente'. L'autore presenta la scomparsa di frasi insignificanti e paurose tracciando l'immagine della loro simbolica agonia.

Un'altra radice associata con la morte **nek-* 'uccidere, annientare', ha interessanti connotazioni in greco, dove incrociamo una numerosa serie delle sue manifestazioni: quella negativa – νεκρός 'morto, cadavere', come quella positiva – νέκταρ 'nettare, bevanda degli dei, che dà l'immortalità'[7]. Riferimenti a questa meravigliosa bevanda, conosciuta anche sotto il nome di *ambrosia*[8], si possono trovare in vari autori classici, in particolare come attinenza alla libagione servita sulle mense degli dei nell'"età dell'oro", menzionata per la prima volta da Esiodo in *Opere e giorni*, poi nelle *Baccanti*[9] di Euripide, nella *Repubblica* di Platone, nelle *Bucoliche* di Virgilio, nelle *Metamorfosi*[10] di Ovidio e da altri antichi ancora. Sulla definizione di "età dell'oro" diversi autori sono d'accordo l'uno con l'altro, chiamando in tale modo un periodo, in cui le persone "come gli dei passavano il loro tempo […] lontano dalle tensioni e miseria"[11], però senza raggiungere mai una piena conformità riguardo al suo collocamento in un determinato periodo della storia. Questa meravigliosa bevanda che offre la vita eterna a volte si associava anche con una miscela di miele, latte e vino, che era usata nel culto rituale dei morti, come apprendiamo da alcuni passaggi dell'*Iliade*[12] e dell'*Odissea*[13]. Derivato dalla medesima radice il verbo latino *neco*, *-are* 'uccidere', si riferisce a una morte violenta, o intenzionale, come nel caso di autodifésa. Relazione di un simile fatto riporta Cicerone nel *Pro Milone*, il quale scrive: "Ebbene, se vi è un qualche caso in cui si può giustamente uccidere, e ce ne sono molti, è certamente non solo giusto, ma anche necessario difendersi dalla violenza con la violenza"[14].

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[6] Aeschylus: *Ch*. 846.

[7] G. Tokarski: *Lexicon Indoeuropaeum Fundamentale Latini Sermones*. Roma 1999, **nek-*, p. 145; il secondo segmento compositivo *-tar* riporta alla radice **ter-* 'attraversare'.

[8] Il vocabolo ἀμβροσία 'cibo degli immortali', è un derivato di ἄμβροτος 'immortale', da βροτός 'mortale' con il prefisso negativo, contiene la medesima radice del latino *mors*, *-rtis* (**mert-/mort-/mrt*, preceduto da *α-* privativo con la vocale anaptittica tra le sonoranti /m/ e /r/; cfr. gr. *aner, andros*). Cfr. P. Chantraine: *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*. Vol. 1. Paris 1968, pp. 197–198.

[9] Euripides: *Bacchae* 142 ss.

[10] Ovid., *Met*. I, 111.

[11] Hes., *Op.* 109 ss.

[12] *Il.* XXIII, 170 ss.

[13] *Od.* XI, 27, XXIV, 67 ss.

[14] Cic., *Mil*. IV ss.

Esempi di cui sopra, indubbiamente non annettono nulla di nuovo alla percezione simbolica della morte, perché il loro ruolo si limita solo a documentare una realtà così poco eterogenea e l'uso corretto dei termini scelti in una situazione concreta. Nel nostro linguaggio sia quello quotidiano sia quel poetico così spesso ci si ricorre all'uso delle figure metaforiche che con il tempo il loro significato originale si perde.

In che modo quindi si può passare dai termini concreti a quelli metaforici, e nell'ambito di questi ultimi – dalle metafore del linguaggio di tutti i giorni alle espressioni simboliche del linguaggio poetico? Per iniziare questo percorso dovremmo adoperare uno dei trattamenti più comuni, ossia la personificazione e ontologizzazione del mondo circostante[15]. Prima però occorrerebbe forse fare una breve introduzione alla descrizione, uso e tipologia della metafora in generale, giungendo via via agli esempi che nello specifico rappresentano i fini di questo studio.

Le prime nozioni riguardanti la metafora si trovano già nelle opere di Aristotele, che soprattutto nella *Poetica* ci lascia un'interpretazione piuttosto dettagliata. Secondo Aristotele il senso della metafora consiste nel "dare a una cosa un nome che appartiene ad un'altra cosa"[16] e deriva dall'uso di un termine estraneo in uno specifico ambiente concettuale, il quale spostandovi il significato causa conflitto. In un altro passo pone in evidenza l'abilità creativa dell'autore e della metafora, dicendo: "«Nuovo conio» è il termine che, mai usato da alcuno, il poeta stesso istituisce"[17]. Per riassumere quanto che è stato detto prima, possiamo solo concordare con Gaspare Mura che "la metafora ha la capacità di assorbire insieme le istanze della poesia e le esigenze metodologiche della riflessione scientifica […]"[18].

Vediamo dunque dove e in quale modo la morte si presenta nei significati legati all'*oblio*. Nel *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*[19] si trova una vasta gamma di voci provenienti dalla stessa radice. Ad esempio, lo Pseudo Apuleo menziona *lete*, *lethusa* chiamando così il papavero selvatico, probabilmente come riferimento alle sponde del fiume Lete in cui cresceva questa pianta; Varrone usa il termine 'leto'[20] (dal gr. λήθη 'morte') per delineare la dimenticanza; Prisciano fa un passo più avanti descrivendo questo termine così: «letum dicitur, quod delet vitam»[21]. Tutte le voci provengono per lo più dalle opere concernenti la grammatica, anche se per

[15] Cfr. R. Langacker: *Obserwacje i rozważania na temat zjawiska subiektyfikacji*. Kraków 2005.

[16] Arist., *Po.* I, 457 B; cfr. anche *Rh.* III, 10–11.

[17] Arist., *Po.* I, 458 A.

[18] G. Mura: *Pensare la parola. Per una filosofia dell'incontro.* Roma 2001, p. 138. Cfr. P. Ricoeur: *La metafora viva. Dalla retorica alla poetica: per un linguaggio di rivelazione*. Trad. a cura di G. Grampa. Milano 1981.

[19] TLL = *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, editus iussu et auctoritate consilii ab accademicis societatibusque diversarum nationum electi, Stuttgart–Leipzig 1910 – [ab anno 1991: Stuttgart-Leipzig].

[20] Varro, *LL* 7, 42.

[21] Priscian., *Inst. gram.* II 529, 20.

la prima volta il vocabolo λήθη emerge dalle opere di Esiodo (*Teogonia* e *Opere e giorni*). Inizialmente indica il nome della figlia della dea Eris che spesso viene ricordata come la sorella della Morte (Θάνατος) e del Sonno Ὕπνος). Però già nel X libro della *Repubblica* e nel *Fedro* di Platone si nomina Λήθη[22] – il fiume della dimenticanza, che si trova nel regno dei morti. Nei dialoghi di Platone il retroterra mitico è introdotto come una sorta di supplemento del ragionamento filosofico e dell'argomentazione logica. Ecco perché Platone nelle opere citate sopra riproduce la visione dell'oltretomba e del sistema idrografico del mondo sotterraneo, per la sua descrizione attingendo dal XI canto dell'*Odissea* di Omero, dove essa è esposta come tradizionale meta delle anime *post mortem*. È un posto buio e terribile dove scorrono le acque dei fiumi Stige, Cocito, Acheronte, Flegetonte e Lete. L'anima per raggiungere il mondo dei morti deve attraversare tutti quei fiumi, ma l'unico modo per farlo è chiedere aiuto a Caronte[23] (ψυχοπομπός, trasportatore di anime) pagandogli un obolo. Nel più celebre dei suoi racconti escatologici – *Il mito di Er*, Platone mostra il destino delle anime che separandosi dal corpo dopo la morte viaggiano verso l'ultimo giudizio. La loro vita precedente e tutte le azioni buone o cattive devono essere giudicate in modo equo. Alle anime buone il giudizio veniva scritto su una lavagnetta posta sul petto, dopo di ché si diceva loro di andare a destra in alto attraverso un foro nel cielo, mentre le anime cattive dovevano procedere a sinistra e verso il basso. Quindi le anime si incamminavano attraverso una valle vuota e afosa, facendo una sosta sul fiume Lete per berne dell'acqua[24]. L'acqua del fiume aveva le proprietà di far dimenticare tutto quello che era accaduto nella vita di prima[25]. Era ragionevole quindi moderare l'assunzione di acqua, mentre berla avidamente, portava a una totale perdita di memoria, rendendo le anime incapaci di non ripetere gli errori commessi nel corso della vita precedente[26].

Possiamo dunque supporre che la morte rappresenti non solo la fine dell'esistenza terrena, ma in questo caso una specie di viaggio. Perciò i modi di raccontare la vita e la morte sono esposti come metafore concettuali basate sul modello della strada[27]. Il punto di partenza nel viaggio vita–morte tratteggia la natura stessa e,

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[22] «Fluminis, aquae oblivionem praebentis (Gloss.^{L} III Abstr. LE 22-e *flumen apud inferos*. Gloss. V 112, 29 *v.p. 1186, 19*): in locutionibus fere tropicis: Ovid., *Trist*. 4, 1, 47 ut … soporiferem biberem in pocula letes temporis adversi sic mihi sensus abest» (*Pont*. 2, 4, 23).

[23] Verg., *Aen*. VI, vv. 298–301.

[24] Verg., *Aen*. VI, vv. 712–714.

[25] Pl., *R*. 621c.

[26] "Tutte queste anime, quando per mille anni avrà finito di girare la ruota, il dio chiama al fiume Lete in grande schiera, s'intende affinché immemori rivedano le volte celesti e comincino a desiderare di voler tornare di nuovo nei corpi" (Verg., *Aen*. VI, vv. 745–75, trad. di G. Bonghi). Cfr. anche U. Pizzani: *Qualche osservazione sul mito di Er*. In: *Letture platoniche* (Università degli Studi di Perugia. Facoltà di Magistero. Quaderni dell'Istituto di Filosofia 4), Napoli 1987, 53–66.

[27] Per un elenco dei simboli più dettagliato, cfr. G. Lakoff, M. Turner: *More than cool reason*. *A field guide to poetic metaphor*. University of Chicago Press 1989.

nel nostro caso, la strada da percorrere è acqua di un fiume. L'acqua nelle varie presenze appartiene alla categoria dei cosiddetti universali linguistici e simbolici. A causa della sua necessità per il normale sostentamento di ogni forma di esistenza, in quasi tutte le culture e religioni si associa con la vita, con la purificazione e con le previsioni del futuro. Tuttavia l'acqua, come gli altri elementi o fenomeni della natura, ha suoi vari *alter ego* che trovano espressione anche nel mondo animale, di cui una visione interessante è presentata da Remo Bracchi[28]. Pertanto, l'uso dell'immagine di acqua ci permette di introdurre il simbolo – *il tempo è fiume*, come trasferimento metaforico della morte sul piano dell'acqua e del tempo contemporaneamente. Secondo il filosofo Eraclito non c'è esistenza, c'è solo il divenire, quindi non si può mai bagnarsi nelle acque dello stesso fiume, perché il mutamento è costante ed eterno. Così anche Ovidio nel XV libro delle *Metamorfosi* descrive il continuo rinnovamento di tutte le cose, paragonando la vita e di conseguenza anche la morte a un fiume:

> Tutto scorre, ogni apparizione ha forma effimera.
> Lo stesso tempo fugge con moto incessante,
> non altrimenti del fiume: come il fiume infatti neppure l'ora
> può fermarsi nella fuga, ma come dall'onda è sospinta l'onda
> e quella che giunge è incalzata e incalza l'onda precedente,
> così svanisce e nello stesso istante ricompare il tempo,
> rinnovandosi di continuo: ciò che è stato si dissolve,
> ciò che non esisteva avviene, e ogni momento si ricrea[29].

Nell'area della lingua latina si presentano il sostantivo *oblivio* e il verbo *obliviscor*, i quali derivano dalla stessa radice del verbo *oblinere* 'ungere, spalmare' che ha acquisito il significato specifico 'di cancellare lo scritto', da cui 'rimuovere dalla memoria', con riferimento alla scrittura sulle tavolette cerate[30]. La voce fa da pendant con *oblitterare*, che viene usata nel medesimo senso. Cicerone nel *Somnium Scipionis* usa la voce *oblivione*, parlando della futilità della gloria terrena: "Quali parole gli altri pronunceranno su di te non ti riguarda, eppure parleranno; ogni discorso, comunque, è delimitato dallo spazio ristretto delle regioni che vedi e non è stato mai, sul conto di nessuno, durevole negli anni: è sepolto con la morte degli uomini e si spegne con l'oblio degli posteri"[31]. Invece Ovidio nelle *Lettere dal Ponto*, scrive così: "Non crederei mai che cader ti potessero queste cose di

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[28] R. Bracchi: "Le capre azzurre". In: *Itinerari linguistici alpini*. *Atti del Convegno internazionale di dialettologia per i 60 anni del prof. Remo Bracchi, Bormio 24–25 settembre 2004* (IDEVV – Istituto di Dialettologia e di Etnografia Valtellinese e Valchiavennasca, Atti e documenti 1). Sondrio 2005, pp. 35–76.

[29] Ovid., *Met.* XV, 188.

[30] A. Ernout, A. Meillet: *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*. Paris 1939, p. 693; A. Nocentini: *L'etimologico. Vocabolario della lingua italiana*. Milano 2010, p. 769.

[31] Cic., *Somn.* 25.

mente, ancorché tu bevessi dall'*oblioso Lete*"[32]. In entrambi i casi, l'immagine del fiume è usata come richiamo alla memoria, o meglio della dimenticanza causata nelle persone dalle acque di Lete. Vediamo quindi la formazione di un'altra catena logica: morte – fiume – dimenticanza.

Non si può certo evitare di menzionare un'ultima effigie della morte, di cui prima si è fatto solo un accenno, ossia il sonno e una sua versione particolare, ossia il letargo, a cui quest'ultimo spesso è associato con la morte apparente. Celso, infatti, nel *De medicina*, dà una precisa definizione a questo stato particolare cui è soggetto sia il genere umano, sia il mondo animale: «Alter quoque morbus est, aliter phrenetico contrarius. In eo difficilior somnus, prompta ad omnem audaciam mens est: in hoc marcor et inexpugnabilis paene dormiendi necessitas. Λήθαργον Graeci nominant»[33]. Però lo stesso Celso assieme agli altri autori antichi segnala anche la paura di essere sepolto vivo che da sempre viene associata al letargo, facendo nascere molte leggende e dicerie. Osservazioni di questo genere tanti secoli dopo saranno raccolte e pubblicate da Melchiorre Missirini nella sua opera *Il pericolo di seppellire gli uomini vivi creduti morti* (Milano 1837), in cui l'autore fa una dettagliata descrizione delle forme, sintomi, cause e possibili cure delle varie malattie letargiche facendo riferimento agli autori classici. Qui bisognerebbe ricordare che nella mitologia il dio Sonno, il fratello gemello di Thanatos, era il padrone delle *Porte del Sonno*, cioè le due uscite dall'inferno, attraverso le quali ai mortali si consegnavano dei sogni veri o falsi, a seconda della porta da cui essi uscivano. Un riferimento a questa consuetudine si trova nel XIX libro dell'*Odissea*[34] che poi è stato ripreso da Virgilio nel VI libro dell'*Eneide*: «Sunt geminae Somni portae; quarum altera fertur / cornea, qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris, / altera cadenti perfecta nitens elephanto, / sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia Manes»[35]. Il potere del sonno tuttavia non si limitava esclusivamente alla trasmissione dei sogni. Il dio Sonno spesso fa ricorso ai suoi poteri per assecondare anche qualche richiesta di un'altra divinità, come nel caso in cui usa un ramo saturo d'acque del fiume Lete[36], bagnando il volto del timoniere di Enea, Palinuro, per farlo addormentare e quindi cadere in mare.

Proprio sulle questioni della morte avvenuta nel sonno, si sofferma Cicerone nel I libro de *Le Tuscolane*, riportando due esempi particolari. Nel primo si tratta dei figli di una sacerdotessa argiva, che grazie al loro aiuto poté raggiungere il tempio per celebrare il sacrificio. La sacerdotessa pregò la dea di premiarli, facendo il dono più grande che un dio possa fare. Dopo il banchetto, i giovani si addormentarono e la mattina furono trovati morti[37]. Nel secondo caso riporta le parole di Euripide:

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[32] Ovid., *Pon.* 2, 4, 23 ss., trad. italiana di G.A. Galerone.
[33] Cels., *De medicina* III, 20.
[34] Cfr. *Od.* XIX, vv. 562–567.
[35] Verg., *Aen.* VI, vv. 893–897.
[36] «Ramum Lethaeo rore mandantem», *Aen*. V, 854.
[37] Cic., *Tusc.* I, 113.

'Nam nos decebat coetus celebrantis domum
Lugere, ubi esset aliquis in lucem editus,
Humanae vitae varia reputantis mala;
At, qui labores morte finisset gravis,
Hunc omni amicos laude et laetitia exequi'[38].

La morte quindi si manifesta non solo come un sonno eterno ma anche come un dono, sia da parte della divinità sia dell'essere umano, un'offerta desiderabile e per nulla temibile. Infatti, in un passo de l'*Apologia di Socrate* di Platone si può leggere: "D'altra parte, se la morte è un mutar sede (ἀποδημῆσαι) di qui a un altro luogo, ed è vero quel che raccontano, che in questo luogo si ritrovano poi tutti i morti, quale bene ci potrà essere, o giudici, maggiore di questo?"[39]. E così anche il Cicerone, in un frammento delle *Tuscolane* asserisce: "Consideriamola piuttosto, la morte, come un porto, un rifugio predisposto per noi. Oh, potessimo entrarci a vele spiegate!"[40].

La morte dunque appare nelle sue varie forme sempre una realtà un po' ambigua: il cessare delle forze vitali degli esseri viventi non sempre rappresenta un male, o un finale triste. Perciò il tuffo simbolico nel fiume dell'oblio, in quell'interminabile sonno si può considerare una chance per rinascere, dimenticare il passato per vivere in un mondo migliore.

Per concludere, raccogliendo insieme tutti gli esempi spigolati di cui sopra, possiamo sostenere che anche le immagini tipicamente metaforiche appartengono tuttavia alle realtà radicate nella lingua parlata. L'unicità di elaborazione letteraria sboccia dall'incremento creativo di metafore concettuali. All'interno di una descrizione avviene quindi un incontro di varie concettualizzazioni che sboccano in una sempre più vasta varietà di interpretazioni. La funzione della metafora però resta comunque quella descritta da Aristotele nella *Retorica*[41], ossia porre le cose "dinanzi agli occhi".

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[38] Cic., *Tusc.* I, 115.
[39] Pl., *Ap.* 40e-41a, trad. italiana di M. Valgimigli, Bari 1996.
[40] Cic., *Tusc.* I, 118.
[41] Arist., *Rh*. III, 10, 1410b.

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Verità, bellezza, bontà alla luce dell'*ars bene vivendi et ars bene moriendi*

Abstract: The paper deals with some ethical/aesthetic values like "truth, beauty and good," which found their primary constitution in ancient times, as representing a canon of both the human being who aspires to search for the sense of existence and of the systems which frame development of humankind trends in the common globalization era. Thinking about death in the context of *ars bene vivendi et ars bene moriendi* provoked philosophical thought on the existence of human beings and their choice between mundane activities and the authenticity of self-creation.

It is notable that an issue raised in the field of classical philology, of the unsolved mystery about achieving perfection by humankind is also particularly emphasized in modern thought: in the modern world of mechanization and digitalization growing rapidly, an individual will always remain the highest value, particularly when confronted with the death.

Key words: truth, beauty, good, *ars bene vivendi et ars bene moriendi*

E' un fatto indiscusso che ognuno di noi tende verso qualcosa. Un tale perseguimento – l'obbiettivo che l'uomo si propone – diventa una forza motrice principale di tutte le sue azioni e le sue trasformazioni indispensabili per la sua realizzazione, sopratutto quella veritiera, che è il trascendere se stesso. Infatti, dice Seneca: "Nessun vento è favorevole per il marinaio che non sa a quale porto vuol approdare"[1]. A questo punto è doveroso domandare a che cosa tende e quali

[1] Seneca: *Ad Lucilium epistulae morales* VIII, 71,3. Ed. L.D. Reynolds. Oxonii 1965: „Ignoranti quem portum petat nullus suus ventus est".

sono le necessità dell'essere umano? Comunque già nei tempi antiqui i filosofi meditando su questo argomento crearono una triade di valori. Ad aprire il corteo è la verità. Subito dopo procede il bene. A chiudere vi è la bellezza. Domandiamo con Ponzio Pilato: „Che cosa è la verità?[2]" Agostino risponde: „Il vero è ciò che esiste"[3]. Se non esistesse ciò che è, non potremmo parlare della verità. Da qui risulta che la condizione della verità si trova nell'esistenza. Dunque per esistere l'uomo indaga e cerca la verità.

Ma il bene? Si tentò assai spesso di definire la differenza e la reciprocità tra la verità e l'essere. Alcuni consideravano questi concetti come equivalenti, altri invece, le ritenevano completamente opposti, come due domini, non aventi nessun denominatore in comune. Il professore Władysław Stróżewski nel suo discorso in occasione del conferimento del titolo di Doctor *Honoris Causa* esortava di non entrare nella discussione con queste convinzioni, riferirsi ad Aristotele, agli scolastici, a Davide Hume, alle scuole post-kantiane ed alla fenomenologia. Sarebbe opportuno, piuttosto, parlare del bene, partendo da un'ipotesi, in un giorno, da analizzare e da verificare più minuziosamente: "[…] dunque, sembra che l'essere non sia assiologicamente neutrale, inoltre a poter parlare del suo »esistere«, possiamo anche vedere che cosa potrebbe o dovrebbe essere". In tal caso diventa una particolare sfida per l'uomo. La realtà è dinamica, si sviluppa costantemente – e come sembra – questo sviluppo tende verso uno stato ottimale. Non dobbiamo dimenticare che "noi, come umanità, nello stesso tempo costituiamo una parte di essa e quindi l'imperativo dello sviluppo appropriato, cioè di uno sviluppo giusto, è ancorato in noi, indipendentemente da tutti gli errori e da tutti i disastri che affrontiamo"[4].

Conviene ancora spendere qualche parola al riguardo della bellezza. Il concetto della bellezza bisognerebbe riferire alla società, piuttosto che all'individualità, perché solo essa valuta, come pare, con disinteresse, che cosa è bello e che cosa non lo è. Conosciamo il detto che "la bellezza della donna nasce nell'occhi dell'uomo"[5]. Quindi, non è bello quello che è bello, ma quello che ci piace. Seguendo questo modo di pensare, potrebbe sembrare, che non esistesse una bellezza universale. Ognuno la crea da solo, cercando di unire ciò che è a quello che dovrebbe essere. Ancora una volta mi rivolgo alle parole di Stróżewski, il quale sostiene che "la bellezza ha la forza creatrice, grazie alla quale, non solo rivela il mistero della realtà, ma anche arricchisce una tale realtà"[6].

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[2] J 18, 38.

[3] La classica formula agostiniana del concetto ontologico della verità in originale è seguente: „Verum mihi videtur esse, id quo est" – Augustinus: *Confessiones* II, V, 8.

[4] W. Stróżewski: *Rzeczy świata tego*. Il discorso tenuto il 27 giugno 2005 durante la solenne cerimonia di consegna a un eminente scienziato del titolo di Dottore Honoris Causa dell'Università Jagellonica (www.3.uj.edu.pl/alma, accessibile: 01.03.2014).

[5] K. Blixen: *Siedem niesamowitych opowieści*. Poznań 1995, p. 182.

[6] W. Stróżewski: *Rzeczy świata tego*…

Il tempo passa. Vengono creati i nuovi sistemi, appaiono i nuovi canoni di bellezza e il nuovo stile di vita. La causa di questi cambiamenti è prosaica: l'intero sviluppo dell'umanità consiste nel fatto che vengono create costantemente le nuove necessità e poi le nuove necessità di soddisfarle. Oggi assai spesso si sente parlare della globalizzazione, intesa come un insieme di processi che costituiscono il mondo sociale uniforme. La civiltà globale, oppure piuttosto informativa, si distingue decisamente da quella agraria o industriale, che ormai sono diventate fuori moda. Ad esempio, prendiamo in considerazione l'attività dell'uomo. Nella civiltà agraria aveva il carattere locale, nell'industriale – regionale. Oggi ha carattere globale. Una cosa simile si nota in altri settori: p.e. il lavoro, il trasporto, il prodotto del lavoro, l'educazione o la lingua. Nella civiltà agraria si lavorava vicino a casa, il trasporto si svolgeva sulle strade o lungo i fiumi, si lavorava per saziarsi, si parlava in greco o in latino, invece l'educazione, che era riservata solo ai figli dei nobili, si concludeva con il titolo di maestro. Nella civiltà industriale, la gente deve emigrare per la ricerca del pane, lavora lontano da casa, viaggia sull'autostrada, in treno e il risultato del lavoro sono i prodotti industriali, l'educazione si svolge a scuola e la comunicazione viene fatta con le lingue nazionali. La civiltà globale è in tutto differente. Non si parla più del lavoro, ma di telelavoro. La principale strada di comunicazione è infostrada, l'effetto del lavoro sono i computer, invece l'educazione viene denominata tele-educazione (educazione on line), e la lingua comune è la lingua inglese. Nonostante che si sostenga che la cultura globale è un prodotto superficiale creato da numerose diversità folcloristiche e nazionali già esistenti, che è privo di radici, che è nata ovunque e appare da nulla, che ha un carattere estemporaneo e sospeso nel vuoto, ha anche molti sostenitori. Sono ben lontana dal sostenere l'una o l'altra opinione. Piuttosto, preferisco indirizzarmi verso la regola d'oro[7], la quale è il modo o la strada che conduce verso la perfezione morale-etica, nonché quella mistica.

L'esistenza giornaliera, banale oppure l'esistenza autentica? E' facile essere nel quotidiano. E' diverso, invece, quando l'essere umano deve creare se stesso ogni giorno, quando si deve realizzare come un esistenza umana. Seneca con una grande passione osservava la morte, dicendo che attraverso la concentrazione sulla morte, si può arrivare ad un autentico modo di vita:

> Et si volueris attendere, maxima pars vitae elabitur male agentibus, magna nihil agentibus, tota vita aliud agentibus. Quem mihi dabis, qui aliquod pretium tempori ponat, qui diem aestimet, qui intellegat se cotidie mori? In hoc enim fallimur, quod mortem prospicimus; magna pars eius iam praeterit. Quicquid aetatis retro est, mors tenet[8].

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[7] Horatius: *Carmina* II 10, 5.

[8] Seneca: *Ad Lucilium epistulae morales* I 1.1–2. Ed. L.D. Reynolds. Oxonii 1965.

> Pensaci bene: della nostra esistenza buona parte si dilegua nel fare il male, la maggior parte nel non far niente e tutta quanta nell'agire diversamente daldovuto. Puoi indicarmi qualcuno che dia un giusto valore al suo tempo, e allasua giornata, che capisca di morire ogni giorno? Ecco il nostro errore: vediamo la morte davanti a noi e invece gran parte di essa è già alle nostre spalle: appartiene alla morte la vita passata[9].

Seneca in questo brano si riferisce all'affermazione di Platone, il quale non di rado sottolinea che il corpo è la tomba (*soma – sema*)[10] e alla visione di Eraclito[11]. Numerose riflessioni sulla vita autentica e non banale ci trasmette Boezio nella sua ultima opera prima della morte. Questo pensatore sta alle soglie dell'epoca medievale, ma nello stesso tempo, guarda indietro con una nostalgia al compimento dell'antichità. E' un personaggio di confine, tutta la sua attività intellettuale rimane "al confine" di due epoche. Nello stesso tempo, si ritrova al confine della morte e della vita. La riflessione di Boezio sulla morte è profondamente commuovente. La morte, di cui la vicinanza, gli dà una certa energia e lo convince per scrivere la *Consolatio Philosophiae* – l'opera più preziosa in cui egli si è manifestato come un filosofo autonomo ed originale. L'opera che "era considerata, per i secoli interi, come uno dei più influenti libri mai scritti nella lingua latina"[12]. La coronazione del discorso sulla morte nel libro terzo era il richiamo del mito di Orfeo ed Euridice. Sottolineando la dimensione moralistica, l'autore invita il lettore alla riflessione sugli argomenti morali e psicologici. La protagonista del mito Euridice personifica la cupidigia e l'avidità. Orfeo non rispetta il divieto di guardare indietro e quindi deve subire una pena. La pena consiste nella perdita della felicità per sempre. La tragica legenda nella conclusione del terzo libro si riferisce alla dottrina relativa alla lotta di due componenti nella natura umana: spirituale e carnale, divino e terrestre, dionisiaco e titanico:

> Quis legem det amantibus?
> maior lex amor est sibi.
> Heu, noctis prope terminos
> Orpheus Euridicen suam
> vidit, perdidit, occidit.
> Vos haec fabula respicit
> quicumque in superum diem

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[9] Seneca: *Lettere a Lucilio*. Libro 1, 1.1–2 (http://www.collezioni-f.it/seneca.html, accessibile: 12.04.2014).

[10] Platone: *Il Gorgia*. 492e.

[11] Eraclito: 22 B 62 DK. Presocratici: *Prima traduzione integrale con testi originali a fronte delle testimonianze e dei frammenti nell raccolta di H. Diels e W. Kranz*. A cura di G. Reale. Milano 2006.

[12] C.S. Levis: *Odrzucony obraz. Wprowadzenie do literatury średniowiecznej i renesansowej*. Przeł. W. Ostrowski. Warszawa 1986, p. 59.

mentem ducere quaeritis;
nam qui Tartareum in specus
victus lumina flexerit,
quidquid praecipuum trahit
perdit, dum videt inferos[13].

Ma qual norma può mai costringere chi ama?
L'amore è norma ancor maggiore a se stesso.
Ohimé, ormai quasi fuori dalla dimora tenebrosa,
Orfeo guardò la sua Euridice,
e così la perse e lui stesso perì.
Questo mito allude a chiunque di voi
aspira ad elevare lo spirito
verso la luce del mondo celeste;
chi, infatti, vinto, volge gli occhi
a riguardare l'antro del Tartaro,
perde quel che reca di più prezioso,
mentre sta a guardar il mondo inferiore[14].

Il ritorno ad Orfeo rivela l'atteggiamento di Boezio verso il mito, nel senso più generale – dinanzi al comune eredità culturale. L'apoteosi della morte appena all'inizio del poema[15] e l'apparizione di Orfeo nella metà dell'opera ha un enorme significato per la comprensione dell'intero senso dello scritto. E soprattutto per la comprensione del significato della morte. L'autore si identifica con il virtuoso tracio. Si realizza, però in modo tutto singolare. Ripete il suo destino, i suoi gesti e le sue parole simboliche. Diventa Orfeo, ma non è quello che visse tanti secoli fa in Tracia, non è il protagonista di Virgilio ed Ovidio, ma si tratta di un Nuovo Orfeo. Il suo canto è la voce orfica risvegliata nuovamente nell'anima dell'uomo. La conclusione del discorso si trova nella comprensione della vita umana. Infatti, concentrando l'attenzione sulla morte si può plasmare il proprio modo di vita autentica. Però, in questo partecipano anche le persone, perché altri divengono membri del gregge, accettando i valori e le convinzioni della società i cui vivono e non se ne approfittano della morte per trovare uno stimolo per l'autorealizzazione. Il trattato di Boezio *Consolatio Philosophiae* è un prologo per una tradizione multisecolare di scritti tipo filosofico-teologico-ascetico, che si riferiscono all'*ars bene moriendi*, e nello stesso tempo, all'*ars bene vivendi*[16]. Poi, è una riflessione espressa e for-

[13] Boethius: *De consolatione Philosophiae*. L. 3, m. XII, v. 47–58. Ed. C. Moreschini. München 2005, pp. 97–98.

[14] S. Boezio: *La consolazione della filosofia*. L. III, m. XII, v. 47–58. Trad. O. Dallera. Milano 2001, p. 263.

[15] Boethius: *De consolatione Philosophiae*. L. 1, m. 1, v. 13. Ed. C. Moreschini…, p. 4: „Mors hominum felix" (felice la morte per gli uomini).

[16] A. Kucz: *Mors hominum felix*. In: Eadem: *Dyskurs z Filozofią w 'Consolatio Philosophiae' Boecjusza*. Katowice 2005, pp. 145–153.

mulata nella domanda retorica di Gombrowicz: "Cos'è questo viaggio, se non il viaggio verso la morte?"[17]

La persona umana dispone di piena libertà di scegliere se stesso. Può farsi "l'uomo" da solo. In tal caso è autentico, la sua esistenza è autentica. Quando invece rifiuta di autorealizzarsi, si condanna alla vita banale, a una solita fuga da se stesso. E in più, condanna se stesso alla perdita e smarrisce il diritto a realizzarsi e compiere le scelte. Dunque, diventare l'uomo è solo una certa possibilità ed in realtà è una precisa scelta dei valori tra due livelli ai quali siamo condannati. Tra la esistenza banale e quella autentica. L'uomo che esiste a livello dell'autenticità sfugge a tutte le definizioni, a tutte le teorie, in generale a tutti, perché l'uomo non può farsi ingannare dalla forma[18]. In effetti, nessun sistema, nessuna idea, nessuna filosofia sono in grado di creare un modello dell'uomo – come si sosteneva nella filosofia stoica o negli altri sistemi filosofici – perché l'essere umano è un esistenza individuale ed originale nella fase della costruzione di se stesso. In realtà, non è giusto parlare che uno è un uomo, ma si deve affermare che uno sta diventando un uomo, si realizza come esistenza umana.

L'autenticità richiede una spiritualità ad alto livello. Richiede la libertà totale dello spirito. Come sottolinea Nabokov nel suo sommario, scritto a Palermo nell'anno 1965, nella versione russa di *Lolita*: "La libertà dello spirito! Lo spazio intero dell'umanità è incluso nella connessione di queste due parole"[19]. Ogni persona umana ha il proprio mondo, ma lo deve trovare.

Nel contesto della vita, della morte, del presente e del futuro alla conclusione di questa riflessione, vedo opportuno riferirsi al breviario minimo di Leszek Kołakowski nel quale egli accenna ad un articolo di un certo scienziato di fisica e nello stesso tempo lo commenta. In questo articolo lo scienziato afferma che solo due generazioni sopravivranno sulla terra: "I computer si perfezionano ed è un processo inevitabile e nessuno è in grado di fermarlo, in un futuro non troppo lontano raggiungeranno l'intelligenza a livello dell'uomo, dopodiché lo sopravanzeranno in maniera travolgente e in tale caso, non avranno bisogno dell'uomo ed eliminandolo, raggiungeranno una nuova fase dell'evoluzione"[20]. Kołakowski risponde a quelle balordaggini, perché in questa occasione si possano porre delle domande, a ipotesi che si realizzi questo scenario minaccioso: "Che cosa faranno i computer per mantenere la vita, per perfezionarsi e per rimanere sicuri? Che tipo di discipline studieranno? La matematica, la fisica, la cosmologia – sicuramente. L'economia, la sociologia, la giurisprudenza – non si sa. Questo dipenderebbe dalle relazioni tra i computer. Non c'è nessun modo per prevedere. Ci sarà tra di essi

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[17] W. Gombrowicz: *Dziennik 1961–1966*. W: Idem: *Dzieła*. T. 9. Red. J. Błoński. Kraków 1986, p. 95.

[18] W. Gombrowicz: *Kurs filozofii w sześć godzin i kwadrans*. Kraków 2006, pp. 86–87.

[19] F.M. Cataluccio: *Niedojrzałość. Choroba naszych czasów*. Przeł. S. Kasprzysiak. Kraków 2006, p. 197.

[20] L. Kołakowski: *Mini-wykłady o maxi-sprawach*. Kraków 2004, p. 307.

l'invidia, la concorrenza, le guerre, l'amicizia e il sesso? Non ci sarà probabilmente psicologia. Neanche la storia, perché non offrono nessun vantaggio pratico. Sarebbe da ipotizzare che i computer seguissero esclusivamente la suddetta ragione. Saranno in grado a creare le arti plastiche e comporre la musica. Tutto ciò è bello, ma per quale scopo?"[21]

[21] Ibidem, pp. 308–309.

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A Few Notes on Hannibal in Silius Italicus's *Punica*

Abstract: The article is an attempt at studying the image of Hannibal as presented in *Punica*. The aim of the paper is to sketch a portrait of the Carthaginian in *Punica* (with the image preserved both in historiography and in poetic epithets in mind), which would be a literary realisation of historiographic matter, with *variatio* typical for poetry, which was extended, shortened and mixed by Silius. The following review also looks at the topic of cruelty, which was a feature attributed to Hannibal himself as well as to Carthaginians in general, and that of death – demonstrated by such actions as (not) burying the bodies of Roman consuls or utilising bodies of the dead to build a bridge.

Key words: Hannibal, Silius Italicus, *Punica*, Punic, Carthaginian

Among the many images of Hannibal in ancient literature the one presented by Silius Italicus is unique. It stands out because the ancient writer in creating his image of the Second Punic War employs *licentia poetica* as well as historical facts.[1] It enabled him to develop, diminish, or even mix together certain historical facts.[2]

[1] See: R.B. Steele: "Interrelation of the Latin Poets under Domitian." *CP* 1930, Vol. 25, p. 331; A. Klotz: "Die Stellung des Silius Italicus unter den Quellen zur Geschichte des zweiten punischen Krieges." *RhM* 1933, Vol. 82, pp. 1–34; J. Nicol: *The Historical and Geographical Sources Used by Silius Italicus*. Oxford 1936; H.-G. Nesselrath: "Zu den Quellen des Silius Italicus." *Hermes* 1986, Vol. 114, pp. 203–230; C.M. Lucarini: "Le fonti storiche di Silio Italico." *Athenaeum* 2004, Vol. 92, pp. 103–126.

[2] See also: E. Kennedy Klaassen: "Imitation and the Hero." In: *Brill's Companion to Silius Italicus*. Ed. A. Augoustakis. Leiden–Boston 2010, pp. 99–126; B. Tipping: *Exemplary Epic.*

The image of Hannibal is based on three concepts: Hannibal as a Punic, as an enemy, and as a soldier. Each of these concepts is based on different features. Hannibal the leader is described as *prudens* and *callidus* – simply a great leader. As an enemy he was characterised as cruel and dreadful (*crudelis*, *immanis*, *cruentus*, *dirus*). The third concept is the broadest of the three and because of its complexity I would like to say a few words on this subject matter. How did the Romans really perceive the Punic? How was he characterised? Before I can answer these questions I would like to explain two things. In my opinion one cannot differentiate between the nouns "Punic" and "enemy," because very often they were used synonymously. That is why the cruelty of Hannibal as an enemy becomes one of the innate characteristics of the Punics as a nation. The second remark has to do with the term "Punic" and the way it functions. There are, however, two terms that are not synonymous. *Poenus* is an ethnic tag, derived from the Greek φοῖνιξ, and meant a member of Phoenicians – who lived in Phoenicia, and also those who dwelt in the western colonies. *Carthaginiensis*, in turn, is a civic term for an inhabitant of Carthage.[3]

George F. Franko in his article "The Use of Poenus and Carthaginiensis in early Latin Literature" noticed that the usage of the term *Poenus* has often negative connotations, whereas the term *Carthaginiensis* is neutral or may have positive connotations. The adjective *Punic* is used to describe various objects or techniques of manufacturing,[4] adopted from Carthaginians and used in Mediterrean culture. This adjective describes also botanic and zoological[5] as well as culinary terms.[6] This was observed by Professor Jerzy Kolendo, who noticed that the adjective Punic (*punicus*, *punicanus*) in some contexts was a synonym of good quality or even of luxury.[7] On the other hand, the adjective acquires negative meaning when paired with some nouns; in this case it even contradicts their meaning, for example: *fides Punica* (*perfidia*) is the opposite of *fides*. In this context, we may also enumerate: *Punica religio*, *perfidia plus quam Punica*, *fraus Punica*, *Punica ars*, *Punicae versutiae*. Franko concludes his argument: "*Poenus* is the term of choice for negative stereotyping, the term of choice for anti-Punic discourse."[8]

Silius Italicus' "Punica." Oxford 2010, pp. 51–106; C. Stocks: *The Roman Hannibal. Remembering the Enemy in Silius Italicus' "Punica."* Liverpool 2014, pp. 80–102.

[3] G.F. Franko: "The Use of Poenus and Carthaginiensis in early Latin Literature." *CP* 1994, Vol. 89, p. 153.

[4] For example: *pavimenta*, *fenestra*, *lutum*, *coagmenta*, *lecti*, *lanterna*, *corium*, *poenicum*, *cera*, *plostellum*, *spongea*, *fossa*.

[5] *Alium*, *malus*/*arbor*, *cicer*, *umbra*.

[6] *Puls* and *punicum*.

[7] J. Kolendo: "L'influence de Carthage sur la civilisation materielle de Rome." *Archeologia* 1970, Vol. 21, p. 20.

[8] G.F. Franko: "The Use of Poenus and Carthaginiensis"…, p. 152.

However, to make a clear distinction between the concepts *Poenus* and *Carthaginiensis* one has to consider not only the geographical context but also the historical one. The majority of literature describing the Second Punic War was written after the Carthage was already rebuilt in the 40s of the 1st century BC. It was a Roman city but it regained its former significance and became the capital of province of *Africa*. So maybe for some authors the difference between a Carthaginian and a Punic was really a difference between an inhabitant of the African metropolis contemporary to the author and a dweller of the city before it was destroyed in 146 BC.

The ancient authors are also not consistent in this scope. In their texts they use both terms interchangeably.[9] Only Florus consistently uses the term *Poenus* throughout his entire work. In the works by the Christian authors – Orosius and St. Augustine – one can come across the expression *bellum Carthaginiense* for the Second Punic War, that is nowhere else to be found. In Greek language this war is referred to as a Hannibalic war.

The epithet *Poenus* was frequently used to describe Hannibal (*Hannibal Poenus*), which shows him on the one hand as a typical representative of his nation, and on the other as "the Other." Did Scipio need the epithet *Romanus* next to his name?

The typical Punic features are the opposites of the typical Roman virtues (such as *fides*, *virtus*, *clementia*, *mos maiorum*, *humanitas* etc.), there are in fact the anti-virtues. This is a generalisation, and each generalisation is of course false. It might have been as well that Roman-Carthaginian contrast was in fact a kind of mirror[10] which reflected for some Romans the glorious Republican past. It is evident in the works of ancient historians who often quoted features and behaviours perceived as typically Punic frequently overinterpreting or exaggerating them in order to create the image of Carthaginian. It must be noted, however, that the meaning of the topoi used by them might have been more archaic and they extended their meaning to later centuries. The example illustrating this phenomenon is *fides Punica* which eventually evolved into *fides Iberica*.[11]

When it comes to poetry the matter is more complicated because of the metrics. *Carthaginiensis* is metrically quite a complicated word and does not appear in *Punica*, whereas *Poenus* in different forms appears over 170 times. Apart from these two, there are also other expressions used for describing Carthaginian and Punic. I will come back to it. The word Hannibal itself as it was shown in a detail analy-

[9] See also: V. Rosenberger: Bella et expeditiones. *Die antike Terminologie der Kriege Roms*. Stuttgart 1992, pp. 15–28.

[10] R. Kapuściński: "Wykłady wiedeńskie I." In: Idem: *Ten Inny*. Kraków 2007, p. 14. Cf. F. Hartog: *The Mirror of Herodotus. The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*. Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1988.

[11] F. Rodríguez Adrados: "La «Fides» Iberica." *Emerita* 1946, t. 14, pp. 128–209.

sis made by Herbert Myśliwiec[12] is a dactyl (*Hánnĭbăl*), or a cretic (*Hánnĭbāl*)[13] which was noticed by Aulus Gellius, who quoted the grammarian Probus and the poet Ennius.[14] In another grammatical cases Hannibal becomes metrically choriiambus.[15] Very often it is replaced by the word barbarous, which metrically is also a dactyl.[16]

The answer to the question "who is a Punic" can be found already in one of the Plautus's comedies. When describing the main hero Hannon – a Carthaginian looking for his daughter, Plautus writes:

> Ita docte atque astu filias quaerit suas.
> Et is omnis linguas scit; sed dissimulat sciens
> se scire: Poenus plane est. Quid verbis opust?[17]

> Thus craftily and cunningly he seeks his daughters.
> And he knows all languages; but though knowing he fakes that
> He doesn't know. He's thoroughly Punic. What need of words?[18]

Plautus also quotes other features such is *astutia* (cunning), *simulatio* (pretending) and *dissimulatio* (lying). They all eventually become a trademark of Hannibal. The example of that is one of Hannibal's deceit, when he tried to deceive the Celts by changing wigs and clothes.[19] The way in which Hannibal conducted war was also based on the mentioned features. Livy describes this as: […] *non bello aperto sed suis artibus, fraude et insidiis*[20] and contrasts it with *Romanis artibus, virtute opere armis*.[21] Later in the text he specifies: *minime arte Romana, fraude ac dolo*.[22]

The Punics were also said to be cruel, which is illustrated by Cato's question: *Qui sunt, qui crudelissime bellum gesserunt?* To which he answers: *Carthaginienses*.[23] Their other characteristic is *perfidia*.[24] *Perfidus Hannibal* or *perfidus Poe-*

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[12] H. Myśliwiec: "Zur Prosodie des punischen Namens 'Hannibal' im Latein." *Eos* 1990, Vol. 78, pp. 315–324.

[13] Enn. *Var.* 13; Varro *Menn*. 213.

[14] Aul. Gell. *NA* 4, 7, 1–5: […] *Is* (sc. Valerius Probus) *'Hannibalem' et 'Hasdrubalem' et 'Hamilcarem' ita pronuntiabat, ut paenultimam circumflecteret* […].

[15] Hor. 2, 12, 2; 3, 6, 36; 4, 8, 6.

[16] Mart. 4, 14, 2; 13, 73, 2; Stat. 4, 6, 106. See also Liv. 22, 59, 14: *barbaro ac Poeno.*

[17] Plaut. *Poen*. 111–113.

[18] Translation: G.F. Franko in: G.F. Franko: "The Characterization of Hanno in Plautus' Poenulus." *AJPh* 1996, Vol. 117, p. 429.

[19] Liv. 22, 1, 4; Polyb. 3, 78; App. *Ann*. 21–22.

[20] Liv. 21, 34, 1.

[21] Liv. 5, 27, 8.

[22] Liv. 1, 53, 4.

[23] Cato *fr.* 195b.

[24] M. Dubuisson: "L'Image du Carthaginois dans la litterature latine." In: *Studia Phoenicia*. Vol. I–II. Eds. E. Gubel, E. Lipiński, B. Servais-Soyez. Leuven 1983, pp. 159–167.

nus is a topos, found very often in poetry, especially of Augustan period. Ovid (*perfide Poene*),[25] Horace and also Ausonius (*perfidus Hannibal*)[26] use this topos. The ancient authors wrote also that Carthaginians excelled others in *avaritia*, however, *avaritia* and *astutia* may have simply been Phoenician heritage linked with their mercantile abilities. A fact that is confirmed in the works of Wathelet and Capomacchia.[27]

The author of *Punica* employs a whole range of ethnographic and mythological epithets. When writing about Carthaginians he uses such adjectives as: *Agenorei*, *Cadmei*, *Elissei*, *Phoenici*, *Pygmaliones*, *Sarrani*, *Sidonii* and *Tyrii.* Hannibal, in turn, is called *Libys, Barcaeus* and *Bellides.* The Romans are referred to as *Troii*, *Dardanii*, *Tyrrheni*.

At the very beginning of *Punica* there is a longer description of Hannibal:

> Ingenio motus avidus fideique sinister
> Is fuit, exsuperans astu, sed devius aequi.
> Armato nullus divum pudor; improba virtus
> Et pacis despectus honos; penitusque medullis
> Sanguinis humani flagrat sitis.[28]

By nature he was eager for action and faithless to his plighted word, a past master in cunning but a strayer from justice. Once armed, he had no respect for heaven; he was brave for evil and despised the glory of peace; and thirst for human blood burned in his inmost heart.[29]

This corresponds with the description of Hannibal given by Livy, in book 21, where the historian summarising what he has already said about Hannibal, reiterates so to speak the complete set of his *vitia*, which since then becomes the canon and among those *inhumana crudelitas*[30] occupies the top position (followed by: *perfidia plus quam Punica, nihil veri, nihil sancti, nullus deum metus, nullum ius iurandum, nulla religio*).

It is worth noting that in Silius's presentation of Hannibal his cruelty seems to be a prevailing feature.[31] The idea of cruelty expressed through adjectives con-

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[25] Ovid. *Fasti* 3, 148; 6, 241.

[26] Hor. 4, 4, 49; Ausonius *Epist.* 36, 54.

[27] P. Wathelet: "Les Phéniciens et la tradition Homérique." In: *Studia Phoenicia*. Vol. I–II. Eds. E. Gubel, E. Lipiński, B. Servais-Soyez. Leuven 1983, p. 241; A.M.G. Capomacchia: "L'avidità dei Fenici." In: *Atti del II Congresso Internationale di Studi Fenici e Punici, Roma, 9–14 Novembre 1987.* Vol. I. Roma 1991, pp. 267–269.

[28] *Pun*. 1, 56–69.

[29] Translation J.D. Duff: Silius Italicus: *Punica*. Ed. J.D. Duff, Vol. 1. London–Cambridge 1934.

[30] Liv. 21, 4, 9.

[31] *Pun*. 9, 655.

nected with blood is quite frequent and according to François Spaltenstein,[32] the author of the only commentary to *Punica*, although it appears to be traditionally attributed to Hannibal (Hamilcar: *Pun*. 1, 147–148: *asper amore sanguinis*), it was developed by Silius in such expressions as: *penitusque medullis sanguinis humani flagrat sitis*,[33] *sanguineus*,[34] *cruentus*,[35] and *sanguine laetum humano*.[36]

It goes without saying that these make up an extremely evocative vision of Hannibal. Cruelty is a feature shared by an enemy and the Punic. The motif of blood not only shows the efficiency of Hannibal's actions, but also, indicating his cruelty by means of this hyperbole, simply builds up the atmosphere of terror. It can be seen in Livy, who describes the Punic army as "a thousand times bathed in Roman blood" *perfusum miliens cruore Romano.*[37]

Other authors, when writing about fear, used the adjective *dirus*, which occurs only a few times in *Punica* (Horace: *Hannibalemque dirum*[38]; *dirus Afer*[39]; Juvenal: *dirus Hannibal*[40]; Sidonius: *dirum Hannibalem*[41]). *Dirus* as well as Greek words φοβερός and δεινός present Hannibal as a terrifying individual. One that brings fear or even terror. *Dirus* is a synonym of Greek δεινός.

Coming back to *crudelitas*, in a scene from book 8 Silius describes how after the battle of Cannae Hannibal ordered that a bridge is built out of dead bodies: *pons ecce cadentum / corporibus struitur* […].[42] It is a very interesting fragment due to the fact that the event is also mentioned briefly in just one sentence by Livius,[43] Valerius Maximus,[44] and also later by Florus[45] and Appian.[46] It is also extremely interesting that this idea was used by Caesar in Munda in 46 BC, who used dead bodies to build a fortification (*agger*).[47] It is even more interesting to note that this event is described by all the aforementioned authors with an exception of Silius,

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[32] F. Spaltenstein: *Commentaire des Punica de Silius Italicus*. T. 1 (liv. 1–8). Geneve 1986, p. 13.

[33] *Pun*. 1, 59–60.

[34] *Pun*. 1, 40; See also: M. Fucecchi: "Empieta e titanismo nella rappresentazione Siliana di Annibale." *Orpheus* 1990, Vol. 11, p. 22.

[35] *Pun*. 10, 265–266; 12, 168. Also: Lucan. *Phars*. 4, 788–800.

[36] *Pun*. 11, 250–251.

[37] Liv. 30, 28, 5.

[38] Hor. 3, 6, 30.

[39] Hor. 4, 4, 42.

[40] Iuv. 7, 161.

[41] Sid. Apoll. 7, 129–130.

[42] *Pun*. 8, 668–670.

[43] Liv. 23, 5, 12: […] *pontibus ac molibus ex humanorum corporum strue faciendis* […].

[44] Val. Max. 9, 2 ext., 2: *Eorum dux Hannibal, cuius maiore ex parte virtus saevitia constabat, in flumine ‹Ver›gello corporibus Romanis ponte facto exercitum transduxit* […].

[45] Flor. 1, 22, 18: *Documenta cladis cruentus aliquamdiu Aufidus, pons de cadaveribus iussu ducis factus in torrente Vergelli* […].

[46] App. *Annib.* 121.

[47] Flor. 2, 13.

and obviously Livy, whose description of the battle of Munda was part of book 115 and did not survive. Another interesting thing is that Valerius Maximus includes the description of the fortification raising in the part called *de necessitate*, while the construction of the bridge is described in the part called *de crudelitate*. In this way, the same situation, utilising corpses of the opponents as a building material is once considered a necessity, and another time it is seen as cruelty. Despite its gruesomeness it may have a somewhat positive overtone – showing the determination and the resourcefulness of the leader (provided he is not Hannibal). It might have also been some kind of a general topos, which can be proven by the fact of Arrian quoting Ptolemaios[48] in the description of Alexander's army crossing a ravine over dead bodies lying there.

What should be noted is that *crudelitas* is also a topos used to characterise bad emperors (among them Domitian; it was during his rein that *Punica* was created. The very same Domitian – according to Suetonius[49] – killed a man because he named his slaves Mago and Hannibal). Whereas the good ones were characterised by traditional Roman virtues,[50] among which we can find *clementia*.

Historians studying *Punica* believe that Silius presents actions of Hannibal as a result of *ira, furor*, and *odium*[51] – the emotions that contrast the stoic nature of Romans, but explaining perfectly the gloomy nature of Hannibal portrayed in *Punica*.

There can also be pointed that the occasional discrepancies do not change the said image of Hannibal. Neither the order *parce ferro* which is not consistent with the typical image, present in Florus[52] and Augustin,[53] nor *clementia* or *humanitas*[54] of Hannibal shown also by Silius – for example in the scene of Marcellus's[55] – or Paulus's funeral influenced the change of the way Hannibal is perceived because they were additional elements in this typified image, and as such they were usually omitted and forgotten.

The author of *Punica* preserved the stereotypical image of Hannibal but the completion of this image is original. The text of *Punica* includes all the historical facts but they are expended with the adjectives and the constant oppositions to

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[48] Arrianus *Hist*. 2, 11, 8.

[49] Suet. *Dom*. 10.

[50] I. Lewandowski: *Historiografia rzymska*. Poznań 2007, p. 409.

[51] M.A. Vinchesi: "Introduzione." In: Silio Italico: *Le guerre puniche*. Ed. M.A. Vinchesi, Vol. 1. Milano 2004, p. 41. See also *Pun*. 7, 578.

[52] Flor. 1, 22, 17.

[53] Aug. *Civ. Dei* 3, 19: *De Cannensi autem mirabiliter horrendo malo quid dicam, ubi Hannibal, cum esset crudelissimus, tamen tanta inimicorum atrocissimorum caede satiatus parci iussisse perhibetur?*

[54] Val. Max. 5, 1, ext. 6.

[55] M. Caltabiano: "La morte del console Marcello nella tradizione storiografica." In: *Storiografia e propaganda*. Ed. M. Sordi. Milano 1975, pp. 65–81; G. Brizzi: "Riflessioni sulla morte di un console." In: Idem: *Studi di storia Annibalica*. Faenza 1984, pp. 33–43.

the Romans and *Romanitas*. Owing to all that, *Punica* accomplishes its goal – the struggle of the Romans with the Carthaginians is presented in an epic form, which helps to immortalise the glory and achievements of the great old Rome. The struggle ends with victory that is repeated again and again with each new reading of *Punica*.[56]

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[56] See: R. Marks: *From Republic to Empire. Scipio Africanus in the Punica of Silius Italicus*. Frankfurt am Main 2005.

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Death in the Villa Publica The Massacre of Prisoners after the Battle of the Colline Gate

Abstract: The article concerns the massacre of prisoners that occurred at the Villa Publica few days after the Battle of the Colline Gate. The order to slay the prisoners was issued by Lucius Cornelius Sulla. The view that only Samnites had died in the massacre due to Sulla's personal hatred of those peoples is deeply embedded in historiography.

The author of the article believes that Samnites constituted only a part of the murdered prisoners in the Villa Publica. Also Sulla's motives were different – he aimed at intimidation of senators who held a meeting at the same time in the nearby Temple of Bellona. The massacre also launched reprisals against political opponents that escalated into the infamous proscriptions.

Key words: Villa Publica, Samnites, Lucius Cornelius Sulla

On the 1st of November 82 BC, Lucius Cornelius Sulla came out victorious in the battle of the Colline Gate, triumphing over the Marian forces supported by the Samnites and Lucanians, and sealed his success in the First Civil War.[1] Almost immediately after the battle, the victor acceded to a final disposal

[1] Sall. *Hist.* I, 44M; Liv. *Per.* LXXXVIII; Vell. II, 27, 1–3; Plut. *Sull.* 29, 1–30, 1; *Crass.* 6, 6; Flor. II, 9, 22–23; App. *B.C.* I, 92–93; Eutrop. V, 8; Oros. V, 20, 9. H.E. Malden: "The Battle at the Colline Gate 82 BC." *Journal of Philology* 1886, Vol. 15, pp. 103–110; E. Pozzi: "Studi sulla Guerra Civile Sillana." *Atti della Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*, 1913–1914, Vol. 49, pp. 675–679; A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*. London–Canberra 1982, pp. 143–145, 147; K. Christ: *Sulla. Eine römische Karierre*. München 2002, pp. 109–110.

of the enemies, which decision soon assumed the form of famous proscriptions.[2] However, before those repressions encompassed the broad circles of his political opponents, first, the future dictator had sentenced to death all prisoners taken captive in the last battle. The slaughter he ordered took place supposedly on the 3rd of November 82 BC, in the Villa Publica, situated nearby Bellona temple, on the Campus Martius.[3]

The massacre was described in many ancient texts and even seemed to overshadow other important events of first days of the November 82 BC, such as the inauguration of the first session of the Senate after Sulla's victory that took place at the same time in the Temple of Bellona.[4] Authors of those sources, followed by the contemporary researchers, first and foremost, perceive the massacre at the Villa Publica as the beginning of Samnite repression, led by the future dictator against those who in the last civil war supported the camp of Marius and Cinna.[5] In my opinion, however, the above notion is questionable. The purpose of this article is therefore to answer the question of who really died in the Villa Publica, what motives guided Sulla when after the victory at the Colline Gate he ordered slaughter of several thousands of defenseless prisoners, and what was the actual attitude of the dictator towards the Samnites – people he is so often accused of destroying by the modern historians.

Reconstruction of the events that took place at the Villa Publica, is made possible thanks to surviving sources. They differ extensively. Some ancient writers – such as Strabo,[6] Plutarch of Chaeronea[7] or Cassius Dio[8] – give a relatively accurate description of the accident, although some details described in the sources vary quite

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[2] T.R.S. Broughton: *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*. Vol. 2. New York 1952, p. 69 (concerning the sources). See also: C. Lanzani: *Lucio Cornelio Silla dittatore. Storia di Rome negli anni 82–78 A.C.* Milano 1936, pp. 5–25, 93–121; Ch. Meier: *Res Publica Amissa. Eine Studie zu Verfassung und Geschichte der späten römischen Republik*. Wiesbaden 1966, pp. 253–255; F. Hinard: *Les proscriptions de la Rome républicaine*. Paris–Rome 1985, pp. 17–257.

[3] Liv. *Per.* LXXXVIII; Strab. V, 4, 11; Flor. II, 9, 24–25; Sen. *Ben.* V, 16, 3, *Clem.* I, 12, 2; Val. Max. IX, 2, 1; Luc. *Phars.* 2, 196–197; Plut. *Sull.* 30, 2–6; App. *B.C.* I, 93, 432; Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 5; Auct. *Vir. Ill.* 75, 10; Oros. V, 21; Aug. *De Civ.* III, 28; Ampel. 42, 3. On the location of the Villa Publica see: S. Ball Platner, T. Ashby: *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome.* Oxford 1929, p. 581; J. Park Poe: "The Secular Games, the Aventine, and the Pomerium." *Classical Antiquity* 1984, Vol. 3, pp. 71–72.

[4] Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 153; Liv. *Per.* LXXXVIII; Val. Max. IX, 2; Flor. II, 9, 25; Vell. II, 27; Plut. *Sull.* 30–31; App. *B.C.* I, 95, 441; Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 5–9; Aug. *De Civ.* III, 28; Oros. V, 21. See: C. Lanzani: *Lucio Cornelio Silla*…, pp. 6–10; F. Hinard: *Les proscriptions*…, pp. 104–116; F.J. Vervaet: "The 'Lex Valeria' and Sulla's Empowerment as Dictator (82–79 BCE)." *Cahiers Glotz* 2004, Vol. 15, pp. 38 ff.

[5] See especially Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 1–2 and E.T. Salmon: *Samnium and the Samnites*. Cambridge 1967, pp. 386–387.

[6] Strab. V,4,11.

[7] Plut. *Sull.* 30, 1–5.

[8] Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 5–9.

radically. Other authors have left only a brief mention of the events in question, but they also provide significant and unique information.[9] Almost all written sources are, however, contaminated with pro-Sullan or anti-Sullan propaganda, which further complicates the reconstruction of the events. It is fortunately still possible, provided that one proceeds based on meticulous and comprehensive analysis of sources.

Although the ancient authors have provided a relatively large amount of data on the massacre of prisoners at the Villa Publica, so far it never resulted in the undertaking a comprehensive study. Modern scholars speak of it only in the context of a broader study of Lucius Cornelius Sulla's activities, for example in the numerous biographies of the dictator,[10] in works on the origins of the Sullan dictatorship,[11] or in a variety of more or less detailed texts on the history of decadent and decaying Republic.[12] No one so far – to the best of my knowledge – has attempted to make a thorough analysis of the said massacre, the event that, to me, seems a fascinating and a multifaceted one.

Ancient writers' accounts of the events at the Villa Publica can be divided into two distinct groups. The first – less numerous – follows the pro-Sullan tradition, perhaps derived from the dictator himself, who right to the very last few days of his life was writing memoirs.[13] The second group of writers was distinctively anti-Sullan. Its authors perceive the massacre of prisoners after the Battle of the Colline Gate as a prelude to transformation that in the following months occurred in the dictator's behaviour – from a good leader he has turned into a bloody tyrant.[14]

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[9] Liv. *Per.* LXXXVIII; Flor. II, 9, 24–25; Sen. *Ben.* V, 16, 3, *Clem.* I, 12, 2; Val. Max. IX, 2, 1; App. *B.C.* I, 93, 432; Auct. *Vir. Ill.* 75, 10; Oros. V, 21; Aug. *De Civ.* III, 28; Ampel. 42, 3.

[10] A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*…, p. 148; F. Hinard: *Sylla*. Fayard 1985, p. 187; W. Letzner: *Lucius Cornelius Sulla. Versuch einer Biographie*. Münster 2000, pp. 243–244; K. Christ: *Sulla. Eine römische Karriere*. München 2002, p. 110; G. Brizzi: *Silla*. Toma 2004, p. 157; Ł. Schreiber: *Sulla 138 – 78 p.n.e.* Zabrze 2013, pp. 261–262.

[11] C. Lanzani: *Mario e Silla. Storia della democrazia Romana negli anni 87 – 82 a. Cr.* Catania 1915, pp. 365–368; Cf. Eadem: *Lucio Cornelio Silla*…, p. 5; F. Hurlet: *La dictature de Sylla: monarchie ou magistrature republicaine. Essai d'histoire constitutionnelle*. Brusel–Rome 1993, p. 25.

[12] S. Perowne: *Death of the Roman Republic. From 146 B.C. to the Birth of the Roman Empire*. London 1969, pp. 107–108; H.H. Scullard: *From Gracchi to Nero. A History of Rome from 133 BC to AD 68*. London 1979, p. 80; R. Seager: "Sulla." In: *Cambridge Ancient History* (*CAH*). Vol. 9. Eds. J.A. Crook, A. Lintott, E. Rawson. Cambridge 1994, p. 195; M. Lovano: *The Age of Cinna: Crucible of Late Republican Rome*. Stuttgart 2002, pp. 130–132.

[13] Sulla's *Commentarii* were one of the key sources of Plutarch's description of the Sullan war. The biographer quotes it repeatedly. See: Plut. *Sull.* 27,3; 27,6; 28,8 and also H. Peter: *Die Quellen Plutarchs in den Biographieen der Römer.* Halle 1865, p. 67. On Sulla's *Commentarii* see: K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska. Okres cyceroński*. Warszawa 1977, pp. 116–117; E.S. Ramage: "Sulla's Propaganda." *Klio* 1991, Vol. 73, pp. 95–102; J. Tatum: "The Late Republic. Autobiographies and Memoirs in the Age of the Civil Wars." In: *Political Autobiographies and Memoirs in Antiquity*. Ed. G. Marasco. Leiden 2011, pp. 163–174.

[14] On this subject see: U. Laffi: "Il mito di Silla. Parte I." *Athenaeum* 1967, Vol. 45, pp. 177–213 and "Parte II," pp. 255–277; F. Hinard: "La naissance du mythe de Sylla." *Revue des Études Latines*

Some ancient authors, especially those writing during the Empire period, treated the massacre as an *exemplum* of Sulla's cruelty and a "cautionary tale" for the Roman emperors.[15]

Strabo, while describing the war of the years 83–82 BC and the Battle at the Colline Gate, corroborates the idea that these events were a continuation of the Social War. He sees Samnites as the main enemies of Rome. So when Sulla fought the decisive battle under the walls of the City and took captive so many prisoners – even though earlier he ordered that no one be taken alive – he trapped them in the Villa Publica on the Campus Martius and on the third day after the battle, ordered his soldiers to execute them all. Strabo is not sure how many of the prisoners perished in the massacre, given that they amounted to 3,000–4,000 people altogether. The massacre of Samnites intended to instigate repressions against the Samnite people. According to Strabo, it was against the powerful Samnites, that Sulla announced the proscriptions, wanting to destroy them or lead to their departure from Italy. The historian also writes of the devastation that affected Samnium during Sullan repressions, emphasizing above all the fall of Samnite cities.[16]

Strabo's narrative reflects without any doubts the pro-Sullan tradition. The historian was likely to get his information about the Civil War and the massacre at the Villa Publica from Sulla's *Commentarii*.[17] According to Strabo, Sulla waged war not against Roman citizens, but with Samnites that he treated as the arch-enemies of Rome. He overlooks the fact that Samnites, after the Social War, *de facto* obtained the Roman citizenship.[18] On the contrary, Strabo seems to believe that Sulla treated him fighting Samnites not as an act of civil war, but a war with an external enemy. After the victory, it is therefore not Roman citizens but Samnite prisoners who became victims murdered at the Villa Publica. Sulla might have orchestrated this well thought-out, anti-Samnite propaganda earlier, to persuade the old Roman citizens, thus explaining his aggression on Italy in 83 BC.[19] He continued this

1984, Vol. 62, pp. 81–97. Cf. A.B. Miączewska: "Good General Becoming Evil Tyrant: The Deconstruction of the Sullan *topos*." In: *Lucius Cornelius Sulla. History and Tradition*. Eds. D. Słapek, I. Łuć. Lublin 2013, pp. 191–212.

[15] M. Barden Dowling: "The Clemency of Sulla." *Historia* 2000, Vol. 49, p. 331.

[16] Strab. V, 4, 11. Destruction was probably still evident in the times of Strabo, who frequently crossed Samnite lands on his many trips to Rome. E.T. Salmon: *Samnium*…, p. 387. On Strabo and his journeys, see: G. Malinowski: "In vino veritas. Uzupełnienia do biografii Strabona." *Eos* 1999, Vol. 86, pp. 199–202.

[17] M. Barden Dowling: "The Clemency…," p. 330.

[18] Already in the year 87 BC, the Italians (including Samnites) were already granted the Roman citizenship. See A. Keaveney: "Sulla and Italy." *Critica Storia* 1983, Vol. 19, p. 505. Cf. T.R. Martin: "Sulla Imperator Iterum: The Samnites and Roman republican coin propaganda." *Schweizer Numismatische Rundschau* 1989, Vol. 68, pp. 37 ff., who claims that Samnites had not received Roman citizenship at that time.

[19] E.T. Salmon: *Samnium*…, pp. 383 ff.; H. Behr: *Die Selbstdarstellung Sullas. Ein aristokratischer Politiker zwischen persönlichem Führungsanspruch und Standessolidarität*. Frankfurt am Main 1993, p. 98; M. Barden Dowling: "The Clemency…," p. 330.

propaganda also when he came to power in Rome. The dictator, who wrote his work almost to the very last moments of his life, might have wanted to expose his repressions of the Italians and thus obscure his recent atrocities committed against the Roman citizens in the proscriptions period. As a result, bearing in mind pro-Sullan propaganda contained in the relevant section of the Strabo's work, one has to approach information about Samnite prisoners executed in the Villa Publica with extreme caution.

Quite accurate and varying only in details from Strabo's account of events that occurred immediately after the Battle at the Colline Gate, is Plutarch of Chaeronea's depiction of the massacre.[20] The biographer writes that shortly after the victory, Sulla went to Antemnae, a village located about 3 kilometers north of Rome, where – according to Plutarch of Chaeronea – Crassus stayed, previously chasing the enemy and winning on the right wing. Also in Antemnae fortified a large contingent of Marian soldiers but not all of them were going to fight: part of them – the biographer determines their number at 3,000 – wanted to lay down their arms and surrender to Sulla, counting on his mercy. Sulla agreed, but under a condition – those who wanted to surrender had first to have done him a favour and charge remaining defenders of Antemnae. The demand was met. Marian soldiers attacked their kinsmen, and as a result there occurred a skirmish followed by sizeable losses. Sulla – as reported by Plutarch – did not intend to keep his promise. Prisoners from Antemnae were taken with other prisoners captured after the Battle at the Colline Gate, and the total of 6,000 people were later gathered in the circus arena located near the Temple of Bellona. There, at exactly the right moment – when he spoke to senators gathered in the temple – people he designated made a pre-scheduled execution. Screams of the people being killed reached the ears of senators listening to Sulla's speech and induced horror in them, a reaction that was apparently provoked deliberately. Sulla, however, continued his speech while calming frightened senators "for it was only that some criminal were being admonished, by his orders […]."[21]

In this fragment, Plutarch clearly depicts Sulla as cunning and cruel. Apparently, the biographer abandoned the dictator's memoirs, the ones he used earlier in Sulla's biography, but also the ones he literally refers to – also while describing years of Civil War of the years 83–82 BC.[22] For Plutarch, events in the Villa Publica are the prelude for following cruelty of Sulla that surfaces during proscriptions.

Sulla's transformation is even more visible in Cassius Dio's narration. The historian writes that "Sulla up to the day that he conquered the Samnites had been a conspicuous figure, possessing the greatest renown for his generalship and his

[20] Plut. *Sull*. 30, 1–5.

[21] Plut. *Sull*. 30, 3. Cf. Sen. *Clem*. I, 12, 2.

[22] Plut. *Sull*. 27, 3; 27, 6; 28, 8. L. Piotrowicz: *Plutarch a Appian. Studia źródłowe do historii Rzymu w epoce rewolucji. Okres I (133 – 70)*. Poznań 1921, p. 125.

plans, and was believed to be a very superior man both in humaneness and piety, so that he had believed all Fortune as an ally because of his excellence. But after this event he changed so much that one would not say his earlier and his later deeds were those of the same person."[23] Subsequently, Cassius Dio discusses events that took place immediately after the Battle at the Colline Gate. Repressions that Sulla ordered at that time were aimed at prisoners, who had already laid down arms. Some of them were killed as soon as the fighting ended. Others Sulla ordered to be slaughtered in the Villa Publica and it was probably where he commanded soldiers to fight among themselves. Cassius Dio also claims that among those driven to the Villa Publica were numerous accidentally apprehended people from the City.[24] Further on, Cassius Dio's narrative is compatible with Plutarch's account of events – simultaneously with the massacre of the prisoners, in a nearby Temple of Bellona Sulla convened a meeting with the Senate. Screams of the murdered soon reached senators, inciting their fear. Bodies of slaughtered soldiers were thrown into nearby river. And it is where the historian smoothly moves to the bloody repressions of the dictatorship period.[25]

Neither Plutarch nor Cassius Dio indicate who were the prisoners killed nearby Temple of Bellona. It is true that Cassius Dio emphasizes that Sulla defeated the Samnites near the Colline Gate, but among the victims of Sullan repression that begun after the battle he lists for instance, Damasippus, who was not a Samnite. Plutarch's relation is also unclear as to who were the prisoners taken captive after the Battle at the Colline Gate. It is only known that some of them – approximately 3,000, diminished by the number of soldiers killed in the course of the battle with their own companions – fought on the left wing of Marian troops and were subordinates of Censorinus, Carrinas and Damasippus, and therefore probably were Marians/Cinnans – (old) Roman citizens.[26] On the basis of Plutarch's and Cassius Dio's relations, it cannot be definitively determined who were the people gathered and murdered in the Villa Publica, and it certainly cannot be said that the ones killed were Samnites only.

Other ancient authors that mention the massacre, do it rather laconically. The author who summarizes the works of Livy reports that Sulla had killed 8,000 of all those who surrendered to him after battle, in the Villa Publica.[27] Similar circumstances and the killed are described by other historians, varying only in numbers given. As such, Valerius Maximus writes about four legions of enemies that

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[23] Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 1–2.

[24] Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 5: "and there perished along with them many persons from the city who were mixed in among them."

[25] Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 6–21.

[26] On the left wing probably fought also Lucanians, shoulder to shoulder with the Cinnans. See A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*…, p. 147.

[27] Liv. *Per.* LXXXVIII: *VIII milia dediticiorum in villa publica trucidauit*.

were completely annihilated,[28] Florus mentions 4,000 defenseless citizens killed,[29] Ampellius describes the killed as remaining opponents of Sulla, who surrendered to the dictator, however, he does not specify their number,[30] author of *De viris illustribus*, attributed to Aurelius Victor, talks about 9,000 dead among those who surrendered to Sulla.[31] Saint Augustine, in turn, informs of 7,000 killed, all of whom were defenseless and not fighting back.[32] All of the aforementioned authors are clearly unanimous when it comes to naming the Villa Publica as the place of the massacre. Seneca the Younger does not specify the place of slaughter, and only notes that after the victory Sulla ordered to kill two legions of helpless prisoners, to whom he had promised security.[33] Orosius, on the other hand, talks about 3,000 unarmed people, who surrendered to Sulla via messengers.[34] None of these writers claims that the killed were Samnites, and Florus and Seneca clearly say that victims of the Villa Publica were citizens and it is highly unlikely that they meant the Samnites in this case.

The only author (apart from Strabo) who mentions the Samnites among the dead of the Battle at the Colline Gate is Appian of Alexandria. He mentions 8,000 captives killed, majority of whom were Samnites.[35] However, Appian does not provide the reader with circumstances preceding the slaughter. Therefore, it is not sure – yet still probable – that Appian refers to the massacre in the Villa Publica. What is more, Alexandrian historian is very adamant in claiming that not all of the prisoners killed after the battle were Samnites. Apart from them, there had to be people of other ethnicities – the Italians (Lucanians), or Roman citizens, representatives of Cinna and Marius faction.

Along those lines, regarding the identity of the prisoners executed in the Villa Publica two distinctly separate traditions were preserved. The first is derived from Sulla or the authors favouring his politics, and represented by Strabo and partly by Appian. It assumes that the repressions that took place after the Battle of the Colline Gate, were aimed at Samnites – eternal enemies of Rome, who once again threatened the Republic. Sulla not only punished them for defecting from Rome,

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[28] Val. Max. IX, 2, 1: *Quattuor legiones contrariae partis fidem suam secutas in publica villa nequiquam fallacis dexterae misericordiam implorantes obtruncari iussit.*

[29] Flor. II, 9, 23–24: *Quattuor milia deditorum inermium civium in Villa Publica interfici iussit.*

[30] Amp. 42, 3: *reliquias adversariorum eorum, qui se dediderant, in villa publica trucidavit.*

[31] Auct. *Vir. Ill.* 75, 10: *Novem milia dediticiorum in villa publica cecidit.*

[32] Aug. *De Civ.* III, 28: *Urbem deinde Sulla victor intravit, qui in villa publica non iam bello, sed ipsa pace saeviente septem milia deditorum (unde utique inermia) non pugnando.*

[33] Sen. *Ben.* V, 16, 3: *legiones duas, quod crudele est, post victoriam, quod nefas, post fidem in angulo congestas contrucidavit.* Cf. Sen. *Clem.* I, 12, 2: *septem milia civium Romanorum contrucidari iussit.*

[34] Oros. V, 21: *Sylla mox atque urbem victor intravit, tria milia hominum, qui se per legatos dediderant, contra fas contraque fidem datam inermes securosque interfecit.*

[35] App. *B.C.* I, 93, 432: "Prisoners, to the number of more than 8,000, were shot down with darts by Sulla because they were mostly Samnites."

but also decided to destroy all Samnites or expel them from Italy forever. According to this tradition, the victims killed by Sulla's orders in the Villa Publica were Samnites.[36]

Other tradition was perpetuated by Livy's work, who most probably intertwined pro-Sullan and anti-Sullan traditions, creating a dichotomous image of Sulla – the one of the good leader becoming a cruel tyrant.[37] The boundary line lies very clearly in the events in the Villa Publica. Up to this moment, the cruelty was – according to Livy – on the Marians' side, while Sulla was characterized by leniency toward the enemy and the will of creating understanding with Senate. Since the Colline Gate battle, Sulla has become a bloody tyrant, who murders 8,000 prisoners. The author of the Livus' *Periochae* writes of Sulla's ordering slaughter in the Villa Publica, but he never mentions Samnites among the victims. The dead are called citizens, which could be suggesting Marians, and may be understood as either Romans or the Italians.[38]

The question arises whether Sulla's hatred turned against Samnites after the Colline Gate battle? What was Sulla's attitude toward them before the Villa Publica massacre happened?

Contemporary scholars present two perspectives. The first assumes that Sulla harboured personal hatred towards the Samnites, and he certainly exhibited it in his *Commentarii.*[39] It was to be rooted in the history of his family – the last of Sulla's great ancestors, P. Cornelius Rufinus was a great enemy of the Samnites. Personal hatred of Sulla towards the Samnites was kindled during the Social War, when he waged war against them,[40] and deepened even further when Samnites were not completely defeated and were able to dictate their own terms of the settlement.[41] Also during Cinna's *dominatio* Samnites were able to maintain their in-

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[36] Majority of modern authors believe that Samnites were the only victims in the Villa Publica. For example, see: G. Bagnani: "*Sullani Manes* and Lucan's Rhetoric." *Phoenix* 1955, Vol. 9, p. 28; M. Lovano: *The Age of Cinna*…, p. 132; C. Williamson: *The Laws of the Roman People. Public Law in the Expansion and Decline of the Roman Republic*. University of Michigan 2005, p. 334; A. Thein: "Sulla the Weak Tyrant." In: *Ancient Tyrany*. Ed. S. Lewis. Edinburgh 2006, p. 244.

[37] M. Barden Dowling: "The Clemency…," pp. 324–330.

[38] Samnites, therefore, constituted only a fraction of all prisoners killed in the Villa Publica. Cf. E.T. Salmon: *Samnium* …, p. 386, who while recognizing that not only Samnites were among the victims, also believes that it was against those people that Sulla introduced repressions after the Civil War, and the massacre at the Villa Publica was one of the stages of those repressions.

[39] Plut. *Sull*. 29, 4. See E.T. Salmon: *Samnium*…, p. 383.

[40] T.R.S. Broughton: *The Magistrates*… Vol. 2, p. 36 (the sources). See also: P.A. Brunt: *Italian Manpower 225 B.C. - A.D. 14*. Oxford 1971, pp. 438–440; E. Gabba: "Rome and Italy: The Social War." *CAH*, Vol. 9, pp. 120–125; T. Corey Brennan: *The Praetorship in the Roman Republic*. Vol. 1. Oxford 2000, pp. 374–377.

[41] Liv. *Per.* LXXX. See E.T. Salmon: "Sulla Redux." *Athenaeum* 1964, Vol. 42, pp. 60–79; A. Keaveney: "Sulla and Italy…," p. 504. Cf. T.R. Martin: "Sulla Imperator Iterum…," p. 39, who claims that "we cannot take this statement in the *Epitome* about a grant of citizenship to the Italic peoples as evidence that the Samnites actually became citizens in 87 B.C. as part of this group."

dependence.[42] Sulla, returning from the East to Italy in 83 BC, could include in his programme the idea of total annihilation of Samnites as the eternal rival of Rome and to counter the threat of Samnite aggression once and for all. But the most certain proof of Sulla's hatred for the Samnites is – according to aforementioned researchers – Sulla's repressions of Samnites during, and immediately after the First Civil War. It was during the massacre at the Villa Publica that Sulla ordered cold-blooded murder of several thousand Samnites and the subsequent destruction of Samnium, which was never to revive in the future.[43]

Recently the notion of Sulla's deeply-harboured hatred for the Samnites is being increasingly questioned in various studies. Researchers representing different opinions believe that the Samnites probably remained under arms during the reign of Cinna, and even then retained a certain degree of independence from Rome.[44] Some historians even draw a conclusion that, in principle, the First Civil War cannot be entirely separated from the Social War. It is mostly due to the fact that Cinna, during the period of his rule, did nothing to end the conflict.[45]

Even if we assume that during the *triennium sine armis* the Samnites laid down their arms and suspended hostilities towards Rome, it may be assumed that this fragile ceasefire would have crumbled when Sulla returned to Italy. It is a well-known fact that Sulla negotiated with the Senate about his return in the year 85 BC.[46] In 83 BC, Samnites in no way responded to Sulla's invasion and did not even disturb him in passing through their own territory.[47] Samnites' neutrality probably stemmed from the fact that immediately after landing in Italy, Sulla guaranteed the Italians all the rights that were previously approved by the Cinnans.[48] Relations between Samnites and Sulla in 83 BC were neutral at the least and clearly deterio-

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[42] E. Badian: *Foreign Clientelae*. Oxford 1958, p. 240 versus C.M. Bulst: "Cinnanum Tempus: A Reassessment of the Dominatio Cinnae." *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 1964, Vol. 13, p. 326.

[43] E. Bispham: *From Asculum to Actium. The Municipalization of Italy from the Social War to Augustus*. Oxford 2007, p. 2, n. 4, for older literature.

[44] R. Syme: *Roman Revolution*. Oxford 1939, p. 87; E. Badian: *Foreign Clientelae*…. p. 240, note 2.; P.A. Brunt: *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays*. Oxford 1988, p. 110; A. Sherwin-White: *The Roman Citizenship*. Oxford 1996, pp. 147–149, 155. Cf. E.T. Salmon: "Sulla Redux…," pp. 70–71.

[45] A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*…, p. 136; H. Mouritsen: *Italian Unification. A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography*. London 1998, pp. 10, 168.

[46] Plut. *Sull*. 27–28; App. *B.C.* I, 77–79. B. Frier: "Augural Symbolism in Sulla's Invasion of 83." *American Numismatic Society. Museum Notes* 1967, Vol. 13, pp. 112–116; T. Ładoń: "Sulla's Peace Negotiations with Cinna's Faction in 85–83 B.C." In: *Lucius Cornelius Sulla. History and Tradition*. Eds. D. Słapek, I. Łuć. Lublin 2013, pp. 91–102.

[47] Vell. II, 25, 1. See B.W. Frier: "Sulla's Propaganda: The Collapse of the Cinnan Republic." *Ancient Journal of Philology* 1971, Vol. 92, p. 598.

[48] A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*…, pp. 136 f.; Idem: "Sulla and Italy…," pp. 508–509; Idem: *Rome and the Unification of Italy*. London–Sydney 1987, p. 187; M. Lovano: *The Age of Cinna*…, pp. 115 f.

rated in the winter of 83 BC. The future dictator negotiated at that time with the Italics, and the Samnites probably did not participate in this process.[49] However, the assumption that Sulla did not want to negotiate with Samnites is illogical – why would he give up such excellent soldiers, who by the end of 83 BC did not yet support Marians? Apparently it was Samnites who did not want to take part in negotiations, and at the beginning of 82 BC already supported the Cinna-Marian faction. The sources, however, lack any information about what kind of motives led to this decision. Something must have happened that made Samnites abandon their neutral position in the war between Sulla and Cinna's and Marius' supporters. And this reason was rather not the realization that after the victory Sulla would have focused his hatred on their people and victimize them. Had the Samnites harboured such fears, they would probably have risen against Sulla immediately after his arrival to Italy, and even if they would have not opted for an open battle, they would at least have made it difficult for Sulla to march across Italy. Meanwhile, in 83 BC Sulla travelled through the Samnites' country untroubled. Samnites' uprising against Sulla in 82 BC brought forth circumstances that were never reported by ancient authors. Perhaps the Samnites from the very beginning wanted more than Sulla promised to them – therefore, their aim was no longer to preserve the already obtained rights, but confirmation of their independence from Rome.[50] Sulla's firm refusal could push them towards his opponents, who may have guaranteed a better chance of realization of these ambitions.

It is difficult to accept the idea of Samnites being willingly victimized after the Sullan War (83–82 BC). Punishment that fell on those people – even if we accept the view that a good portion of the prisoners executed at the Villa Publica were Samnites – was not any harsher than that suffered by, for instance, residents of Preaneste in the wake of capturing the city by Sullan army at the end of 82 BC.[51] Of course, the fall of Samnium in the 1st century BC became a reality, and the memory of this destruction was still alive in the days of Strabo. But it was most likely the outcome of the Social War and Civil War, not repressions that subsequently affected Samnium. There are no visible differences between Sulla's treatment of Samnium and other parts of Italy. No one denies – and this must be clearly stated – that Sulla treated Samnites harshly. It was no different, however, from how he treated other Italians and political opponents in Rome.[52]

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[49] Liv. *Per.* LXXXVI. A. Keaveney: "Sulla and Italy…," p. 509; T.R. Martin: "Sulla Imperator Iterum…," p. 39.

[50] E. Badian: *Foreign Clientelae*…, pp. 240 ff.; A. Sherwin-White: *The Roman Citozenship*…, pp. 148–149, 155; E. Bispham: *From Asculum*…, p. 200, n. 193.

[51] Liv. *Per.* LXXXVIII; Vell. II, 27; Val Max. IX, 2, 1; App. *B.C.* I, 94; Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 4. See: A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*…, p. 148 f.; M. Lovano: *The Age of Cinna*…, pp. 131–132, n. 80.

[52] A. Keaveney: "Sulla and Italy…," p. 531: "Sulla's treatment of Samniium was undoubtedly harsh but not harsher than his treatment of the rest of Italy." See also F. Santangelo: *Sulla,*

Sulla had, as it seems, no reason to punish Samnites specifically after the victorious battle at the Colline Gate. The massacre at the Villa Publica was, therefore, not directed exclusively against them – it was a brutal execution of prisoners captured after victorious battle, regardless whether they were Samnites or not. Indecisiveness of ancient writers as to who was killed during this massacre can be the best evidence of that. And so, in the Villa Publica were gathered those who surrendered after the defeat in the Battle of the Colline Gate: Roman citizens from Marian army, as well as Samnites and Lucanians supporting them. It is possible, at the same time, that among those killed were also random citizens of Rome, who took part in one of the stages of the battle. It may be them who Cassius Dio mentions in already cited, obscure fragment of his narration.[53]

But since the massacre at the Villa Publica was not likely a punishment of only Samnites, for yet another defection from Rome, the question arises whether Sulla had reasons for such a cruel proceedings against captured prisoners. Even at first glance it seems obvious that the events described in the sources resemble a well-planned and directed spectacle. The slaughter began at precisely specified time, in a carefully selected location and had to prompt a meticulously thought-out effect. The analogy with Sulla's fondness of acting is in this case very accurate.[54] Certainly, it is impossible to agree with the assumption provided by one of the authors that Sulla organized the massacre in the Villa Publica for his own enjoyment, to relax after a difficult war.[55] The slaughter had very precise and pragmatic purpose. It was aimed at intimidating senators and used to force them into submission. Sulla not only expected Senate to approve all of his regulations that he issued in the East and to cancel all already enacted laws that were unfavourable to him, but he also wanted to obtain permission to gain authority to punish political opponents.[56] The Senate, as it seems, did not give Sulla control he applied for, even while proceeding under such pressure. As a result, Sulla was forced to exercise his dictatorship and approved of the proscriptions aimed at, among others, elimination of his political opponents.

The massacre at the Villa Publica was not – which is worth acknowledging – a precedent in terms of the ways in which prisoners and opponents were punished in the times of decaying Republic. Similar events had already taken place in the years prior to the massacre. The most spectacular in terms of the number of casualties was

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the Elites and the Empire. A Study of Roman Policies in Italy and the Greek East. Leiden–Boston 2007, p. 143, n. 31.

[53] Cass. Dio *fr.* 109, 5.

[54] Since his youth, Sulla surrounded himself with mimes and actors, he even tried his hand at writing, creating Atella (*Atellanae Fabulae*) – folk comedies of rather unrefined content. See: Val. Max. VI, 9, 6; Plut. *Sull*. 2, 3; 36, 1. A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*…, p. 9. See also C. Garton: "Sulla and the Theatre." *Phoenix* 1964, Vol. 18, pp. 137–156.

[55] Ł. Schreiber: *Sulla*…, p. 262.

[56] F. Hurlet: *La dictature de Sylla*…, p. 25; F.J. Vervaet: "The Lex Valeria…," p. 38. See also T. Ładoń: "Kilka uwag o posiedzeniu senatu w świątyni Bellony 3 listopada 82 roku przed Chr.". In: *Elity w świecie starożytnym*. Ed. M. Cieśluk. Szczecin 2015, pp. 151–163.

Cinna's and Sertorius' slaughter of 4,000 Marian henchmen, who were recruited from among slaves and previously used by *populares* to seize the power, whereupon they became disposable.[57] Another manifestation of Marian brutality were grisly persecutions of alleged Sullans in Rome that occurred after breaking off negotiations with Sulla at the end of 83 BC.[58] They were not, perhaps, as cruel as the massacre at the Villa Publica, however, they included many prominent and distinguished Roman citizens. Also, during Sulla's absence from Rome, his followers, and even his family, were subjected to repressions.[59] All of the above may suggest that after the victory, Sulla was aiming to avenge the murders of his allies.[60] Perhaps, the carnage in the Villa Publica should therefore be seen as demonstration of Sulla's thirst for revenge, and barely an introduction to further persecutions.

The Villa Publica massacre also became an *exemplum* of Sulla's cruelty and brutality, exposed especially by future historians writing during the Principate period.[61] This was to be a warning for future emperors, illustrating how corruptive the excessive power may be, and how it may unleash cruelty in the ruler. For Sulla's contemporaries the massacre was, however, only the aftermath of the brutal Civil War and the prelude to a new wave of persecutions, or Sullan proscriptions. Interestingly enough, authors of that time, whose writings have survived to the present day, do not mention the events of the Villa Publica. It is especially frustrating in case of Cicero, who never mentions the massacre, even though he describes Sulla's cruelty in the number of his works.[62]

To conclude, the idea that Sulla was guided by personal hatred for Samnites when ordering Villa Publica massacre, does not appear to have been correct. Even if Samnites actually were executed in this massacre, they constituted only a fraction of the prisoners captured after the Battle of the Colline Gate. There is also no strong evidence that would confirm victimization of the Samnites after Sulla's victory in the Civil War, and the massacre of prisoners no different. The main objective of the carnage was to intimidate and terrorize senators and build their support for the authority of the new regime. It also was a prelude to the subsequent repressions carried out against political opponents, and it symbolically represented the starting point for the image of Sulla as a tyrant.

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[57] Plut. *Mar.* 44; App. *B.C.* I, 74; Oros. V, 19, 24. See T. Ładoń: *Wojna sertoriańska (80 – 71 przed Chr.).* Oświęcim 2011, pp. 31–32.

[58] Liv. *Per.* CXXXVII; App. *B.C.* I, 88, 403–406. M. Lovano: *The Age of Cinna*…, p. 126 and n. 61 concerning other sources.

[59] App. *B.C.* I, 73, 336–340; 81, 371. A. Keaveney: *Sulla. The Last Republican*…, p. 85; M. Lovano: *The Age of Cinna*…, pp. 48–49.

[60] P. Madejski: "Sullańskie proskrypcje a zemsta w Rzymie." In: *Świat starożytny. Państwo i społeczeństwo.* Eds. R. Kulesza, M. Stępień, E. Szabat, M. Daszuta. Warszawa 2013, pp. 239–247.

[61] M. Barden Dowling: "The Clemency"…, pp. 331–336.

[62] H. Diehl: *Sulla und seine Zeit im Urteil Ciceros*. Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 1988, pp. 12, 15, 119–121, 158, 165, 223, 225.

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When the Dead Love the Living: A Case Study in Phlegon of Tralles's *Mirabilia*

> …. [the nurse] went to the door of the guest room, and in the light of the burning lamp she saw the girl sitting beside Machates. Because of the extraordinary nature of the sight, she did not wait there any longer but ran to the girl's mother screaming, 'Charito! Demostratos!' She said they should get up and come with her to their daughter, who was alive and by some divine will was with the guest in the guest room.[1]

Abstract: An interesting narrative about a revenant found in the first chapter of the *Mirabilia*, a collection of marvelous stories by Phlegon of Tralles (2nd century AD), has been examined and interpreted by many. Scholars usually discussed the narrative's origin, composition, and style, and also the vague identity of the main character of the story, a girl by the name of Philinnion, and her affiliation with ghost-lore. No one of them, however, attempted to locate Philinnion within the category of the restless dead which she seems to belong to, namely, ἄωροι – the prematurely dead. This distinct type of the dead, as is inferred from numerous ancient literary and non-literary sources, was believed to be especially prone to interaction with the living. In this article I attempt to examine the figure of Philinnion in the context of beliefs in the prematurely dead by means of which I hope to better explain crucial problems encountered by modern readers by answering questions regarding Philinnion's identity and her rationale for returning to the world of the living.

Key words: Phlegon of Tralles, revenants, ghosts, restless dead

[1] Phlegon, *Mir*.1.: <***> εἰς τὸν ξενῶνα προσπορεύεται ταῖς θύραις, καὶ καιομένου τοῦ λύχνου καθημένην <ε>ἶδεν τὴν ἄνθρωπον παρὰ τῷ Μαχάτῃ. οὐκ ἔτι δὲ καρτερήσασα πλείονα χρόνον διὰ τὸ θαυμαστὸν τῆς φαντασίας τρέχει πρὸς τὴν μητέρα, καὶ βοήσασα μεγάλῃ τῇ φωνῇ "Χαριτοῖ" καὶ "Δημόστρατε" ᾤετο δεῖν ἀναστάντας ἐπὶ τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοὺς μετ' αὐτῆς πορεύεσθαι· πεφηνέναι γὰρ ζῶσαν εἶναί τε μετὰ τοῦ ξένου διά τινα θείαν βούλησιν ἐν τῷ ξενῶνι. Trans. by W. Hansen: *Phlegon of Tralles' Book of Marvels*, Exeter 1996, p. 25. All quotations from the *Mirabilia*, unless stated otherwise, are taken from this edition.

The quotation used as the motto of this article is how one of the most beautiful and mysterious narratives of ancient literature begins. The text comes from a compilation of marvelous stories, the so-called *Mirabilia* (*On Marvels*) by Phlegon of Tralles, a Greek freedman of the emperor Hadrian (reigned 117–138 AD).

In fact, as one easily realizes, the said quotation is not the original beginning of the story. The *Mirabilia* have survived to our times in a single manuscript, the Palatinus Graecus 398, which is corrupted. Therefore, the first part of the narrative has been lost: today it begins, literally, *in medias res* – it opens in mid-sentence, of which we learn that a nurse approaching the door of a guestroom finds that the guest is not alone but is accompanied by a woman. To her horror she immediately recognizes the woman as Philinnion – her master and mistress's daughter who died some time before.

Speaking in Riddles: The Plot of the Story

Due to the text's incompleteness, the identity of the protagonists remains unknown to the modern reader. Fortunately, the lost fragment can be supplied from Proklos (*In Rem Publicam Commentarii* 2.116 Kroll), who provides, although a much shorter, version of the same story. Proklos, in turn, quotes as his source a certain Naumachios of Epeiros, a personality not known from elsewhere, who is located by scholars in the 4th century AD, since Proklos, living in the 5th century himself, dates him as being of his grandfathers' generation. Phlegon, Naumachios, and Proklos most likely used the same source for their accounts.

After patching the two versions together[2] – the one by Phlegon and that by Proklos – we obtain the following tale: In the Greek city of Amphipolis a couple, that is Demostratos and Charito, marry their daughter Philinnion to a man named Krateros. The girl dies shortly after the wedding and is buried in the family tomb. Six months later a young man, Machates, comes from Pella and visits the girl's parents' house. He resides in the guest room. Machates receives a nocturnal visit from a girl by the name of Philinnion. Apparently, he is not aware of the fact that she is the hosts' recently deceased daughter. The young man and woman spend the night together and exchange love-tokens – she gives him a gold ring and he gives her an iron one and a gilded wine cup. The girl leaves unnoticed before daybreak. During the second night the nurse discovers her presence in the guest room and reports this fact to the girl's mother, Charito. On the third night, Charito and Demostratos (the girl's father), having been informed discreetly about her arrival

[2] Erwin Rohde in his study "Zu den *Mirabilia* des Phlegon." *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 1877, Vol. 32, pp. 329–339, was the first who collated the text by Phlegon with that by Proklos.

by Machates, interrupt their meeting and find their daughter who died half a year earlier. Philinnion accuses her parents of meddling in her affairs that should remain undisclosed to them since her return came by divine will. After saying that, she drops dead again. The despaired parents and the entire house begin their mourning anew. The rumour of what happened quickly spreads throughout the city and comes to the ears of the governor. He keeps the crowds, attracted by the news, who come to Philinnion's parents' house, in check. The next day a great crowd gathers at the theater where the matter is then discussed. It is decided to open up Philinnion's tomb to see whether her body lies on its bier. On entering the chamber the governor and his men find the bones or the bodies of all of Philinnion's dead ancestors in place, but her own bier is empty, beside it lie the iron ring and golden cup that Machates had given her on the first night. Astonished and terrified, they proceed to Philinnion's house again, where they find her body stretched out on the floor. An assembly is called during which such a serious matter is discussed again. A certain Hyllos, regarded as a wise man and excellent augur, bids to bury the girl's body outside the city's boundaries and to propitiate the Chthonic Hermes and the Eumenides. He also tells the governor in private that he should inform his king about the prophetic implications of the episode and that a sacrifice should be made to Hermes, Zeus Xenios and Ares. His instructions are carefully carried out. But Machates kills himself in despondency.

Really Dead? Philinnion's Identity

Here this beautiful, novella-like narrative ends. Its appeal lies mainly in the atmosphere of mystery and in a plot full of riddles; for the plot poses many questions which, in the majority, avoid clear and simple answers. The most intriguing riddle is certainly the vague identity of the girl by the name of Philinnion – the main character of the story. Thus the general questions concerning this issue are: Who actually is Philinnion: is she a ghost or not? What was her purpose to come to Charito and Demostratos's house? Why does she visit Machates? In this article, I will attempt to answer these questions by examining the narrative's main episodes, by means of which I hope to explain the key problems encountered by the modern reader and to obtain and interpret the overall meaning of the story. Many scholars have been interested in this narrative and have especially discussed its origin, composition, and style, but also the figure of Philinnion as the revenant and her affiliation with ghost-lore[3]; no one, however, attempted to locate Philinnion

[3] To name but a few: E. Rohde: "Zu den *Mirabilia*…," pp. 329–339; P. Wendland: "Antike Geister- und Gespenstergeschichten." In: *Festschrift zur Jahrunderfeier der Universität zu Breslau*

within the category of the restless dead which she seems to belong to, namely, the ἄωροι – the prematurely dead. This special type of the dead, as is inferred from numerous ancient literary and non-literary sources, was believed to be especially prone to interact with the living. By means of examining the figure of Philinnion in the context of the prematurely dead I hope to solve the riddles found in the plot and to better explain the main character's identity and her rationale for returning to the world of the living.

Philinnion's identity and motives for her return are the crucial problems encountered by the reader of the narrative. For from the very beginning until the end Philinnion escapes neither easy categorization into the living nor the dead. During the whole course of action she is never explicitly named a ghost nor dead, and a description of her is not provided by the narrator. We have but a few words by which she is referred to in the narrative: several times the term ἡ ἄνθρωπος (a female human, a woman) appears; also a couple of times her name – Philinnion – is used; once, in the scene when she "dies again" she is described as dead (νεκρά). And finally, at the very end of the story, she is explicitly called φάσμα (a ghost, an apparition) – obviously for the sake of surprise and sensation. As Debbie Felton[4] aptly observes, such a description of Philinnion as being a ghost or a phantom (φάσμα) indicates that Greek terminology did not distinguish between insubstantial and embodied apparitions, for evidently she is a corporeal ghost, namely – a revenant. Of that we have many proofs, yet not explicit, as everything can be deduced only from her appearance and behaviour. And she looks and acts like a real girl to the extent that she is able to delude the young man, Machates, who does not least suspect that he is dealing with someone or something other than a living woman. First of all, Philinnion wears casual clothes; and clothes are used as proof of her being alive – Machates shows to the girl's mother her breast-band that she left as well as the golden ring that he received from her the night before.

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im Namen der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde. Ed. T. Siebs. Breslau 1911, pp. 9–32; L. Collison Morley: *Greek and Roman Ghost Stories*. Oxford 1912. J.C. Lawson: "ΠΕΡΙ ΑΛΙΒΑΝΤΩΝ. Part 1." In: *The Classical Review* 1926, Vol. 40, no. 2, pp. 52–58; and more recently by: W. Hansen: *Phlegon of Tralles…*; Idem: "An ancient Greek ghost story." In: *Folklore on Two Continents: Essays in Honor of Linda Dégh*. Eds. N. Burlakoff, C. Lindahl. Bloomington, IN 1980, pp. 71–77; Idem: "Contextualizing the story of Philinnion." In: *Midwestern Folklore* 1989, Vol. 15, pp. 101–108; J. Radner: "The Woman Who Went to Hell. Coded Values in Irish Folk Narrative." In: *Midwestern Folklore* 1989, Vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 109–117; D. Felton: *Haunted Greece and Rome*. Austin 1999; A. Stramaglia: "Sul Peri thaumasion di Flegonte di Tralle." In: *Studi Classici e Orientali* 1995, Vol. 45, pp. 191–234; Idem: "Tre « femmes fatales » soprannaturali." In: *Vicende e figure femminili*. Ed. R. Rafaelli. Ancona 1995, pp. 217–226; Idem: *"Res inaudite, incredulae": storie di fantasmi nel mondo greco-latino*. Bari 1999; Idem: *Eros: antiche trame greche d'amore*. Bari 2000; D. Ogden: *Witches, Wizards and the Dead in the Ancient World*. London 2008; J.R. Morgan: "Love from beyond the Grave: The Epistolary Ghost-Story in Phlegon of Tralles." In: *Epistolary Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*. Eds. O. Hodkinson, P. Rosenmeyer, E. Bracke. Brill. Leiden Boston 2013, pp. 293–321.

[4] D. Felton: *Haunted Greece…*, p. 25.

The clothes appear once again in quite a strange context, when Machates suspects the girl he has met to be dressed in dead Philinnion's clothes. Such a morbid idea appears in his mind when he tries to explain to himself Philinnion's parents' claim that his mysterious mistress is their dead daughter. His explanation relies on the idea that some robbers opened Philinnion's tomb, took off her clothes and then sold them to the other girl's father.

Yet Philinnion acts like a real girl: she uses her own body in the same way the living do. She eats and drinks with Machates (δειπνούσης μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ συμπινούσης) and, most importantly, she is able to have sexual intercourse with him. The latter is stated explicitly, since we learn that Machates "did not believe that he consorted/had sex with a dead girl" (οὐ πιστεύων εἰ νεκρᾷ πλησιάζοι); although the verb πλησιάζειν is ambiguous, meaning "to consort with" but also "to have sexual intercourse with," thus we guess that the youngsters had begun an intimate relationship and we can infer from Philinnion's confession that she came to Machates driven by desire/lust (ἐπιθυμία). Her ability to have such close and intimate contact with Machates means that her body – her scent and temperature – did not differ from the real body of a living person. Therefore, she was a reanimated corpse but, so to say, a fresh and good-looking corpse: a seductive revenant. Her ghostly identity is explicitly revealed and confirmed in the final part of the story. The reader learns that "Machates, the guest whom the ghost (φάσμα) visited, became despondent and killed himself." For the first and last time the word "ghost" appears, and, as a matter of fact, it is perversely mentioned somewhat passingly, as if Philinnion's real identity was obvious from the very beginning. The end of the story reveals the mystery of the main character's ambiguous identity, but does not explain at all Philinnion's motives for her return.

"Neither properly dead nor properly alive" Why Do the Dead Return?

The reader is then left alone with the question concerning Philinnion's rationale for returning and visiting Machates. Although one may intuitively work out that her general motivation was love, the problem arises of the dead's capacity to feel emotions and desires. Therefore, Philinnion's particular case needs to be examined in the broader context of popular religion and ideas about the afterlife. However, depicting such a context in ancient Greek and Roman culture appears to be a truly difficult task, since in antiquity there was no single coherent concept regarding the existence after death: we are dealing with a true mix of different – sometimes even conflicting – ideas that were preserved mainly in literary

sources. The said inconsistencies are clearly indicated by an English author, Sir Thomas Browne (1605–1682), in his work *Hydriotaphia*, whose words I quote after Felton[5]:

> The departed spirits know things past and to come, yet are ignorant of things present. Agamemnon fortels what should happen unto *Ulysses*, yet ignorantly enquires what is become of his own Son. The Ghosts are afraid of swords in *Homer*, yet *Sibylla* tells *Aeneas* in *Virgil*, the thin habit of spirits was beyond the force of weapon. The spirits put off their malice with their bodies, and *Caesar* and *Pompey* accord in Latine Hell, yet *Ajax* in Homer endures not a conference with *Ulysses*: And *Deiphobus* appears all mangled in *Virgils* Ghosts, yet we meet with perfect shadows among the wounded ghosts in *Homer*.[6]

At the beginning of the 20th century Lacy Collison-Morley[7] pointed out the ancients' confusion when they came to picture the afterlife. What we get from the sources is, actually, according to the scholar, a combination of elaborate Greek mythology with the primitive beliefs of Italy, and of Greece also, in spirits of the dead that live in the tomb with the body. Along with cremation gradually superseding a burial, the idea of the possible independent existence of the soul appeared.[8] Briefly, according to Keith Hopkins's words,[9] Greek and Roman beliefs "ranged from the completely nihilistic denial of afterlife, through a vague sense of souls' existence, to a concept of the individual soul's survival and of personal survival in a recognizable form."

It seems, however, that some fixed ideas about why some of the dead were restless existed. "In many cultures – says Sarah Iles Johnston[10] – both ancient and modern, three types of dead are almost always presumed to be dangerously restless: those who have not received funeral rites (ἄταφοι), the untimely or prematurely dead (ἄωροι), and those who have died violently (βι(αι)οθάνατοι)." From explicit or implicit mentions in many ancient sources, as various as Homer, Virgil, Plato, Apuleius, Pausanias, Tertullian, or Suidas, we infer that these categories of restless dead also functioned in ancient Greece and Rome; it would be difficult, however, to say to what point such a classification was developed. A brief survey of some of these beliefs may shed some light on the meaning of Philinnion's story.

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[5] D. Felton: *Haunted Greece*…, p. XIII.

[6] T. Browne: *Hydriotaphia*. New York 1977 [1658], p. 62; the original spelling has been retained.

[7] L. Collison-Morley: *Greek and Roman*…, p. 1.

[8] Ibidem, p. 1.

[9] K. Hopkins: *Death and Renewal. Sociological Studies in Roman History*. Vol. 2. Cambridge 1983, p. 227.

[10] S. Iles Johnston: *Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and Dead in Ancient Greece*. Berkeley 1999, p. 127.

Herbert J. Rose aptly points out that: "Indeed, the whole horror of vampires, ἄωροι, βιαιοθάνατοι, and such uncanny spooks, is that they are not properly dead at all. The living one is used to; the real dead are all very well in their way; […] but the others are, in Bram Stoker's expressive phrase, 'Undead'."[11] Actually, Philinnion also seems to not be properly dead: she is a revenant, the undead, and very likely the category she falls within is the category of the untimely dead, the ἄωροι. Philinnion's case is not a need for funeral rites, since her burial in the family tomb is mentioned explicitly in the narrative; nor is anything known about her violent death. Therefore, leaving the ἄταφοι and βιαιοθάνατοι aside, in this article I will focus on the prematurely dead, since this group of the restless seems more promising for my attempt to solve the riddle of Philinnion's motives for return.

Fortunately, we get quite a precise definition of this category of the dead from late antiquity. The Christian author, Tertullian, in his work *De Anima* (56–57), characterizes it this way: "And they say that souls that experience death before their time wander about until they complete the remainder of the period for which they would have lived if they had not died early. […] Either it is excellent to be kept here with the 'untimely dead' or it is awful to be kept here with the 'dead-by-violence', to employ the terms now voiced by the source of such beliefs, namely magic – Ostanes, Typhon, Dardanus, Damigeron, Nectabis, and Berenice. A famous text promises to evocate even souls that have been laid to rest at their proper age, even souls separated from their bodies by a just death, and even souls dispatched with prompt burial."[12]

Tertullian refers in this passage to the magical practices performed by pagan sorcerers, and demonstrates the importance of the standard categorization of the restless dead, developed allegedly by Ostanes and others, which served for ghost-manipulation in magic; however, the "famous text" about evocations that Tertullian alludes to remains unidentifiable.[13]

For the ἄωροι we also have nonliterary evidence, namely the κατάδεσμοι – the lead tablets with written curses that were deposited in or near the graves and were requests sent by the living to the deceased in order to receive their help in important matters, or, to formulate it more safely, to use them as messengers carrying

[11] H.J. Rose: "Antigone and the Bride of Corinth." *The Classical Quarterly* 1925, Vol. 19 (3–4), p. 149.

[12] Trans. by D. Ogden. In: Idem: *Magic, Witchcraft, and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds. A Sourcebook*. Oxford 2009 (1st edn. 2002), p. 151. Tertulian, *De Anima* 56–57: aiunt et immatura morte praeventas eo usque vagari istic, donec reliquatio compleatur aetatum, qua cum pervixissent, si non intempestive obissent. […] aut optimum est hic retineri secundum **ahoros [=aōroi]** aut pessimum secundum **biaeothanatos [=biaiothanatoi]**, ut ipsis iam vocabulis utar quibus auctrix opinionum istarum magia sonat, Ostanes et Typhon et Dardanus et Damigeron et Nectabis et Berenice. Publica iam litteratura est quae animas etiam iusta aetate sopitas, etiam proba morte disiunctas, etiam prompta humatione dispunctas evocaturam se ab inferum incolatu pollicetur.

[13] Cf. D. Ogden: *Magic*…, p. 151.

the words of the tablets to the underworld deities.[14] The bulk of such tablets was discovered in the graves of the untimely dead, as far as we can determine the age of the deceased from skeletal remains or grave goods.[15]

The remedies for the ἄωροι were not as simple as in the case of ἄταφοι, who just needed proper burial rites. The motivation for the return of this type of the dead seems to be more complex as well. In general, they were considered as potentially angry ghosts who had not completed their lives, which in fact remained unfinished, so they lingered between categories, unable to pass into proper death. Tertullian refers to them as wandering souls trying to complete the missing period of their lifetime.

Inferring from many ancient sources, in the process of such completion of their lifetime the souls of the prematurely dead were believed to be particularly dangerous: this group of the restless included mostly female ghosts who were driven by envy and desire to deprive the living of what they themselves had been deprived of – they attacked and killed women of reproductive age and their babies.[16] For women, the primary function in the family and in society was to bear and successfully nurture children: their goal in life was to be a mother, therefore women who died prematurely were automatically perceived as such who had failed to meet the fundamental duty they were to perform for society and, consequently, they broke the social order, or at least did not form the most important part of its structure, namely the family.[17] The ghosts of such unsuccessful women who had died "in transition" were presumed to return and cause problems to the living, especially attacking women and their babies. Many types of malicious demons fall within the category of the ἄωροι. Some of them were mythic characters such as Gello, Lamia, or Mormo, to whom specific stories have been ascribed.[18] Their names, used in the plural – such as the *lamiai* (λάμιαι) or *mormones* (μορμόνες) – referred to other aggressive female ghosts. The stories about Mormo, Gello, or Lamia present them as originally mortal women who had failed to bear or successfully nurture children, although not all of them are described explicitly as being prematurely dead in our sources.[19] They must have been, however, commonly equated, as we can conclude from the passage of the scholiast to Theokritos, who defines Mormo

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[14] Cf. S. Iles Johnston: *Restless Dead*…, p. 72.

[15] Cf. Ibidem, p. 71.

[16] See an excellent study on this topic by S. Iles Johnston: "Childless Mothers and Blighted Virgins: Female Ghosts and Their Victim" in her *Restless Dead*…, pp. 161–203.

[17] Cf. Ibidem, pp. 169–175.

[18] Zen. *Prov.* 3.3 = Sapph. fr. 178.; Hsch., s.v. *gello*; Psell. ap. Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus epistola* (Cologne 1643), § 3; *Cyranides*, a collection of magical lore includes special spells to avert Gello: *Cyr.* 2.31.20–23 and 2.40.35–38. On this topic see also the passages below, pp. 145–146. Cf. S. Iles Johnston: *Restless Dead*…, pp. 164–167.

[19] Zenobius explicitly calls Gello "a virgin […] prematurely dead" (παρθένος… ἀώρως ἐτελεύτησε, *Cent.*l. 3.3.).

as another name for Lamia and Gello,[20] and from the scholiast to Aristides, who notes the similarity between Mormo's and Lamia's story and seems to describe Mormo as a kind of λάμιαι.[21] Apollonios of Tyana (*VA*. 4.25) describes the demon who seduced the young Menippos as one of the ἔμπουσαι, considered by others as λάμιαι or μορμολυκίαι.[22]

As former humans they seem to retain their body to some extent since they are capable of attacking women and strangling their babies. The most famous Lamia, exposed by Apollonios of Tyana, was able to have sexual intercourse with a man (*VA*.4.25), which makes her resemble Philinnion in this respect. The form of a beautiful woman was not the only one that such demons had, since their common significant feature was their talent in shape-shifting. The best known description of Empousa's metamorphoses is to be found in Aristophanes's *Frogs* (288–295), when Ksantias and Dionysos encounter her in Hades: first she takes the shape of a bull, then a mule, then a lovely woman, then a dog and, finally, she shows her real face that burns like fire, with one of her legs being of bronze and the other of cow dung. This description is significant since it perfectly shows the hybrid character of a demon such as Empousa, which confirms its status of a liminal being situated between two (or more) categories. Shape-shifting, as Iles Johnston says, is "a diachronic rather than synchronic form of hybridism: the demon does not necessarily display traits of two or more categories simultaneously, as the werewolf does, but its ability to change from human to horse to fire to tiger nonetheless prevents its secure categorization and thus is frightening."[23]

In the 7th century AD, John Damascene, in his brief treatise against female demons,[24] says that some people claim to have seen or heard of how στρύγγαι (*stryngai*) enter houses despite locked doors with body or with spirit alone[25]; from

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[20] *Schol*. Theoc.15.40c: Μορμώ: Λάμια βασίλισσα Λαιστρυγόνων ἡ καὶ Γελλὼ λεγομένη […].

[21] *Schol*. Aristid. p. 41 Dindorf: ἃ δὲ τοὺς παῖδας φοβεῖ καὶ ἐκπλήττει οἷον Λαμίας καὶ τὰ τοιοῦτα φάσματα. λέγει δὲ τὴν Μορμὼ, ἣν ἀκούοντα ὀρρωδεῖ τὰ παιδία…

[22] Philostr. *VA*.4.25: ἡ χρηστὴ νύμφη μία τῶν ἐμπουσῶν ἐστιν, ἃς λαμίας τε καὶ μορμολυκίας οἱ πολλοὶ ἡγοῦνται.

[23] S. Iles Johnston: *Restless Dead*…, p. 171.

[24] Titled Περὶ στρυγγῶν (= *Peri stryngon*, Migne PG 94 1604); the name στρύγγες used by John Damascene comes from the Latin *strix* that denotes a screech-owl which, according to the belief of the ancients, sucked the blood of young children, cf. Plaut. *Ps*.3.2.31; Ov. *F*.6.133 sq.; Plin. *NH*.11.39.95; Tib.1.5.52; Ov. *M*.7.269; Prop. 4(5).5.17; 3.(4, 5).6.29; Petr.134.1; the Latin term was likely adapted to Greek in late antiquity. John Damascene also gives Γελοῦδες (*Geloudes*) as another name for these demons: γυναῖκές εἰσι Στρύγγαι, αἳ και (sic) Γελοῦδες λεγόμεναι. According to J.C. Lawson: *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion. A Study in Survivals*. Oxford 1910, p. 179, in modern Greek folklore στρίγλες (*strigles*) are essentially different beings than λαμίαι and γελλοῦδες; the latter are demons while the former are simply women with the capacity to transform themselves into birds of prey or other animals; there is only the taste for blood that the στρίγλες share with demons.

[25] John Damascene (Migne PG 94 1604): καὶ ταῦτα μὲν διαβεβαιοῦνται, οἱ μὲν εἰδεῖν, οἱ δὲ ἀκοῦσαι, πῶς εἰσέρχεται εἰς τὰ οἰκίας κεκλεισμένων τῶν θυρῶν μετὰ σώματος, ἢ γυμνῇ τῇ ψυχῇ.

which we can conclude that they were believed to be corporeal beings with the capacity to separate their souls from their flesh. Iles Johnston seems to overinterpret this mention,[26] translating the quoted passage of Damascene as "the Γελοῦδες and Στρύγγαι were believed to retain some, but not all, of their corporality," from which she concludes that "they were neither fully flesh so as to enjoy life, not fully free of flesh constraints as were normal residents of the Underworld."[27] Nevertheless, we can see that all of these creatures, such as λαμίαι, ἔμπουσαι, μορμόνες and others, were believed to be corporeal beings.

Philinnion a Demon?

It is doubtful whether Philinnion may be considered a dangerous demon, nevertheless she has something in common with such creatures, for instance corporality, in that she uses her own body which she had before she died. There is also another common point, that is premature death. Although we do not know the circumstances in which Philinnion died, her death was certainly untimely: she passed away as a young bride. However, she does not seem to be a typical – or the most popular – ἄωρος, but a quiet, peaceful ghost. As we shall see next, her motivation is not anger and envy towards the living, who successfully experience what she herself has been deprived of, but most likely desire. Although as a "regular" prematurely dead she returns to complete what was incomplete in her life, in this case it is likely the sexual initiation that she lacks since, as we can suppose, she died before the marriage had been consummated.

"It seems to me necessary to assume that she died still a virgin, and fairly likely that in the original story Machates and Krateros were one and the same person. However, this last point is not quite necessary; Machates, if not her actual husband, was well fitted to represent him, being and an outsider who declared himself such by sleeping in the guest-room. What makes me think that he was her husband is that, according to Phlegon, he gave her an iron ring, which is surely a gift rather suited to a bride than light-o'-love" – points out Rose[28] and refers here to the passage in Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* (33.12), which relates that an iron ring is sent to a bride.[29]

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[26] Or another passage from the treatise, since Iles Johnston does not quote the exact part of the text she discusses (Iles Johnston also gives the incorrect bibliographical address: Migne PA 94 1064 instead of PA 94 1604).

[27] S. Iles Johnston: *Restless Dead*…, p. 176.

[28] H.J. Rose: *Antigone*…, p. 149.

[29] *NH*.32.12: sponsae […] ferreus anulus mittitur.

It is unclear if Krateros and Machates were in fact one and the same person, but if not, then Philinnion's nocturnal visits to a stranger instead of her own husband appear even more intriguing. We read that she confessed to Machates that her desire (ἐπιθυμία) was so strong that she came to him secretly, without her parents knowing. Proklos says that she comes to him driven by love/desire (διὰ τὸν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔρωτα; in *R.Comm.*2.116 Kroll). Erwin Rohde[30] suggested that Philinnion and Machates had loved each other before, but that the girl had been forced to marry another man – Krateros; she thus died of despair. Rohde's supposition is, however, illogical, since in Phlegon, Machates did not recognize Philinnion as his former beloved; apparently he did not know the girl at all. It seems obvious that if the young man knew Philinnion the story would lose its mystery, thus the author made his characters alien to each other for the sake of surprise and sensation.

Another possibility is that Philinnion visits a stranger because her husband, Krateros, has also died. That would easily explain her return as being motivated by her need or desire for something that her husband was no longer able to give her: obviously for the sexual intercourse.

Therefore, if Philinnion died a virgin, by no means can she be considered as the prematurely dead, which would definitely mean she is not the properly dead. Her situation is quite pitiable: she is a liminal being stuck between two opposing worlds: the upper and the underworld, as well as between the single and the married state. Her return may be seen as an effort or rather a task to complete a kind of rite of passage by means of sexual initiation: the experience she had been deprived of by her premature death.

Philinnion's mysterious words directed towards her parents would rather indicate that her return was a task delegated by a divinity. Caught *in flagranti* with Machates, she complains: "Mother and father, how unfairly you have grudged my being with the guest for three days in my father's house, since I have caused no one any pain. For this reason, on account of your meddling, you shall grieve all over again, and I shall return to the place appointed to me. For it was not without divine will that I came here" (οὐ γὰρ ἄνευ θείας βουλήσεως ἦλθον εἰς ταῦτα). In my view, her complaint suggests that her parents' interruption stopped her on her way to complete the task delegated by a divinity: to achieve rest and become "properly dead" by means of completing of what had not been completed in her short life. Equally mysterious is her statement "I shall return to the place appointed for me" (εἰς τὸν διατεταγμένον τόπον). "The place" may indicate her tomb, meaning "a place appointed for Philinnion by her parents after her death," where she evidently returns after her meeting with Machates and where she leaves the ring and the cup. "The place" may also refer to a place destined by a deity especially for the ἄωροι, who were forbidden to enter Hades proper. The actual meaning of this expression must remain Philinnion's secret as it is too vague and ambiguous to refer to anything specific.

[30] E. Rohde: *Zu den Mirabilia*…, p. 333.

Philinnion's other words may be interpreted as a further hint of her motives for her return. She vaguely claims her intentions are peaceful, saying she came to her parents' house with no wish to cause any trouble (λυποῦσαν οὐδέν) – *absque ullo maleficio* – as Carl Müller translates this passage in his edition of Phlegon's *Mirabilia*.[31] However, many modern editors of the *Mirabilia* (e.g. Giannini[32]), following Johann August Nauck's conjecture,[33] read in this passage λυποῦσαν οὐδένα – "causing no one any pain/any trouble"; this conjecture seems to be justifiable since the verb λυπεῖν indicates "to grieve" or "to vex," thus the personal object οὐδένα, instead of the impersonal οὐδέν in the context of recent death, sounds plausible.[34] Since in the works of historians the verb λυπεῖν often indicates "to harass," "to annoy" the enemy by constant attacks,[35] Philinnion's words can also have a double meaning – she may be emphasizing that despite her premature death she is not a malicious demon like Λάμια,Ἔμπουσα or other female evil that comes to disturb people.

On the other hand, her motivation for interacting with the living is to some extent similar as in the case of some female demons: she searches for a young man who would satisfy her sexual desire, while λαμίαι and others seek young men to drink their blood, as is explicitly explained by Lamia in *The Life of Apollonios of Tyana* (*VA*.4.25). And although Philinnion does not have such bloodthirsty intentions, she is dangerous just as the other types of the ἄωροι in the way that she leads, perhaps even unintentionally, her lover to death. We can only wonder what would have happened to Machates if Philinnion had not been recognized by her family. Would he stay alive, unaware that his lover was dead?

This question must remain unanswered, and Philinnion may now return to the place appointed for her. But I must return to the questions posed at the beginning of my article. I hope that in this brief study I managed to answer them at least partially. The questions were: Who actually is Philinnion: a ghost or not? What was her purpose to come to Charito and Demostratos's house?, and Why does she visit Machates? As for the first question, the answer will be positive: Philinnion is a ghost of a special kind; she is a revenant and belongs to the category of the restless dead due to her premature death. However, she is not the most typical female ghost who attacks women and their babies. Her purpose is to satisfy her desire,

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[31] C. Müller: *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* III. Parisiis 1849, p. 613; Müller founded his edition and translation on the very first edition of the *Mirabilia* by Xylander [W. Holtzmann]: *Antonini Liberalis Transformationum congeries. Phlegontis de mirabilibus & longaevis libellus*. Basileae 1568.

[32] A. Giannini: *Paradoxographorum graecorum reliquiae*. Milan 1966, p. 174.

[33] J.A. Nauck in: O. Keller: *Rerum naturalium scriptores Graeci minores* I. Lipsiae 1877, p. 60.

[34] All the more that the expression λυποῦσαν οὐδένα resembles the formula οὐδένα λυπήσας or -ασα, found in epitaphs, cf. IG14.1857, 2.1868. *AG App.*, *Epigrammata Sepulcralia*: 359; 602.

[35] Cf. H.9.40; Th.6.66; X.*HG*.6.3.14; An.2.3.23, etc.

which can be symbolically understood as the need to complete the rite of transition in order to pass the threshold between the single and married state; this would be the answer to the second question. In order to achieve her goal she needs a living man who will give her what she is seeking. The young man, Machates, who is being hosted in her parents' house, can give her what she needs and can symbolically be her husband substitute; this may serve as an answer to the third question.

When the dead love the living this means that at least one of the lovers is not who he or she seems to be; in this case the dead does not seem to be properly dead. And Philinnion likely remains as such, disturbed in her way to obtain her rest. Is this to be continued?

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The Good News about Death: Predictions of Jesus' Death in the First Commentaries on the Gospel of Mark*

Abstract: The references to Jesus' death that appear before the beginning of the actual description thereof prove the significance of this death for Mark the Evangelist. Theophylact of Ohrid, the first Greek commentator of the entire Gospel of Mark, also paid attention to the significance of these references. He turns out to be original when compared with the patristic interpretations of the Gospel texts.

Key words: biblical commentaries, Gospel of Mark, Theophylact of Ohrid

The Gospel is good news. However, the content denoted by this word in the writings of the New Testament contrasts with a literal meaning of the noun εὐαγγέλιον. The term "gospel" appears in the first verse of the Gospel of Mark, although this Evangelist devotes much more space to the narration of Jesus' passion and death than to the references to His resurrection.[1] The references to

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[1] This focus on Jesus' passion and death is easily noticeable in its original text with a shorter ending. The longer ending of the Gospel of Mark includes three last pericopes (Mark 16:9–20). It is missing from the two most important codices: Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus (both from the 4th century), medieval manuscripts, and the significant Syrian, Georgian, Armenian, and Ethiopian translations. The longer ending can be found in later manuscripts, although Justin Martyr, Tatian,

Jesus' death that appear even before the beginning of the actual narrative concerning it prove the significance of this death for Mark. Their crucial role was noticed in the last two centuries when the Gospel of Mark was called a passion narrative with a long introduction.[2] The first Greek commentator of the whole Gospel of Mark also paid attention to the significance of these references. Theophylact of Ohrid turns out to be original when compared with the patristic interpretations of the Gospel texts.[3]

The Motif of Jesus' Death in the Gospel of Mark

Owing to the structure which emphasises the role of Jesus' death, characteristic for the Gospel of Mark and adopted in the other three,[4] the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) can in a way present itself as bad news. The inherent and essential part of all four of them is narratives about the last moments of Jesus' earthly life.[5]

For a long time the meaning of the motif of Jesus' death as unique for the development of a genre of gospel was underestimated in the interpretations of Mark. Many of the commentators of the text did not pay any attention at all to its own unique character. Such little interest of the commentators was grounded in the conviction of its dependence on other Evangelists, particularly on Matthew.[6]

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and Irenaeus mention it. Cf. A. Malina: *Ewangelia według św. Marka, część 1: 1, 1–8, 26. Wstęp – przekład z oryginału – komentarz*. Częstochowa 2013, pp. 27–28.

[2] Cf. M. Meyer: "Taking Up the Cross and Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark." *Calvin Theological Journal* 2002, no. 37, pp. 231–232: "This text of good news apparently has bad news, not *euangelion*, but *dysangelion* – painful news, deadly news. Mark is, as it has been put aptly, a passion narrative with a long introduction (in the quoted article footnote 9: M. Kähler: *Der sogenannte historische Jesus und der geschichtliche, biblische Christus* [Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1956], 60). The good news is the bad news, and the bad news is the good news: the news of the cross, the suffering Messiah and Son of God, and the suffering followers of the Messiah and Son of God."

[3] Source texts: Theophylact: *Hermeneia eis to kata Markon Euangelion*. In: *Patrologia Graeca*, t. 123 (reprint: Athenai 1990, pp. 487–682); *Catena in Evangelium S. Marci*. In: *Catenae Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum*. Ed. J.A. Cramer. Oxford 1840, pp. 259–447.

[4] In the Gospel of Mark a narrative of the passion and death constitutes 19 per cent of the whole text, while in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke: about 15 per cent each. The author of the fourth Gospel devotes even more space to the final week of Jesus' life than the Synoptics, namely chapters 12–20, so he fills a half of his Book with this narrative. Cf. B. Witherington III: *New Testament History. A Narrative Account*. Grand Rapids 2001, pp. 21–22.

[5] Although gospel is regarded as a separate genre, yet it has some features characteristic of other ancient biographical texts as well. Cf. A. Malina: *Ewangelia według św. Marka*…, p. 37.

[6] This conviction was forcibly expressed by Augustine in *De consensu Evangelistarum*: "Mark follows him [Matthew – M.Cz.] closely, and looks like his attendant and epitomizer." Cf. Augustine: *De consensu Evangelistarum* I, 2, 4. Translations of Augustine's texts in: *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. First series*. Vol. 6. Ed. P. Schaff, trans. by S.D.F. Salmond. Buffalo 1888.

It was only in the 19th and 20th century that a breakthrough in the studies on the Gospels was made.

The originality of the Gospel of Mark is proved by the references to the Jesus' death which occur in the narration of His public activity from Galilee to Jerusalem (Mark 1:14–13:37). The other Synoptics include texts sounding exactly the same as those in the second Gospel or to a lesser extent highlighting the role of Jesus' death, particularly its significance for the formation of the disciples. Due to their character the interpretation of the motif of the death in the "pre-passion" texts of the Gospel of Mark, provided by the first Greek commentator of the whole Book, deserves closer attention.

Mark's Motif of Jesus' Death in Theophylact's Interpretation

The Bishop of Ohrid pays attention to the references to the end of Jesus'earthly life, which precede the actual narrative concerning His passion. The explanations of them provided by Theophylact prove the originality of the first Greek commentary on this Gospel because they form one of the first interpretation of the texts, which by the contemporary exegesis are referred to as an extensive introduction to the narration of Jesus' passion.

Mark 2:20

Jesus' answer to the question posed by John's disciples and the Pharisees, concerning the reason why His disciples do not keep fasts, may be regarded as the first mention of the death in the Gospel of Mark (Mark 2:19–20). Several elements in the text indicate the reference to Jesus' death. The identification of the bridegroom with Jesus and the disciples with the wedding guests is clearly highlighted in the Gospel of Mark. The ignoring of fasts by His followers mirrors the attitude of the wedding guests who go after the bridegroom. Owing to this Christocentric character of the mention of the taking away of the bridegroom, the version of the narrative which appears in the Gospel of Mark more unambiguously refers to Jesus' death than its identical formulations in the other Gospels (Matthew 9:15; Luke 5:35).

The Bishop of Ohrid is not the first commentator of this fragment. *Catena in Marcum*[7] also interprets the mentioned text about taking the bridegroom away:

[7] *Catena in Marcum* is a diversified compilation of fragments of the commentaries on the Synoptic Gospels written before the 6th century. It is also not a full commentary: the pericopes analysed

"that is he is taken up"[8] (τοῦτ᾽ἔστιν ἀναληφθῇ). The verb ἀναλαμβάνειν in the New Testament narratives refers to Jesus' Ascension (literally: taking up, assumption; cf. Mark 16:19, Acts 1:2.11.22) and is used in the passive, which determines God as the subject of the action marked by the verb (*passivum theologicum*). *Catena in Marcum* does not interpret the verb ἀπαίρειν (to take, to take away), appearing in Mark's text in the sense of Jesus' death but in the sense of a glorious act that His Ascension was.

Theophylact quotes Mark's text with the verb ἀπαίρειν, and he subsequently retains it in the interpretation of Jesus' answer to the accusations made against His disciples: "I am the bridegroom and they should celebrate, and cannot fast. When I am taken away from this life, then having fallen into temptations, they will fast and be despondent." The Bishop of Ohrid relates the taking away of the bridegroom from the wedding guests rather to the end of the earthly period of Jesus' life, spent with the disciples, than to His departure from them at the moment of Ascension. The earthly dimension of His existence is implied by the adverbial "from this life" (ἀπὸ τοῦ βιοῦ τουτοῦ). This first reference to Jesus' death in the Gospel of Mark commented on in *Catena in Marcum* and by Theophylact shows that the Bishop of Ohrid is not dependent in his analyses on *Catena in Marcum* and interprets the unambiguous verb ἀπαίρειν in the sense of the end of Jesus' earthly life.

Mark 3:6

The second mention of the death, and the first one clearly referring to Jesus' destiny is the subject of the gathering of his adversaries: "The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him" (Mark 3:6). This sentence closes the narrative about the healing of a man with a withered hand. The role of this sentence as a transition between two narratives is no doubt a reason why it is differently treated in the first commentaries. *Catena in Marcum* omits it both in the quoted fragments of the Gospel and in the commentary itself, linking the conspiring against Jesus neither with the miraculous healing nor with the withdrawal of the miracle-worker with his disciples.

The significance of the motif of death is proved by three references to it in a concise commentary. First, Theophylact determines the purpose of the statements of Jesus' adversaries, using a phrase containing the verb appearing in the Greek text of the Gospel of Mark: "to destroy the Lord" (ἀπόλεσαι τὸν Κύριον).

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by the bishop of Ohrid are omitted; whereas John Chrysostom in his commentary to the Gospel of Matthew dealt only with a few pericopes, undoubtedly those of Mark (Mark 10:17–27; 14:65). Even if Theophylact collects many of these interpretations, he is the first one to undertake to analyse Mark after providing an interpretation of all the pericopes of Matthew.

[8] W.R.S. Lamb: *The Catena in Marcum. A Byzantinte Anthology of Early Commentary on Mark*. Leiden–Boston 2012, p. 250.

The commentators do not notice a special significance of the used verb in the narration of the second Gospel.[9]

The use of the verb in Theophylact's commentary closely corresponds to Mark's precise differentiation between two types of actions taken by Christ's opponents. In the narrative about Jesus' public activity in Jerusalem the Evangelist differentiates between their efforts aiming at finding a way how to destroy Him (ἀπολλύειν) and those intended to devise a method of killing Him (ἀποκτείνειν – Mark 14:1). Firstly, the chief priests and the scribes begin seeking a way to destroy him (Mark 11:18; the same verb in 3:6). The use of the verb ἀπολλύειν does not yet determine a way of eliminating Jesus; the aim is rather a moral elimination than physical annihilation. Thus, their subsequent questions show that they strive to harm Jesus in the eyes of the listeners by persuading Him to make statements that could ridicule Him (Mark 11:28, Mark 12:13, Mark 12:18). Only after their failure (cf. Mark 12:34) do they start looking for a way to kill Him. However, the killing is not the final aim. They do not only want to physically get rid of Him but – still – also to deprive Him of the respect of people. That is why they are considering the possibility of arresting Him, since for the moral elimination it is necessary to pass a judicial sentence. Thus the reference to the activity of the Pharisees and Herodians can be noticed in Mark's presentation of the motif of Jesus' death. Both they and the chief priests and the scribes do not only want to kill Jesus but also to destroy Him morally as a criminal.

The second mention of Jesus' death appears in the explanation of Jesus' withdrawal from His adversaries. The fragments of other Gospels (Matthew 4:12, Luke 4:29–30) reveal the connection between Jesus' withdrawal and the danger that His life becomes exposed to. In contrast to the mentioned texts, Mark (3:6–7) does not clearly present the withdrawal of Jesus from his adversaries as a reaction to their efforts to trap Him. Theophylact, however – probably under the influence of these texts – follows this line of interpretation of the sequence of these events: the plotting of His adversaries (Mark 3:6) and His withdrawal to the lake (Mark 3:7). Nevertheless, the Bishop of Ohrid does not restrict himself only to recognizing the connection between these two events but gives them an additional theological meaning: "And he withdraws, as the time of his passion has not yet come" (ὁ τοῦ πάθους καιρός). Theophylact uses the term καιρός, and not χρόνος, which may prove the influence of the New Testament interpretations of the earthly age as a special time given by God. In the Gospel of Mark the term καιρός ap-

[9] They sometimes convey the strong meaning of the verb by referring to the killing in a sense of destruction; cf. J.R. Edwards: *The Gospel according to Mark*. Grand Rapids 2002, p. 101: "[…] the Pharisees and the Herodians 'began to plot… how they might kill Jesus'." Although C. Stade correctly quotes the text of translation (using the translation from the King James Version), yet, the verb used by Theophylact is cited imprecisely: "to kill the Lord," cf. *The Explanation of the Holy Gospel according to Mark by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ohrid and Bulgaria*. Trans. C. Stade. House Springs 2008, p. 32.

pears in Jesus' programme statement (Mark 1:14) and determines the time of the relationship between the disciples and Jesus (Mark 10:30), and the eschatological time, which is, however, closely connected with the time of Jesus' activity (Mark 11:13; 12:2; 13:33); yet it does not signify the time of Jesus' passion.[10]

The third mention is an example of the lack of cohesion in Theophylact's interpretation of the actions taken by Jesus' adversaries: "Consider that, on the one hand, the Herodians, of the flesh and skin, want to kill Jesus" (ἀποκτεῖναι βούλονται τὸν Ἰησοῦν). Although the Gospel is very precise in its use of the terms referring to Jesus' death, limiting the use of the verb "to kill" to the predictions of the passion, death and resurrection of the Son of Man, and to the appearances of the members of the Sanhedrin from their gathering three days before the Passover (Mark 14:1–2), still, the Bishop of Ohrid already uses this term in the narrative about the first period of Jesus' activity.

Mark 8:31

The verb "to kill" (ἀποκτείνειν), referring to Jesus' death, appears for the first time in Jesus' teaching which is reserved solely for the disciples following Him on the way to Jerusalem. The first commentators of Mark do not differentiate three predictions of the destiny of the Son of Man on account of the occurrence of this verb (8:31; 9:31; 10:32–34). They notice neither their roles in the structure of his Gospel nor their significance for its theology. Although the references of Jesus' death are not limited to those three, but only in these three cases Jesus' words about the passion, death and resurrection of the Son of Man are addressed to His disciples identified as the Twelve, while they react to these predictions with incomprehension, and because of these reactions they receive additional preaching from him. Jesus' teaching – incomplete at the beginning – corresponds to their imperfect understanding of the sense of a bond with Him, which is expressed in the section of the Gospel called His way to Jerusalem (Mark 8:27–10:52).

The first prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man is accurately interpreted by Theophylact as a revelation of the mystery of the cross, which remains limited due to the incomplete understanding of His disciples: "When Jesus noticed that they confessed that he is the true Messiah, he revealed[11] to them the mystery

[10] Theophylact uses the noun καιρός in a sense close to John's idea of the time of the passion, which in his Gospel is denoted by the noun ὥρα (John 2:4; 7:30).

[11] C. Stade translated the verb ἐκκαλύπτειν in the following way: "When He saw that they had confessed Him to be the true Messiah, then He also **began to reveal** to them the mystery of the cross, although not in its entirety" [emphasis – M.Cz.], cf. *The Explanation of the Holy Gospel according to Mark*…, p. 69. Theophylact does not write about "the beginning" of the revelation. The verb "to begin" appears in the analysed text: καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν (Mark 8:31).

of the cross (ἐκκαλύπτει τὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ μυστήριον), although not in its entirety (εἰ καὶ μὴ γυμνῶς πάντη). Since they neither yet understood (συνίεσαν) what he said, nor imagined what to rise [from the dead] (τί ἐστιν τὸ ἀναστῆναι) means." The commentator pays attention to the central subject of Jesus' teaching on His way to Jerusalem which is the mystery of His cross. Similarly to *Catena in Marcum*, in his explanation the noun "mystery" appears in the singular, which corresponds with the second Gospel; whereas the other Synoptics apply the plural form (τὰ μυστήρια in Matthew 13:11 and Luke 8:10). In Mark this noun appears in Jesus' declaration about giving the mystery of the Kingdom of God to the disciples (Mark 4:10) – directly before the first mention of the verb "to understand" (Mark 4:12; cf. Matthew 13:13–14; Luke 8:10).

The connection between the mystery confided to the disciples and their difficulties with understanding it is closer to the Gospel of Mark in Theophylact's commentary than in *Catena in Marcum*. While explaining the first prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man with the use of the terms typical of the Gospel of Mark, Theophylact describes Jesus' pedagogy, who adapts His teaching to the disciples' limitations in their comprehending of His person and activity. When confronted with His death, they experience a double difficulty: both caused by His absence and by the lack of His activity. Their limitations in the understanding become apparent in their reactions after two miracles of the feeding of the multitude (6:35–44; 8:1–10): they recognize neither His presence nor His deeds. In these texts Mark uses the verb "to understand" (συνιέναι). He applies it first in his negative opinion of their reaction to theophany, which expresses their lack of comprehension of the sense of the last miracle: "they had not understood about the loaves" (Mark 6:52). Next, he uses it twice in the rhetorical questions expressing the miracle-worker's appeal for understanding, addressed to the witnesses of these miracles: "Do you not yet perceive or understand? […] Do you not yet understand?" (Mark 8:17.21). Such an allusion made by Theophylact about the disciples' ignorance of the sense of rising from the dead parallels Mark's connection between the motif of incomprehension and Jesus' death.

The originality of Theophylact commenting on Mark can be also observed in juxtaposition with the explanation of the first prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man in *Catena in Marcum*. The Bishop of Ohrid does not quote the content of Peter's verbal opposition. *Catena in Marcum* refers to the parallel text in the first Gospel (Matthew 16:22). Moreover, Theophylact does not take up the theme from the third Gospel, as *Catena in Marcum* does, attributing the disciples' lack of understanding to the outside influence: the word revealed was "hidden from them." In such a way Luke explains the reactions of the disciples to the third prediction of Jesus' destiny (Luke 18:34). This explanation does not fit in the conception of Mark, who sees the reason for their lack of understanding in their refusal to accept the necessity of Jesus' death as the plan of God and not in the outside activity of the subject hindering the full cognition by hiding the truth.

In conclusion, Theophylact accurately notices the connection between the incomprehension of Jesus' disciples and the incomplete cognition of the truth of His death. If a disciple does not understand the sense of belonging to Him, he cannot accept the revelation of the mystery of the cross as a consequence for his own life. The commentator pays attention to this relation in the explanation of the next fragment (Mark 8:34–37). Firstly, he derives the value of the acceptance of the cross by a disciple from a type of death: "Let him take up the cross, that is a shameful death, as the cross was then regarded as shameful." Next, he claims that what distinguishes the disciple who takes up the cross from others condemned to the same kind of death is his belonging to Jesus: "But because many were crucified for being bandits, he adds something else after the crucifixion: that we should have a virtue. Because that is what 'follow me' means." The special attention given to the necessity of belonging to Jesus explains why Theophylact begins the explanation of the first prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man with the statement of the incomplete revelation of the mystery of the cross due to the incomprehension of the disciples. In other words, the incomplete revelation of the mystery of the cross is not the reason for this incomprehension but its consequence, in such a sense that in view of their ignorance the teaching is adapted to their limitations.

Mark 9:2–8

Mark's narrative about the transfiguration does not contain any explicit references to Jesus' death. Such a reference can be found in the parallel text of the third Gospel (Luke 9:31), which depicts Jesus' talk with Moses and Elijah: two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure (ἔλεγον τὴν ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ), which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. While interpreting a general note of the appearance of Elijah and Moses, who talked with Jesus (Mark 9:4), Theophylact supplements its content with Luke's version: "What were the prophets talking with Him about? About His cross and His death." One might see here the influence of *Catena in Marcum*, which supplements Mark in a similar way, pointing out the lack of information about the content of the talk in Mark's text: "While the present Evangelist does not specify, the others add, 'they were speaking about the glory which he was to fulfil in Jerusalem,' that is to say, the Passion and the Cross: for so they always call it."[12] However, Theophylact does not change Luke's mention of the appearance of Moses and Elijah in glory in the statement about the fulfilling of Jesus' glory in Jerusalem. While analysing this fragment, he only writes about the glory which is to be revealed to His disciples after the end of the world because "now he revealed himself without glory (ἐν ἀδοξίᾳ ἐφάνη) as the crucified and the carpenter's son."

[12] W.R.S. Lamb: *The Catena in Marcum*…, pp. 330–331.

Thus, the Bishop of Ohrid identifies the subject of the talk only with His cross and death, and not with glory. Similarly, earlier he interprets the taking away of the bridegroom in the parable in the sense of Jesus being taken away from the earthly life; whereas *Catena in Marcum* presents the same event as taking Him to heaven. Another characteristic feature of Theophylact's analyses is the explanation of the motives of the disciples reacting to the events taking place in the foreground of the narration. Peter's words prove that he did not want Jesus to be crucified to bring salvation to people: "Truly, Peter was not in his own mind, as he did not want Jesus to go down to be crucified for our salvation (εἰς τὸ σταυρωθῆναι πρὸς σωτηρίαν ἡμῶν), but wished He could stay forever up on the mountain."

Mark 9:9–10

In the predictions of the destiny of the Son of Man the resurrection is denoted by the verb "to rise" (ἀνιστάναι), which does not have a complement "from the dead" (ἐκ νεκρῶν). This complement appears twice in this fragment of Mark. In none of the predictions such a complement about the rising from the dead is necessary because each of the predictions, before mentioning His rising from the dead, has a reference to His death caused by the activity of: the elders, the chief priests and the scribes – in the first one (8:31); people – in the second one (9:31); the chief priests and the scribes – in the third one (10:31–34).

The order of silence given to the witnesses of the transfiguration contains the expression "rising from the dead." In Theophylact's explanation of the order of silence and the reactions of the disciples, it appears three times. In the first case, its presence is redundant in comparison with the rule of using it in the Gospel of Mark, since the commentator clearly mentions Jesus' death, describing Him as crucified and alluding to the cross when he points out the aim of this order of silence: "to prevent people from being shocked at hearing first such glorious things about Christ and then seeing Him crucified. But when he rose from the dead, the right time came to speak about glorious [things] about Christ, which took place before the cross." This double way of describing Jesus' death is typical of Theophylact, who highlights the significance of the cross. *Catena in Marcum* does not have this emphasis: the mention of the cross appears in the commentary to this fragment of the Gospel only once, whereas the next reference deals with Jesus' suffering, not with His death itself. While bringing up the discussion of the disciples, *Catena in Marcum* seeks the reason for their reactions in the incomprehension of the mystery of the resurrection. Theophylact differs from such a perspective: while explaining the first prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man, he related the incomprehension of the disciples to the incomplete revelation of the mystery of the cross to them.

Two other references to Jesus' death which appear in Theophylact are dependent on *Catena in Marcum*. The subject of both commentaries constitutes a reaction

of the disciples to the order of silence. After quoting the sentence from the Gospel informing about their discussion, Theophylact provides an explanation for the reason of such a reaction: "And the apostles 'kept the matter to themselves, discussing what "rising from the dead" meant.' Because they did not know yet, he says, that He must rise from the dead." From Mark's text one cannot draw a simple conclusion that the disciples understood the reference to the rising from the dead in the sense of Jesus' resurrection. The difficulty of the disciples results from the time limitation of the ordered silence. The disciples' discussion is in line with their view of the concept of the rising from the dead, which in Judaism during the Second Temple period is presented as an event of the end times. From their point of view, a possible beginning of the narrative of the transfiguration must have no sense in the light of such a vision of the resurrection. Theophylact's misunderstanding of the true sense results from his seeking the explanation of the difficulty of the disciples regarding the issue of the resurrection, which is in harmony with the fourth Gospel – as *Catena in Marcum* proves: "But not understanding the mystery of the resurrection, although they kept the word to themselves, they were discussing what 'rising from the dead' might mean. Since as the Evangelist says: they did not know yet that He must rise from the dead, even after the promise was fulfilled." In the Gospel of Mark the inevitability of the resurrection indirectly results from the necessity of the fulfilment of the whole plan of God, whose first stage is that "the Son of Man must suffer many things" (Mark 8:31). On the other hand, the motif of the necessity of the resurrection is present in the fourth Gospel. This event is essential because it is the work of God who lifts up His Son (John 12:32.34; 20:9).

Mark 9:11–13

In the Gospel of Mark a question posed by the witnesses of the transfiguration and concerning the doctrine of the scribes, and Jesus' answer (Mark 9:11–13) constitutes one narration with the order of silence and the discussion of the disciples about the meaning of the resurrection (Mark 9:9–10). Following *Catena in Marcum*, Theophylact analyses the question and the answer as a separate fragment. What is more, their explanations coincide also in both their indirect references to Jesus' death, when they quote His comparison of the suffering of the Son of Man with the destiny of John the Baptist, and in their interpretations of the conduct of the addressees of Jesus' predecessor as an expression of their lack of faith. The theme of the Jews' lack of faith in Christ appears in both commentaries.[13] This lack

[13] *Catena in Marcum* mentions only that when Elijah comes, "he will put right the unbelief of the Jews who are found at that time" (διορθώσεται τὴν ἀπιστίαν τῶν Ἰουδαίων τῶν τότε εὑρισκομένων), (*Catena in Evangelium S. Marci*…, p. 358; W.R.S. Lamb: *The Catena in Marcum*…, p. 335). Likewise, Theophylact writes: "When Thisbite Elijah comes, he will make peace among the disobedient Jews and lead them to faith" (Ὁ Θεσβίτης Ἠλίας ὅταν μέλλῃ ἐλθεῖν, εἰρήνην μέλλει ποιήσειν

of faith is to come to its end only with the coming of Elijah, who "will restore everything." However, the Bishop of Ohrid draws a conclusion which is not present in *Catena in Marcum*: the Jews' lack of faith in Christ is the cause of the sufferings He is to experience. Both in Theophylact's commentary and in the analysed text there are no precise explanations of what kind of sufferings they speak about, or what is Mark's depiction of the destiny of the Son of Man, who "must be treated with contempt" (ἐξουδενηθῇ) refers to. A different approach is taken in *Catena in Marcum*, which by linking what happened to John the Baptist ("they threw him to prison, abused and killed him, and his head was delivered on a plate"), with a destiny of the Son of Man who "will also suffer from them" in such a way, shows that Jesus' sufferings will end with His death. Yet, it immediately adds: "With the recollection of the death of John he brought them a great consolation." *Catena in Marcum* adopts here extensive fragments from John Chrysostom's texts,[14] where the sentence about consolation explains Jesus' pedagogy, who combines the predictions of His passion with the miracles and the revelation of His dignity, so as to bring them not only the words prompting sadness, but also providing consolation by testimony of His dignity as the Son and of the power resulting from it. And here, after the transfiguration, Jesus behaves in the same way: comparing his destiny with the death of John, He brings them consolation.

Mark: 9:19

Theophylact interprets Jesus' complaint about faithless people (Mark 9:19) in the same way as *Catena in Marcum* – as an expression of His desire for death, which for Him is less evil than staying with the unbelieving addressees of His activity. Theophylact is closer to Mark's text when he points out the significance of the lack of faith, echoing the arguments of Mark, that is, treating it as a reason for the failure of the disciples. The disciples are not excluded from a wide circle of the addressees of this complaint. While for Theophylact the lack of faith among people is greater evil caused to Jesus than His own death, according to *Catena in Marcum* a more unbearable hardship is just staying with the generation, previously called by Jesus – in a version provided by this commentary – faithless and perverse. Here one can recognize the value of Theophylact's explanation. While interpreting Jesus' desire for death, caused by the behaviour of people, Theophy-

τοῖς ἀπειθοῦσιν Ἰουδαίοις, καὶ εἰς πίστιν τούτους ἐγαγεῖν), (Theophylact: *Hermeneia eis to kata Markon Euangelion*…, p. 584).

[14] John Chrysostom in *Homily LVII, 2* states: "Now in doing this, He by the greatness of the miracles was abating the excess of their sorrow, and in every way consoling them; even as here also, by the mention of John's death, He afforded them much consolation". Translations of John Chrysostom's texts after: *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. First series*. Vol. 10. Ed. P. Schaff. Trans. G. Prevost. Oxford 1851 (digital edition: Albany 1996).

lact accurately quotes the text of the second Gospel since the addressee of the complaint is described only with one attribute: "O unbelieving generation" (Mark 9:19); whereas *Catena in Marcum* presents a version of the expression taken from the other Synoptics, who characterize the addressees of the complaint using attributes: "You unbelieving and perverse generation" (Matthew 17:17; Luke 9:41).

Mark 9:31

Theophylact notices a certain regularity in Jesus' teaching about His passion and death, which has already been pointed out by *Catena in Marcum*: the words about His suffering are linked with the predictions that have positive overtones. Once again the Bishop of Ohrid more precisely comments Mark's text for he emphasises also positive ideas which occur in the closest context of negative statements. On the one hand, like *Catena in Marcum*, he recognizes their occurrence next to the narratives about His miraculous activity, which is to convince the listeners of this teaching that He must suffer not because he is to be deprived of power. The greatness of the power He wields is proved by His miracles. On the other hand, Theophylact pays attention to the fact that after a sad prediction of being killed, Jesus adds the words of joy about His rising from the dead on the third day. In fact, in the Gospel of Mark the second prediction is given a positive meaning, not only thanks to its closeness to the account of the exorcism (Mark 9:14–29), but also because it contains, like the first and the third prediction (Mark 8:31; 10:33–34), both references: to Jesus' death and His resurrection.

Mark 10:39

The request of the disciples is preceded by the third prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man. Its narrative frameworks and content are connected with the motif of Jesus' and His disciples' way to Jerusalem.

Theophylact's independence in commenting Mark can be observed in his reference to the cross. *Catena in Marcum* claims that one should not blame the disciples for their inability to understand the sense of Jesus' activity because "there were yet neither the cross nor the grace of the Spirit."[15] Such a view is close to Luke's and John's conceptions which attribute the disciples' lack of understanding to the temporary hiding of the meaning of Jesus' words and of the sense of the Scriptures, which shall be revealed to them at the moment of their meeting with the Risen Christ and their receiving of the Holy Spirit (Luke 18:34; 24:45; John 2:22; 7:39). Theophylact does not seek the reasons for their incomprehension in the outside

[15] W.R.S. Lamb: *The Catena in Marcum*…, p. 367.

circumstances but in the limitations of the disciples themselves. Jesus' allusions to the baptism and the cup are not interpreted by them in the sense of His death on the cross because they understand it solely in the material sense (αἰσθητός), that is in the same sense as they understand the reign of God, perceiving it from the perspective of the earthly kingdom.

Mark 10:45

While commenting on the indignation of the Ten with the discussion of the sons of Zebedee with Jesus, Theophylact begins with the characteristics of the disciples: "acting in a human way, they are driven by envy." The Gospel of Mark attributes this motivation only to the chief priests, who, out of envy, hand Jesus over to Pilate (Mark 15:10; cf. Matthew 27:18). The Bishop of Ohrid indicates the internal deficiencies of the disciples: "The Christ heals them, on the one hand, silencing them firstly, so that they could come close to Him – as [the phrase] 'He called them together' suggests; on the other, He intends to show them that the seizure of adoration and the desire for the first places is of pagan character." The original element of the explanation offered by the Bishop of Ohrid is the presentation of this "calling together" as a process of healing the disciples.[16] Although his explanation of Jesus' sentence about the Son of Man serving and giving his life as ransom (Mark 10:45) depends on the texts of Chrysostom and *Catena in Marcum*,[17] it also exposes Jesus' pedagogy, who teaches the disciples about His death. The conduct of the Son of Man is given here as an example: Theophylact interprets His death as the greatest act of service towards those to whom this service is directed.

Mark 11:11–14

Although a pericope of the withered tree (Mark 11:11–14) lacks any references to Jesus' passion and death, they appear in the explanations of this fragment.[18] Theophylact and *Catena in Marcum* adopt the explanation provided by the

[16] John Chrysostom presents the whole answer of Jesus as healing, cf.: John Chrysostom: *Homily LXV, 5.*

[17] Likewise, John Chrysostom in *Homily LXV, 4.*

[18] While commenting on the triumphant entry to Jerusalem (a fragment of the explanation of Mark 11:1–6) Theophylact notices first that during the previous entries to Jerusalem Jesus did not act so openly to avoid instigating envy; thus paying attention to the motivation which Mark attributes to the chief priests during the process before Pilate (Mark 15:10; cf. Matthew 27:18). He explains this change in Jesus' behaviour, who now shows his glory (the change is also noted in *Catena in Marcum*: He did not act like that earlier because the time of his passion was not near), by the nearness of his passion (*Catena in Marcum*: "the cross is at the gates"). This interpretation is derived from John Chrysostom: *Homily LXVI, 1.*

Chrysostom,[19] which says that the fig tree withered for the sake of the disciples, in order to show them Jesus' power, capable of destroying His opponents. This explanation does not, however, include the emphasis on Jesus' pedagogy towards the incomprehension of the disciples, which is typical of other places in Theophylact's commentary. In comparison to the earlier commentators the Bishop of Ohrid more clearly points out Jesus' death while writing about the opponents as those who wanted to crucify Him.

Mark 12:7–8

Theophylact does not allude to Jesus' death in his commentary on the pericope about the driving out those who are buying and selling in the temple, which contains information about the chief priests and the scribes who seek to destroy (ἀπολέσωσιν) Jesus (Mark 11:18). Almost the same group (composed of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders) becomes the addressee of His parable about the wicked tenants to whom the son of the owner of the vineyard is sent: "But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill (ἀποκτείνωμεν) him, and the inheritance will be ours.' And they took him and killed (ἀπέκτειναν) him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy (ἀπολέσαι) those tenants and give the vineyard to others" (Mark 12:7–9). The Evangelist accentuates, on the one hand, the intention of the tenants to kill the son of the owner of the vineyard, yet on the other – the undoing of the killers as a punishment inflicted on them by the owner.

Theophylact accurately depicts the analysed fragment. He uses two verbs present in the parables referring to the destiny of: Jesus – "to kill" (ἀποκτείνειν); the tenants – "to destroy" (ἀπολλύειν). *Catena in Marcum* also relates the verb "to kill" (ἀποκτείνειν) to Jesus but it presents the destiny of the tenants as the punishing of the servants (ἐπὶ τιμωρίᾳ τῶν δούλων), while not only are they but also the people betrayed (παραδοθῆναι) to the Romans.

Theophylact reads the parable as a prediction of Jesus' destiny, interpreting the throwing out of the vineyards as the crucifixion outside Jerusalem (cf. also Hebrews 13:12). Here he understands the vineyard as the city, although earlier he claims that the vineyard means people whom the Lord planted.

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[19] John Chrysostom explains: "Wherefore then was it cursed? For the disciples' sakes, that they might have confidence. For because everywhere He conferred benefits, but punished no man; and it was needful that He should afford them a demonstrative proof of His power to take vengeance also, that both the disciples might learn, and the Jews, that being able to blast them that crucify Him, of His own will He submits, and does not blast them; and it was not His will to show forth this upon men; upon the plant did He furnish the proof of His might in taking vengeance." Cf. John Chrysostom: *Homily LXVII, 1.*

The Originality of Theophylact's Explanations

The common conviction of the influence of *Catena in Marcum* on Theophylact is responsible for the underestimation of the value of the commentaries written by the Bishop of Ohrid; however, the comparison of his explanations with the interpretations of the pericopes from the second Gospel offered by *Catena in Marcum* enables to precisely verify the opinions about his dependence on the earlier commentators. Among the above analysed commentaries on the fragments speaking about Jesus' death, one can find Theophylact's explanation of the plotting of the Pharisees and the Herodians against Jesus (Mark 3:6), which was omitted in *Catena in Marcum*. Theophylact, having noticed the differences between the Gospels, present even in the parallel texts, departs from the interpretations made by *Catena in Marcum*. While commenting on Jesus' statement about the taking away of the bridegroom, which forms an answer to the question posed by John's disciples and the Pharisees and concerning the reason why the Jesus' disciples do not keep fasts (Mark 2:20), *Catena in Marcum* interprets "the taking away of the bridegroom" as Jesus' Ascension; while Theophylact sees here the reference to His death, which corresponds with the text of the Gospel of Mark. Furthermore, the commentaries differ also in the understanding of the scene of the transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8). Although they both, falling under the influence of the Gospel of Luke, refer to "appearing in glory" (Luke 9:31), still, they interpret it differently. According to *Catena in Marcum* Jesus' glory is to fulfil itself in Jerusalem, whereas Theophylact stresses that it will be revealed to Jesus' disciples after the end of the world.

The originality of the Bishop of Ohrid is above all visible in his consistent reference to Mark's motif of the formation of the disciples, which is necessary due to their internal limitations: the lack of faith, thinking in the material categories, embarrassment, not accepting the necessity of Jesus' death as the plan of God. Theophylact explains the objection of the disciples to the first prediction of passion, death and resurrection of the Son of Man (Mark 8:31) with their inability to understand the sense of the belonging to Jesus, and *Catena in Marcum* – with their incomprehension of the mystery of resurrection. Commenting on the failure of the disciples in casting out the mute spirit from the boy (Mark 9:18), Theophylact points out the essential role of faith; the lack thereof among disciples is evil done to Jesus, which is greater that His death; whereas *Catena in Marcum* stresses the hardship experienced by Jesus during his stay with "the faithless and perverse generation." The necessity of the formation of the disciples is also highlighted by Theophylact when he explains the request of the sons of Zebedee (Mark10:35). Here *Catena in Marcum* seeks the outside reasons for the lack of understanding of the mystery by the disciples; but Theophylact believes that the reasons are rather internal and result from the misunderstanding of the reign of God as the earthly kingdom.

Theophylact distinguishes Mark from other Gospels, at the same acknowledging their theological unanimity. This recognition of the theology, which is unique to Mark, is visible in the fragments analysed above. In accordance with the content of the Gospel Theophylact relates the taking away of the bridegroom to Jesus' death (Mark 2:20). While explaining the narrative of the plotting of the Pharisees and Herodians against Jesus how to destroy Him (Mark 3:6), he adopts the verb "to destroy," which plays a vital role in Mark's narration: it describes the actions of Jesus' adversaries which aim at ridiculing and destroying Him in the eyes of people, and only as a result of the failure of their efforts they decide to achieve their aim by killing Him. In the commentary to the first prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man (Mark 8:31) Theophylact uses the terms typical of this Gospel: the noun "mystery" (τὸ μυστήριον) in the singular, the verb "to understand" (συνιέναι) to refer to the ignorance of the disciples. He also places an emphasis on the themes which are important for the Gospel of Mark: the mystery of the cross as a subject of Jesus' teaching on his way to Jerusalem and the difficulties of the disciples in understanding it. The issue of the formation of the disciples is brought up by Theophylact several times: the lack of faith is the reason for their failure in casting out the mute spirit from the boy (Mark 9:19), the entry to Jerusalem is the background to the difficulties in understanding the content of the prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man (Mark 10:39), to which Jesus adapts the formation of the disciples, and the calling the disciples together to Him is an element of Jesus' pedagogy (10:45).

The distinction of Mark's theology from other Gospels, which is present in Theophylact's *Explanation*, becomes more visible in juxtaposition with *Catena in Marcum.* The latter does not notice the uniqueness of Mark and falls under the influence of the parallel pericopes in other Gospels. While commenting on Peter's objection (Mark 8:32) to the first prediction of the destiny of the Son of Man, *Catena in Marcum* quotes his words – which do not appear in Mark – after Matthew (16:22), and explains the incomprehension of the disciples with the fact that the meaning of these words was hidden from them – in the same way as Luke does in the third prediction (Luke 18:34). Further, it expresses Jesus' complaint (Mark 9:19) according to the version provided by other Synoptics: "You faithless and perverse generation" (Matthew 17:17; Luke 9:41) and gives the reason for the request made by the sons of Zebedee, explicitly following "another Evangelist" – paraphrasing a narrative introduction to the parable of the ten minas from the Gospel of Luke (19:11–28). And still more, it justifies the limitations of the disciples in their understanding of the sense of Jesus' activity with the notion typical of the Gospel of Luke and John, where the gift of understanding is given to the disciples at the meeting with the Risen Christ and in the Holy Spirit (Luke 18:34; 24:45; John 2:22; 7:39).

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Retornos fílmicos de Orfeo y Eurídice

Abstract: The analysis of eleven films, which return to the story about Orpheus and Eurydice, proves universality of the myth and depicts its new cultural and symbolic contexts in different stages of development of cinematography. Adaptations, inspirations, and references to the tragedy of the ancient heroes reflect variable fashions and social realities in which their namesakes live, as well as form the starting point to reflection on the theme of love and death, meeting and loss, power of poetry, and widely understood artistic creativity. The author focuses on the range of styles, diversity of film conventions and interesting influences of the other works of an Orphic.

Key words: Orpheus and Eurydice, mythology in the cinema, reception of antiquity

El relato mitológico de la muerte de Eurídice – sobre todo el episodio del descenso de Orfeo al Hades y el dramático momento cuando éste mira atrás y pierde a su esposa para siempre – aparece en distintas épocas y varios estilos tanto en pintura como en escultura, ópera o literatura y, más tarde, también en cine. Fijémonos en la variedad de códigos artísticos que aparecen en esta última disciplina, su complejidad y cómo se entremezclan creando un raro palimpsesto. Los retornos fílmicos de Orfeo y Eurídice consisten en imágenes, motivos y, a veces, hasta en citas a otras obras de esta temática.

La tradición iconográfica representa un punto de partida en la mayoría de las películas analizadas. A veces, la propia obra de arte mostrada en la pantalla introduce al espectador en la simbología mitológica. Podemos observarlo, por ejemplo, en la película de Icíar Bollaín *Te doy mis ojos* (2003). En esta historia

contemporánea de una mujer maltratada por su marido aparece una reproducción de *Orfeo y Eurídice* de Rubens. En el cuadro, Eurídice todavía sigue caminando detrás de Orfeo pero ya presentimos que el impaciente músico no soportará la tensión y mirará hacia atrás. La mano del hombre busca a tientas a su esposa mientras que con el rabillo del ojo intenta advertir por lo menos parte de la ropa de ella. La reproducción del cuadro aparece en pantalla cuando Pilar, que está haciendo un cursillo para trabajar como guía en un museo, muestra a su hijo un álbum con reproducciones de cuadros inspirados en la mitología griega. El relato sobre la muerte de Eurídice termina en el momento en que Orfeo casi logra conducirla de vuelta al mundo de los vivos. Nosotros sabemos que se dará la vuelta y perderá a su esposa pero la protagonista no tiene tiempo para contarlo porque precisamente en este momento su marido vuelve a casa. Durante la escena suponemos que la historia de este matrimonio tampoco tendrá un final feliz. El hombre no es capaz de confiar y pierde a su Eurídice: ella se irá a otra ciudad para empezar allí su nueva vida sin él[1].

Versiones pictóricas del mito aparecen también en la famosa trilogía órfica de Jean Cocteau que incluye las películas *La sangre de un poeta* (*Le sang d'un poète*, 1930), *Orfeo* (*Orphée*, 1950) y *El testamento de Orfeo* (*Le Testament d'Orphée ou ne me demandez pas pourquoi*, 1960). En la trilogía, el director muestra en pantalla sus propios cuadros y dibujos. Observamos también relaciones intertextuales entre dichas películas. No encontramos ninguna continuación directa a nivel narrativo pero en los guiones aparecen los mismos personajes y *leitmotiv*, como los autógrafos de Orfeo para sus fans o el espejo que sirve al matrimonio de puerta al otro mundo. Dichos motivos después inspirarán a otro director francés, Jacques Demy, que en su película *Parking* de 1985 hace referencia muchas veces a *Orfeo* de Cocteau.

También merece la pena recordar el carácter personal de la trilogía órfica y la identificación de su director con el artista del mito. Cocteau lo subraya sobre todo en la última de las tres películas en la que él mismo interpreta a Orfeo. *El testamento de Orfeo* empieza con el comentario de su autor: «[…] esta película es como un estriptis que está desnudando mi alma». En la escena anterior, con el cuadro, uno de los protagonistas le dice a Orfeo: «El artista siempre crea su autorretrato, nunca será usted capaz de pintar esta flor». Como nos explica Alicja Helman:

> Para Cocteau Orfeo es el prototipo del «poeta maldito», perseguido, desdichado y no comprendido por los demás. Así el director le muestra en su obra, donde podemos ver las huellas de sus propias experiencias. [En la película *Orfeo* – J.A.] en el parisino Café des Artistes se encuentran dos generaciones de poetas. Los jóvenes modernistas no aceptan a Orfeo de la misma manera

[1] Sobre esta película ver más J. Aleksandrowicz: „Podarunki Eurydyki". *Opcje* 2008, nr 1 (70), págs. 98–99.

> en la que en la vida real no aceptaban al autor de la película por ser considerado un artista anticuado y de menor importancia[2].

La trilogía (sobre todo su segunda parte) es también un ejemplo de los vínculos existentes entre los motivos órficos en el cine y el mundo del teatro. En el año 1944 Cocteau escribió la pieza teatral llamada *Orfeo* (*Orphée*) de la que muchos elementos volvemos a encontrar en la película homónima del artista. Entre dichos motivos destaca el matrimonio malavenido con una aburrida Eurídice que no entiende la poesía del Orfeo. Cuando el protagonista baja al mundo subterráneo no lo hace para salvar a su esposa, fallecida en un accidente de coche, sino para encontrarse otra vez con la bonita princesa que personifica a la muerte. Pero esto no es el fin de los vínculos intertextuales. En el año 1993 en Boston tuvo lugar el estreno de la ópera *Orfeo* (*Orphée*) de Philip Glass con libreto basado en el guión de la segunda parte de la trilogía de Jean Cocteau[3].

Otros ejemplos de inspiración teatral y fílmica conjuntas son *Orfeo negro* (*Orfeu negro*, 1959) de Marcel Camus y el *remake* dirigido por Carlos Diegues titulado *Orfeo* (*Orfeu*, 1999): ambas películas se basan en la misma pieza teatral, *Orfeo de Conçeicão* (*Orfeu da Conçeicão*), del dramaturgo brasileño Vinicius de Moraes. Las tres obras tienen en común el lugar donde se desarrolla la acción – un barrio pobre de Río de Janeiro – y los elementos más importantes de la trama. Los protagonistas se conocen y enamoran durante el carnaval, aunque él ya está comprometido con otra. Al final, Eurídice inevitablemente (pero en distintas circunstancias) pierde la vida. Después muere Orfeo con el nombre de la amada en los labios y, en ambas películas, a manos de la ex-novia enloquecida de celos. Podemos encontrar aquí la reminiscencia de una de las versiones del mito en la tras haber muerto a manos de celosas mujeres tracias la cabeza del poeta no paraba gritar el nombre de Eurídice[4].

Tanto en la obra del teatro brasileña como en sus adaptaciones los protagonistas no son conscientes de las connotaciones mitológicas de sus nombres. Marcel Camus lo hace muy visible en la escena en la que Orfeo va con Mira a una oficina para arreglar unas formalidades antes de la boda. Un empleado dice en broma que si el novio se llama Orfeo, su novia seguramente se llama Eurídice. La chica se enoja al estar convencida de que Eurídice es la nueva amante de su prometido y, como resulta después, tenía razón aunque el propio Orfeo todavía no se diera

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[2] A. Helman: „Filmowe przygody Orfeusza". W: *Mit Orfeusza: inspiracje i reinterpretacje w europejskiej tradycji artystycznej*. Red. S. Żerańska-Kominek. Gdańsk 2003, pág. 316. Ver también A. Helman: „Orfeusz". *Kino* 2009, nr 11, págs. 66–67.

[3] Ver: R. Wiesend: „Śpiew w śpiewie. Implikacje i przemiany motywu Orfeusza w operze". W: *Mit Orfeusza*…, pág. 245.

[4] Ver: Ovid. *Met.* XI, 5–41; Verg. *Georg.* IV, 525–526; Pausanias: *Descripción de Grecia*. Vol. 3. Libros VII–X. Trad. y notas de M. Cruz Herrero Ingelmo. Madrid 2002, pág. 304; P. Grimal: *Diccionario de la mitología griega y romana*. Prefacio por Ch. Picard. Trad. F. Payarols. Revisión P. Pericay. Barcelona 1965, pág. 392.

cuenta de eso. Cuando le pide al empleado que se explique éste dice solamente que se trata una historia muy antigua. Precisamente a esta historia antigua se refiere el principio de la película cuando vemos una copia romana del relieve ático *Orfeo, Eurídice, Hermes* de 420 a.C. (el mismo que inspiró uno de los famosos *Sonetos a Orfeo* de Rainer María Rilke). Personajes de mármol blanco y acordes nostálgicos de guitarra forman el contrapunto en la escena del baile, llena de colores y ruido de tambores que anuncian el principio del carnaval.

En el cine, sin embargo, la relación con otras representaciones de los motivos órficos no es siempre tan evidente. En algunos casos solo podemos hablar de una tradición o continuidad cultural, sin claras referencias a una obra concreta. Merece la pena recordar aquí la adaptación hollywoodiana del mito que termina en *happy end*. En la película de Vincent Ward *Más allá de los sueños* (*What dreams may come*, 1998) resulta que pese a haber muerto los cónyuges pueden vivir juntos en el otro mundo. Después de encontrarse allí la pareja se abraza con sus hijos y su perro favorito en un escenario paradisiaco. Pero esto todavía no es un final. Los protagonistas deciden renacer y enamorarse otra vez en la tierra mientras que sus hijos les esperan en el cielo. A la mujer le preocupan las dificultades de reencontrar a su marido pero él le dice: «Si yo te encontré en el infierno, tu podrás lograrlo en New Jersey». Así que el Orfeo americano hace lo imposible, vuelve con su Eurídice al mundo de los vivos y al final de la película la encuentra otra vez. Vemos a una niña y un niño y sus pequeños barcos chocando mientras juegan. En la escena siguiente los niños intercambian sus bocadillos. Esto se parece más a un idílico anuncio de televisión que al punto culminante de un mito.

El final feliz de la historia de Orfeo y Eurídice, no obstante, no es una novedad inventada por Hollywood, ni siquiera es un invento de los cineastas. Un tipo de *happy end* lo podemos encontrar en *Orfeo* (*Orphée*) de Cocteau. El poeta obtiene el permiso para volver con su esposa al mundo de los vivos mientras que los recuerdos de Hades desaparecen. Sin embargo, el significado de este final no es tan feliz como parece porque Orfeo está enamorado de la princesa y no de su poco atractiva esposa. Un final parecido, no totalmente feliz, aparece en *Parking* donde el protagonista reencuentra a su amante pero después de su propia muerte (motivo que encontramos también en *Metamorfosis* de Ovidio[5]). Reminiscencias de esta versión del mito están presentes en la película de Marcel Camus y especialmente en el *remake* de Carlos Diegues. Durante el final la cámara deja los amantes muertos y muestra una peculiar retransmisión desde el cielo en la pantalla de un televisor. En un escenario paradisiaco Orfeo sigue vivo y baila con una sonriente Eurídice durante un pintoresco desfile aunque el carnaval en Río ya se haya acabado. En cambio, un final plenamente feliz lo encontramos en la poesía antigua[6]

[5] Ver: Ovid. *Met.* XI, 62–66.

[6] Ver: Z. Kubiak: *Mitologia Greków i Rzymian*. Warszawa 1997, pág. 355; W. Lengauer: „Orfeusz poeta. Rola słowa w przeżyciu religijnym w okresie archaicznym kultury greckiej". W: *Mit Orfeusza*…, pág. 26.

y en algunas óperas del siglo XVII, ante todo en *Orfeo y Eurídice* de Christoph Willibald Gluck[7] quien culminó esta obra con el triunfo del amor.

En distintas variantes del mito y sus versiones artísticas lo que cambia no es solamente el final. Varían también los papeles de los protagonistas, el tipo del instrumento músico de Orfeo y la causa de su muerte. Sławomira Żerańska considera que

> no existe una versión completa y «original» del mito de Orfeo. Todo lo que sabemos sobre el músico legendario se parece a una figurilla rota y pegada cuidadosamente pero incompleta a pesar de los esfuerzos[8].

Las películas también reflejan dicha variedad, están vinculadas con distintas tradiciones y a veces mezclan variantes del mito. Por ejemplo, el personaje de Hermes – quien en algunas versiones hace de guía que ayuda al Orfeo durante su viaje al Hades – aparece en la trilogía de Cocteau, en *Más allá de los sueños* y en las adaptaciones brasileñas[9]. José Luis Sánchez Noriega mantiene que los cambios del contexto y giros semánticos son típicos en el caso de las referencias mitológicas en el cine:

> La mitología clásica griega y romana viene en el cine de la mano del *peplum* en un territorio que combina con extraordinaria libertad la historia y los textos literarios para tratamientos que oscilan entre la recreación histórica y la fantasía pasando por el espectáculo y la aventura. […] La propia tradición mitológica mezcla personajes y ofrece múltiples variaciones, por lo que no es extraño que el cine haga otro tanto, aunque en ocasiones con incoherencias inaceptables. Hay películas que recrean mitos clásicos a partir de dramas teatrales y otras referencias culturales, como es el caso de Medea u Orfeo, por lo que suelen presentar un tratamiento metafórico más cercano al espíritu y la función de aquella tradición[10].

En la última película de la trilogía de Jean Cocteau Orfeo viaja a distintas épocas y dice que se perdió en la atemporalidad mientras que los protagonistas de casi todas las películas analizadas funcionan en otros tiempos y otros lugares. El capítulo sobre Orfeo y Eurídice de la serie *El cuentacuentos: Mitos griegos* (*The Storyteller: Greek Myths*, 1990) de Tony Smith es la única y bastante ingenua

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[7] Ver: A. Helman: „Filmowe przygody Orfeusza"…, pág. 317; B. Przybyszewska-Jarmińska: „Początek opery, czyli uszczęśliwienie Orfeusza". W: *Mit Orfeusza*…, págs. 166–167; J. Miziołek: „*Orfeusz i Eurydyka*: cykl obrazów Jacopo del Sellaio z czasów Lorenzo il Magnifico". W: *Mit Orfeusza*…, pág. 83.

[8] S. Żerańska: „Portret wenusjańskiego artysty w balladzie Roberta Henrysona *Orpheus and Eurydice*". W: *Mit Orfeusza*…, pág. 57.

[9] Sobre el papel de Hermes en algunas versiones del mito ver por ejemplo Z. Kubiak: *Mitologia Greków i Rzymian*…, pág. 359.

[10] J.L. Sánchez Noriega: *Diccionario temático del cine*. Madrid 2004, pág. 314.

prueba de mostrar las realidades del mito. El director hace la reconstrucción de la versión más popular – desde la huida frente a un fastidioso admirador y la picadura de la serpiente hasta el descenso al Hades, la momentánea salvación y la definitiva pérdida de Eurídice. La tragedia del músico y su mujer está representada por la naturaleza salvaje. La caracterización de los personajes se asemeja a una fantasía sobre los héroes mitológicos. En otros casos los protagonistas se enamoran y mueren en grandes ciudades – Río de Janeiro, París o Copenhague – y el tiempo de la narración coincide generalmente con el tiempo en que se rodó la película a excepción de *Todas las mañanas del mundo* (*Tous les matins du monde*, 1991) de Alain Corneau, adaptación de la novela homónima de Pascal Quignard. Tanto en la película como en el libro la acción se desarrolla en una Francia del siglo XVII perfectamente recreada y los protagonistas son dos virtuosos de la viola da gamba, Jean de Sainte Colombe y Marin Marais[11]. Las demás películas analizadas se desarrollan en distintas décadas del siglo XX o XXI y los motivos mitológicos aparecen adecuadamente actualizados. En *Parking* Orfeo es un cantante pop y en lugar de la lira toca la guitarra eléctrica. Este instrumento sirve también para crear la transformación irónica de una de las versiones del mito según la cual Zeus mató al músico con un rayo por divulgar los secretos divinos[12]: en el musical francés la estrella se electrocuta durante un concierto.

Un caso interesante de actualización lo encontramos también en *Reconstrucción de un amor* (*Reconstruction*, 2003) de Christoffer Boe. El episodio órfico se adapta perfectamente a la onírica historia de amor y el motivo del encuentro de una mujer y un hombre, dos desconocidos convencidos de que ya se habían conocido antes, que constantemente se repite. En una secuencia apoteósica con claras referencias al mito el narrador nos explica las reglas del peculiar juego de los protagonistas: «Una prueba para él y para ella. Para que demuestre su amor por ella. ¿Estúpido? Quizás. Si él retrocede o duda… ella desaparecerá». Los amantes caminan de noche por las calles de una ciudad en la que una estación del metro se convierte en el mundo subterráneo de Hades. La mujer va caminando detrás del hombre por un laberinto de pasillos, si bien muy cerca de la salida él se da la vuelta y en el siguiente encuadre vemos solamente un andén vacío. Cuando la pareja se encuentra de nuevo la mujer ya no reconoce ni se acuerda del hombre. Así que «Eurídice» no muere en la pantalla como sus predecesoras fílmicas: esta versión hace pensar en una tradición griega donde «la muerte se asemeja al olvido, los muertos son los que han perdido la memoria»[13].

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[11] Sobre los elementos biográficos en la película ver: K. Lipka: „Nie wszystkie gamby świata". *Kwartalnik Filmowy* 1994, nr 6, págs. 82–84; Idem: „Życie dla muzyki, muzyka dla cieni… Wizja baroku w filmie *Wszystkie poranki świata* Alaina Corneau". *Kwartalnik Filmowy* 1994, nr 6, pág. 90.

[12] Ver: Pausanias: *Descripción de Grecia*…, pág. 305; P. Grimal: *Diccionario*…, pág. 392; R. Graves: *Los mitos griegos*. Vol. 1. Trad. L. Echávarri. Madrid 1986, pág. 137.

[13] Ver: M. Eliade: *Historia de las creencias y de las ideas religiosas.* Trad. J. Valiente Malla. Barcelona 2005, pág. 231.

Si comparamos esta escena de la estación del metro escandinava con otras imágenes de la separación de los amantes nos llamará la atención su impactante y sobrio vacío. No encontramos aquí gestos desesperados, gritos, ni manos extendidas en vano como en el hermoso fragmento de las *Geórgicas* de Virgilio:

> Y ya volviendo sobre sus pasos, había escapado
> Orfeo a todos los peligros, y Eurídice, que le había
> sido devuelta, llegaba a la región de la luz caminando
> tras él (pues tal era condición impuesta por Prosérpina),
> cuando un súbito acceso de locura se apoderó
> del imprudente enamorado, locura ciertamente perdonable,
> si los Manes supieran perdonar: se detuvo y, ya
> al borde mismo de la luz, sin acordarse, ¡ay!, y sin
> poderse contener, volvió los ojos a su querida Eurídice.
> En ese momento se echaron a perder todos sus
> esfuerzos y quedaron rotos los pactos con el cruel
> tirano; por las lagunas del Averno se dejó oír por tres
> veces un rumor sordo. Ella inquirió: "¿Qué locura,
> Orfeo, qué locura tan grande me ha perdido, desgraciada
> de mí, y te ha perdido a ti? He aquí que por
> segunda vez los hados crueles me hacen volver atrás y
> el sueño cierra mis ojos anegados en llanto. Y ahora…,
> ¡adiós! Se me lleva la profunda tiniebla que me
> envuelve mientras tiendo hacia ti, ¡ay!, sin ser ya tuya,
> mis manos impotentes". Tal dijo, y de repente, como
> el humo que en el aire impalpable se disipa, desvaneciéndose
> la imagen de los ojos de Orfeo en dirección
> opuesta; y ya ella no pudo verle más, por mucho que
> aquel en vano trataba de aprehender las sombras y
> decirle mil cosas a su amada […][14].

Christoffer Boe suprime toda expresividad de la escena y al mismo tiempo destaca la soledad de los personajes, uno de los temas más importantes en esta historia. Al final el protagonista se queda solo en una calle en la que en un instante desaparecen todos los peatones como antes había desaparecido «Eurídice». También en *Todas las mañanas del mundo* el director nos muestra, de manera sencilla y sugestiva a la vez, la conmovedora soledad del personaje. Sin efectos especiales, por medio de sombríos y estáticos encuadres experimentamos aquí el vacío que provoca la pérdida de una persona cercana. En la escena que se desarrolla a la orilla de un lago vemos al protagonista y el espectro de su mujer en un bote. En el siguiente plano podemos advertir solamente la orilla desierta y la oscura silueta

[14] Verg. *Georg.* IV 485–500. Traducción española citada por: Virgilio: *Geórgicas*. Trad. J. Valázquez. Madrid 1994.

del músico que resalta sobre el fondo del agua. También en otros instantes la añoranza y el desconsuelo son transmitidos mediante lugares vacíos en los que hace un tiempo señora de Sainte Colombe se tomaba un vaso de vino o mordisqueaba galletas.

Tanto en *Reconstrucción de un amor* como en la mayoría de las películas analizadas al transportar la narración al momento contemporáneo la caracterización de los personajes se adapta a la de la época. Solo podemos hablar de excepciones en el caso de las películas ambientadas en Río de Janeiro. El director aprovecha la mascarada de Año Nuevo para vestir a Orfeo y Eurídice de forma menos realista. Los trajes de carnaval que transportan a los protagonistas a otra, poco precisa mas lejana, época. De esta manera parecen interpretar eternos papeles en un drama siempre actual.

Además de la variedad de escenarios llama la atención la diversidad de los estilos y géneros: del drama contemporáneo al cine histórico, pasando por el musical o la vanguardia surrealista. Sería también muy interesante analizar, si bien no han sido mencionadas aquí, películas de animación técnicamente tan distintas como el anime, el *collage* posmoderno, la animación en volumen de figuras de plastilina o la animación por ordenador de siluetas parecidas a las de las vasijas griegas.

Más sencilla parece la categorización de las inspiraciones mitológicas según sus funciones en la narración fílmica. Podemos distinguir entre adaptaciones de una de los versiones del mito – con o sin su actualización – y películas con algunos motivos de la historia sobre Orfeo y Eurídice. Cezary Rowiński mantiene que las inspiraciones literarias del mito órfico casi siempre están reducidas a tres elementos: el amor más allá de la muerte, el arte que tiene poder sobre la naturaleza y el viaje al mundo de los muertos[15]. Dichos temas que aparecen también en el cine resultan ser los más universales y abiertos a nuevas interpretaciones. Sin embargo, entre las reminiscencias temáticas los más populares son los motivos románticos, comúnmente intercalados en forma de melodrama con algún episodio que trate de la creación artística que, por otra parte, no es solamente la profesión de Orfeo – por ejemplo, en *Más allá de los sueños* la esposa del músico es pintora y la Eurídice de *Parking* esculpe.

Dentro de los tres grandes temas mencionados aparecen normalmente detalles del mito fáciles de reconocer. Entre los más populares encontramos: el mirar hacia atrás, la música que hechiza los animales, Cerbero y el bote al mundo de los muertos. Los directores transforman y actualizan estos motivos, a veces con cierta dosis del humor. En la película de Jacques Demy el bote de Caronte se convierte en un coche que atraviesa la pared de un párking subterráneo y en la entrada del Hades un funcionario introduce los datos de los muertos en un ordenador. El motivo

[15] Ver: C. Rowiński: „Orfeusz i Eurydyka". W: *Mit – człowiek – literatura*. Wstęp S. Stabryła. Warszawa 1992, pág. 105.

mitológico de la lira de Orfeo ubicada en el firmamento como una constelación[16] está reducida por Carlos Diegues a un interés del protagonista por la astrología. En la obra de Cocteau Orfeo mira a Eurídice por casualidad en el espejo retrovisor. El barco naufragado en *Más allá de los sueños* se llama Cerbero. En las películas francesas el célebre artista del mito se convierte en un ídolo de masas. En *El testamento de Orfeo* los policías que detienen al poeta en cuanto lo reconocen le piden un autógrafo en lugar de ponerle una multa, el cantante de *Parking* admira los grandes carteles con su semblante que hay en las calles de Paris.

En la pantalla a los amantes mitológicos los acompañan a menudo otros personajes de la tradición órfica: Hermes, Aristeo, Hades y Caronte, a veces también Perséfone. Es interesante que dichos protagonistas, al igual que Orfeo y Eurídice, en las versiones contemporáneas del mito no se den cuenta del significado de sus nombres. En la película de Marcel Camus el experimentado portero de la cochera de tranvías se llama Hermes y no le parece extraño que esté ayudando a un conductor de tranvía llamado Orfeo a encontrar a Eurídice. También el papel de Hades lo interpreta, inconscientemente, un empleado anónimo del depósito de cadáveres donde el músico encuentra el cuerpo de su amada.

En este contexto *Todas las mañanas del mundo* es una película excepcional. Su narración tiene un deambular propio. El director no intenta buscar a toda costa equivalentes de los motivos mitológicos, tampoco quiere someter literalmente la historia a la estructura del mito. Las referencias a Orfeo son muy sutiles pero, a pesar de eso, a través de ellas es precisamente cómo los críticos interpretan a menudo la película[17]. Sainte Colombe, el maestro de viola da gamba busca el olvido, desesperado tras la muerte de su esposa. Ella aparece como un espectro atraído por sonidos del instrumento y explica que el mundo de los muertos se parece a un barco agujerado que se hubiera podrido en el fondo del lago. Así que es la mujer muerta quien vuelve con su marido y no es casual que a su primer encuentro lo anteceda un onírico descenso del músico dentro del agua oscura del lago que podemos interpretar como un acceso simbólico al otro mundo. Pero el protagonista aquí está muy solo, no hay ningún guía que le pudiera indicar el camino al Hades o algún modo de salvar a su amada. Sumergirse en aguas profundas no produce el mismo efecto que surcar el Estigio. Las imágenes del maestro que toca en soledad o pasea a lo largo de la orilla del lago traen a la mente el retrato de Orfeo de las *Geórgicas* de Virgilio:

> A su vez Orfeo, buscando consuelo a su amor
> desdichado en la cóncava lira, a ti, su dulce esposa,
> sólo a ti cantaba por las riberas solitarias, solo; al

[16] Ver: R. Graves: *Los mitos griegos*…, pág. 137; P. Grimal: *Diccionario*…, pág. 393.

[17] Ver por ejemplo: A. Helman: „Filmowe przygody Orfeusza"…, págs. 309–327; D. Czaja: „Wariacje na tematy orfickie". *Kwartalnik Filmowy* 1994, nr 6, págs. 115–124; S. Sikora: „Święte pożegnanie". *Kwartalnik Filmowy* 1994, nr 6, págs. 103–114.

despuntar el día te cantaba y te cantaba al recogerse el día.
Incluso penetró en las fauces del Ténaro, boca
abismal del reino de Plutón, y en el bosque que el
negro espanta plaga de tinieblas; se presentó ante los
Manes y su terrible rey, y ante esos corazones que no
se dejan ablandar por súplicas humanas. Entonces,
conmovidas por su canto, de las profundas moradas
del Erebo avanzaban las sombras fugaces y los espectros
de los seres privados de luz […][18].

Las referencias mitológicas en *Todas las mañanas del mundo* las podemos encontrar en detalles del mundo representado, el ambiente de algunas escenas y los títulos de las composiciones del protagonista (*La tumba de los lamentos*, *Los llantos*, *La barca del Caronte*, *El Infierno*). También la viola da gamba puede ser estudiada como un símbolo órfico: el virtuoso le añade al instrumento una séptima cuerda y se dice que Orfeo inventó la lira de siete cuerdas o que, según otra versión, la perfeccionó gracias a dos cuerdas añadidas (en honor a las nueve musas)[19]. Así lo leemos en la novela de Pascal Quignard: «[Sainte Colombe – J.A.] añadió una cuerda baja al instrumento para dotarlo de una posibilidad más grave y con el fin de proporcionarle un timbre más melancólico»[20]. Krzysztof Lipka compara el «grave, sombrío, oscuro registro»[21] del instrumento con las sombras presentes en la película a través de la tristeza del protagonista, el espectro de su esposa y los pintorescos juegos de contrastes entre luz y sombras. Lipka constata también una interesante observación. Existe un vínculo entre la nostalgia de los personajes y el momento histórico de que trata la película: la época de esplendor de la viola da gamba y también el fin de su desarrollo, un momento que antecede su ocaso[22]. En lo relativo a las referencias órficas nos llama la atención el apodo de Sainte Colombe. Lipka considera que los alumnos del virtuoso le llaman «Orfeo de nuestros tiempos»[23]. Sin embargo, no sabemos si al músico le dieron el apodo únicamente gracias a su maestría o si también, como en la novela de Quignard y la película de Corneau, porque llora la muerte de su mujer.

El motivo del amor perdido está duplicado en *Todas las mañanas del mundo* en la historia de la trágica aventura de la hija de Sainte Colombe con Marin Marais, un alumno del maestro y más tarde virtuoso del instrumento. El guión se aparta de las convenciones melodramáticas (común entre otras adaptaciones

[18] Verg. *Georg.* IV, 465–473.

[19] Ver por ejemplo: P. Grimal: *Diccionario*…, pág. 391; S. Sikora: „Święte pożegnanie”…, pág. 106.

[20] P. Quignard: *Todas las mañanas del mundo*. Versión castellana de E. Benítez. Madrid 1995, pág. 8.

[21] K. Lipka: „Nie wszystkie gamby świata”…, pág. 83.

[22] Ver ibidem.

[23] Ver ibidem, pág. 84.

mitológicas) y no se centra en la separación de los amantes sino en la fuerza de la música aunque su poder esté vinculado con el dolor de la pérdida. En la primera escena de la película el director de orquesta le dice a un violagambista: «Tenga presente que las arcadas son personas infinitamente amadas que se alejan en las sombras»; y así suena la música de *Todas las mañanas del mundo*, lo que no se puede decir de otras adaptaciones del mito. Aunque la mayoría de los directores recurre al motivo del encantamiento de los animales mediante la música[24], la realización en general parece poco convincente. Basta mencionar una corza encantada por la canción pop a quien el protagonista de *Parking* canta al confín de su finca. Otro ejemplo lo podemos encontrar en la película de Carlos Diegues dónde cabras, gatos, gallinas, perros, patos, cerdos y monos escuchan con atención una melodía a guitarra. En el caso de la mayoría de protagonistas fílmicos parece dudoso que posean un extraordinario talento musical. Esto sucede sobre todo a la serie *El cuentacuentos: Mitos griegos* donde Orfeo presenta unas sencillas, briosas melodías a flauta y es difícil creer que así amansara bestias salvajes y ablandara el corazón insensible de Hades. En este contexto la maestría de la banda sonora de *Todas las mañanas del mundo* parece realmente excepcional. Su construcción fue extremadamente difícil porque todas las piezas que conocemos de la obra de Sainte Colombe fueron compuestas para dos violas (con fragmentos más fáciles probablemente reservados para su hija) mientras que para las escenas en solitario el director necesitaba música para un instrumento y así la compuso Jordi Savall, destacado violagambista, especializado en música antigua. Gracias a él la banda sonora armoniza perfectamente con estilo del maestro barroco y con las imágenes de protagonista que toca en soledad[25]. Los *leitmotiv* de Savall aportan un ambiente especial a esta película escueta en diálogos y acción donde «la música está simplemente ahí para hablar de lo que la palabra no puede hablar»[26]. Es interesante que la música de cuerda cambie su fuente de emisión, frecuentemente lo interpretado en pantalla se transforma en música *over* (es decir, aquella que no proviene de ningún elemento presente en la pantalla) así que algo fugitivo y temporal parece vencer el tiempo y la muerte.

La falta de temporalidad en *El testamento de Orfeo* que anteriormente hemos mencionado tiene también algo que ver con otras películas comentadas y trae a la mente una multitud de referencias y motivos que aparecen en realidades de distintas épocas. El análisis confirma la universalidad del mito pues se ha representado en varios contextos culturales y simbólicos adaptados al aquí y ahora a lo largo de diferentes etapas del desarrollo cinematográfico. Las adaptaciones, inspiraciones y referencias a la historia de Orfeo y Eurídice reflejan cambios de moda y realidades sociales en las que viven sus encarnaciones fílmicas y también forman el punto de

[24] Ver: Ovid. *Met*. XI, 1–3; Verg. *Georg*. IV, 510; Pausanias: *Descripción de Grecia*…, pág. 304; P. Grimal: *Diccionario*…, pág. 391.

[25] Ver más K. Lipka: „Życie dla muzyki…", págs. 90–91.

[26] P. Quignard: *Todas las mañanas del mundo*…, pág. 112.

partida para reflexionar sobre los motivos del amor y la muerte, el encuentro y la pérdida, la fuerza de la poesía y ampliamente entendida creación artística.

Hemos mencionado once ejemplos fílmicos presentes en el cine desde los años treinta hasta el principio de siglo XXI. Durante los próximos años seguramente se realizarán otras adaptaciones del mito o películas que hagan referencia a sus más reconocibles motivos. Sin importar la dirección que tomen, los cambios genéricos y nuevas interpretaciones estarán vinculados con la tradición antigua, fuente inagotable de inspiración. El protagonista de *Orfeo negro* dice que heredó su guitarra de otro Orfeo y que después de su propia muerte seguramente aparecerá algún Orfeo nuevo. Un motivo parecido podemos encontrarlo en *Todas las mañanas del mundo*: el viejo maestro confía a Marin Marais secretos de «las melodías que despiertan a los muertos» y al final de la película (que difiere del libro) reaparece como un espectro durante un concierto de su antiguo alumno. En la última escena de *Orfeo negro* un chico toca la guitarra del protagonista muerto. Los niños creen que gracias a esta música el sol se levanta sobre Río de Janeiro. Antes opinaban lo mismo de los conciertos de Orfeo. «Ahora tú eres Orfeo», le dice una chica al joven músico. El baile de los niños tiene su contrapunto en el plano del bajorrelieve de Orfeo, Eurídice y Hermes, el mismo que aparece al principio de la película. Sławomira Żerańska lo describe así:

> La obra puede representar el momento en que Eurídice es entregada a un victorioso Orfeo quien con gesto impaciente indica el camino que conduce a la luz. Sin embargo es posible también otra interpretación: Hermes lleva a Eurídice por primera o segunda vez al Hades. Eurídice mirando de cara a Orfeo y su fecunda lira, desea unirse con su amado, pero ya pertenece al Guía de las almas y estará por siempre al otro lado, personifica a la vez la fatalidad de la muerte y la esperanza de renacimiento que presagia Orfeo. De todos modos la obra simboliza la unión indisoluble entre el amor, la creación artística y el renacimiento después de la muerte[27].

Las repetidas salidas de sol a lo largo de la película de Marcel Camus y los tres personajes infantiles que aparecen en la última escena que se desarrolla al amanecer nos obligan a suponer que el mito se repetirá. Quizás el amigo del pequeño Orfeo se convierta en Hermes y la niña que baila sin preocupaciones al borde del abismo sea en el futuro una nueva Eurídice.

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[27] S. Żerańska: „Portret wenusjańskiego artysty…", pág. 69.

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