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The exploitation of local resources of Western Greece by Roman entrepreneurs (3rd -1st c. BC)

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In the manuscript of a Syrian trader of the turn of the 4th c. AD known as the *Expositio Totius Mundi*⁽¹⁾ the Greek mainland is presented as a poor region, producing small quantities of olive oil and honey. With the exception of Thessaly, which produced large amounts of grain, and Corinth, where there was considerable commercial activity, the main products of Greece were 'schools' and the country could be proud only of its scholars and orators.

Given this generalization, the question then arises as to what it was about the region that attracted Romans and Italiote Greeks, whose activity is attested in various parts of the Greek peninsula and adjacent islands, since it is obvious that their movement eastwards presupposes some economic motive, which is connected with the exploitation of various local opportunities⁽²⁾. The area examined in this study is Western Greece from the Ambraciot Gulf to Cape Akritas, namely Acarnania, Aetolia, the western part of the Peloponnese and the islands of Leukas, Ithaca, Kephallenia and Zakynthos. It is in this region that the earliest attestations to the presence of individuals from Italy are to be found from the 3rd c. BC onwards⁽³⁾. The period in question is therefore roughly framed at one end by the first traces of regular expansion by Roman traders eastwards in the 3rd c. BC and at the other end by the reign of Augustus, *i.e.* by the time that the network of Roman professionals spread over the whole Mediterranean had already been established⁽⁴⁾.

A combination of literary, epigraphic, numismatic and archaeological documents is needed if one is to gain a coherent view on the topic. Romans and Italiotes are as a rule to be found in the written sources described in general as *Italiotai* and *Romaioi*. Italiotes are sometimes defined by their towns of origin, these being in the majority of cases towns in the south of Italy and in Sicily. Sometimes no origin is given and Romans can be identified only by their Roman names. During the 3rd and 2nd c. BC they are never defined in terms of their occupations. Definitions, such as *negotiatores*,

(1) *Expositio Totius Mundi*, XII, 353-368. The original text was written in Greek by an unknown writer of the 4th c. AD and was twice translated into Latin under the titles *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* and *Descriptio totius mundi*. On this text see WOODMAN, 1964, p. 17; ROUGÉ, 1966; Cf. also MITTAG, 2006, p. 338-351.

(2) RUFFING, 2002, I, p. 134.

(3) PREKA-ALEXANDRI, 2000, p. 69-79; FUNKE, 2010, p. 8; ZOUMBAKI, in press.

(4) On the environment of this economic growth cf. HITCHNER, 2005, p. 208-212.

engaiountes, unguentarius, are not to be dated before the 1st c. BC (see below p. 82 and 84). As for earlier periods, it may be possible to trace activities and opportunities for profit seized by individuals from the West either by examining indirect references in the ancient sources or by considering the opportunities offered by the location or by the natural resources of the region.

Transport, trade and other enterprise along the route connecting western Greece to Italy

The western coast of the Greek mainland and the islands of the Ionian Sea are located on the safest sea-route connecting Italy to the eastern Mediterranean⁽⁵⁾, which is serviced by several safe harbors along the Acarnanian and the Aetolian coast, from the Ambraciot to the Corinthian Gulf⁽⁶⁾. With the exception of the harbor at Patras, whose importance increased after the destruction of Corinth, the western coast of the Peloponnese does not possess any important harbors: Kyllene and Pheia, on the Elean coast, Kyparissia and Pylos on the Messenian coast, small harbors facing Sicily, which could however provide brief posts on the route for the purposes of unloading. Shelter was also provided by the small island Prote lying between the two Messenian ports, on the rocks of which sailors scratched their names and wishes to Euploia, among whom were also individuals from Sicily (*IG V 1*, 1556, 1557).

The geographical location itself thus offered economic opportunities, as it offered safe transport routes and commerce. Archaeological finds of Italian origin along this route indicate that Italian vessels and their cargos found safe shelter in the harbors of western Greece⁽⁷⁾. The interest of Romans in transport and seaborne trade along the western Greek coast is further revealed by several literary texts, such as Polybius's (II, 8, 1-2) reference to the Italian merchants seized by the Illyrian queen Teuta in 229 BC and Livy's (XXXVIII, 44, 3; XL, 42, 4) mention of merchants taken by King Genthius

(5) For this route see WIRBELAUER, 1999, p. 401-402; STRAUCH, 1996, p. 222-226; FUNKE, 2010, p. 3-4.

(6) Anaktoron, Leukas, Palairos, Alyzeia, Astakos, Hagios Panteleimon, Oiniadai, Pleuron, Antirrhion, Naupaktos, cf. Skyl., XXXIV: *Ἀκαρνανία ἐστὶ πάσα εὐλίμενος*. Cf. STRAUCH, 1996, p. 224-225. Furthermore, the river Achelooos was navigable as far as Stratos, thus allowing transport, Strabo, X, 2, 2; Skyl., XXXIV. Polyb., IV, 65, 3 refers to *ξύλα* used by Philip V for the transport of building material to Oiniadai. Generally on navigable rivers see Freitag 1998, p. 78-89. On Stratos see STAVROPOULOU-GATSI, 2010, p. 84-87. Simple loading facilities perhaps existed on one of the Echinades islands, cf. STRAUCH, 1996, p. 179 and 225-226.

(7) Cf. for example Palairos: Pottery found in the ancient harbor mole of Palairos is to be dated from the 4th to the 2nd c. BC and consists mostly of Corinthian amphoras, but also Roman amphoras dated to the second half of the 2nd c. BC, see MURRAY, 1985, p. 72. Pogonitsa: see STEIN, 2001, p. 71-72. Ormos Vathy: large quantities of amphoras, other ceramic or glass ware and coins have been found, see STEIN, 2001, p. 67. Archaeological finds from Elis and Kyllene testify to the importing of products from Italy to Eleia as early as the 3rd c. BC, as the so-called Greco-Italic amphoras found in Elis also particularly indicate. Elis: LEPENIOTIS, 1991, p. 383-387. Kyllene: SERVAIS, 1961, p. 144, pl. 13.

in Illyria (180 BC). A decree of the senate of 187 BC which laid down that the Ambraciotes were to recover all their property, to be free, to have their own laws and collect port-duties, provided that the Romans and the allies of the Latin confederacy were exempt from paying them (Livy XXXVIII, 44, 4), clearly shows the presence of Roman commercial activity in the area of the Ionian Sea. Contact between traders from Italy and Messenia is perhaps to be traced in the request addressed by the Achaean League to the Roman senate (183/2 BC) to prevent the import of either grain or arms from Italy into Messenia⁽⁸⁾. Other sources mention the presence of individuals from Italy in particular spots in western Greece. For example Livy and Appian refer to a Roman presence respectively on Leukas and Zakynthos in the early 2nd and early 1st c. BC⁽⁹⁾. Epigraphic texts refer to particular individuals of Western origin active in the region, rarely, however, giving an insight into their activities. By the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 2nd c. BC a Roman, Μάαρκος Κορνήλιος Γαίου, was established on Kephallenia, since he appears as a *thearodokos* in Same in the lists of *thearodokoi* from Delphi⁽¹⁰⁾. Grave stelai, such as that of Χρησίμου Ἰταλιώτα (3rd c. BC) from Argos Amphiloichikon, the Latin funerary inscription of the *liberta* Lena (early 2nd c. BC) from Trichonion and Greek and Latin tombstones of Westerners from Leukas dated to the Hellenistic period and after, testify that individuals from Italy were, if not settled, then still certainly active in Western Greece⁽¹¹⁾. *Proxenoí* lists and proxeny decrees from Aetolia and Acarnania include Roman and Italiote *proxenoí* and benefactors. A further indication of Roman presence is the use of Latin language in inscriptions found in this otherwise Greek-speaking area, e.g. the Latin funerary texts mentioned above or a Latin inscription from the shipsheds of Oiniadai⁽¹²⁾. Finally, Roman republican *denarii* found at several spots in western Greece, either in coin-hoards or as isolated finds, reveal that there was considerable contact between these areas and the West; it is noteworthy that two of the three earliest coin-hoards which include Roman Republican *denarii* of the 2nd c. BC, were found in Aetolia,

(8) Polyb., XXIII, 9, 12; cf. commentary by HATZFELD, 1919, p. 213-214.

(9) Appian (*Mith.*, XII, 6, 45) refers to some Romans present on Zakynthos by the time of the Mithridatic wars. Livy (XXXIII, 17, 11) mentions Italian exiles resident on Leukas in the beginning of the 2nd c. BC, who welcomed the Roman soldiers of Flamininus, despite the efforts on the part of the Leukadians to resist. The siege by the Romans has been traced in archaeological investigations, as is the case with a public building related to commercial activities and to the storage of goods near the port outside the fortification, see PLIAKOU, 2001, p. 151.

(10) PLASSART, 1921, p. 15 II 146. For a discussion of date of the lists of *thearodokoi* see OULHEN, 1992 p. 303-304, 329-332, 485 with earlier bibliography.

(11) Argos Amphiloichikon: *SEG*, 32, 1982, 562. Trichonion: *IG* IX 1. 1, 124; FRASER and RÖNNE, 1957, p. 145, pl. 28; p. 164 on the name *Allia*. *C. l. Lena*; p. 173 for the date. Leukas: cf. the Hellenistic grave stele of Δημήτριος Μασσαλιώτης (*IG*, IX 1, 590; *IG*, IX 1² 4, 1284; cf. K. LOMAS, 2004 on the Hellenic cultural identity and the progress of Romanisation in Massalia), a further of a man from Syracuse (*IG*, IX 1, 595; *IG*, IX 1² 4, 1277) and the bilingual epitaph of A(ulus) Cossinius Philocratis Puteolanus dated to the 2nd/1st c. BC (*IG*, IX 1² 4, 1451).

(12) SEARS, 1904, p. 235-237; ZOILS, apparently the name Zoilus (*IG*, IX 1² 2, 426, n. 6).

namely the hoards found at Agrinion and Naupaktos⁽¹³⁾. Although coin-finds may be connected with movements of the army, it is not impossible that they are also connected with commercial activity.

Some scholars consider that Romans and Italiotes attested as *proxenoi* of Aetolian and Acarnanian *poleis* as early as the 3rd c. BC were *agentes mercatorii*⁽¹⁴⁾. However, a possible economic role, in addition to conventional diplomatic contact, cannot be firmly attributed to individuals who appear in *proxenoi* lists, if no further details are given. This seems possible in other cases, however, such as in that of a decree of the 2nd c. BC from Anaktorion, in which two Roman brothers and an individual from Patras, are honored as *proxenoi* and benefactors of the Acarnanian *koinon*⁽¹⁵⁾; perhaps we are dealing here with traders active on the route connecting Patras and Italy and passing along the Acarnanian coast, as their privileges include a guarantee of safe passage for themselves and their belongings when travelling by land or sea⁽¹⁶⁾.

Negotiatores

Individuals defined as *negotiatores* are not attested before the 1st c. BC. The sources related to the region north of the Corinthian Gulf do not refer at all to *negotiatores*. *Negotiatores* are attested in Patras in the period before the foundation of the colony by Augustus. The economic areas in which they are involved are unknown. In Cicero's correspondence, several well-established and influential⁽¹⁷⁾ Romans appear in Patras, such as C. Maenius Gemellus (*Fam.* XIII, 19, 2), about whose business interests nothing is known, and Manius Curius, who is defined in two cases as *negotiator* (*Cic., Fam.* XIII,

(13) Agrinion-hoard (*IGCH* 271, between c. 145 and 135 or shortly after 130 BC); Naupaktos-hoard (*IGCH* 317, end of the 2nd c. BC, shortly after 114/113 BC); Vlachomandra-hoard, Naupaktos (*AD* 1889, E, 103, no. 5; first Macedonian war, 215-205 BC). We leave aside a further coin-hoard from a later burial at Actium that includes 38 Roman Republican denarii along with two imperial denarii (CHRYSOSTOMOU, 1987, p. 26-33). A small number of isolated coins were found in the region of Aetolia and the Ionian islands: Pyra Herakleous (a sextans of 211-208 BC, an assarius of 169-158 BC, see PAPAGEORGIADOU-BANIS, 1996, p. 219 and ns 19-20); Thermos (denarii of 90 BC, see *ibid.*, p. 220); Ithaca (a very worn Roman bronze coin, see BENTON, 1938-1939, p. 50, 91.24, no. 26).

(14) Scholars, such as L. Robert, Chr. Habicht and L. Shear, regard *proxenoi* as *agentes mercatorii*, which is doubted by MAREK, 1984, p. 359-360, where previous literature on both views is to be found.

(15) *IG*, IX 1, 513 (dated by the editor W. Dittenberger to 167-146 BC; HATZFELD, 1919, p. 23 n. 2 dates to after 189 and certainly after 167 BC but does not exclude the possibility of a date after 146 BC); *IG*, IX 1² 2, 208 (dated by the editor G. Klaffenbach to the middle of the 2nd c. BC). Cf. STRAUCH, 1996, p. 138-139.

(16) Although HATZFELD, 1919, p. 23 sees two possible Roman *negotiatores* of Ambracia, the fact, that the Roman brothers and the individual from Patras are mentioned in the same decree, may imply that the Romans were among the men of business active in Patras, see ZOUMBAKI, 1998/1999, p. 141-144. For the role of Patras in the maritime communication with Italy see RIZAKIS, 1988, p. 453-472.

(17) RIZAKIS, 1990, p. 325, 333-336.

17; 50). Curius had certainly settled there before 50 BC, since he offered Cicero hospitality on his way back from Cilicia in that year. The financial transactions between Cicero and Manius Curius do not necessarily indicate that the latter ran a banking business, since services of an economic nature between friends were common within Cicero's social circle. The location of Patras on the sea routes between Italy and Greece would certainly favor banking and other commercial activities⁽¹⁸⁾.

Another attestation to the presence of a *negotiator* concerns, remarkably enough, Elis, an area famous neither for any strategic location nor for any vital commercial activity and external contacts. In Cicero's letters a certain M. Mindius, a *negotiator* of Elis, is mentioned, probably brother of L. Mescinius Rufus, *quaestor* of Cilicia in 51 BC, and probably an *eques* himself⁽¹⁹⁾. The scale of his affairs is indicated by the fact that Cicero addresses letters of recommendation⁽²⁰⁾ for Mindius to the proconsul of Achaia, Servius Sulpicius Rufus. It is also indicated by the long dispute between Mindius's widow Oppia and his brother on his inheritance. The nature of his business in Elis is not known. That Eleia is one of the most fertile regions of the Greek mainland, where for centuries agriculture and cattle breeding were the most profitable activities and its population had no particular inclination towards commerce and business, does not exclude the presence of commercial or banking activity or a combination of various profitable occupations on the part of Mindius. The nature of local resources in Eleia suggests that he may also have invested in land, perhaps in *byssos* (flax) production, a rare plant, from which fine veils and dresses were manufactured (Paus., VI, 21, 14).

It is in general accepted that *negotiator* is a broad term that covers a multiplicity of occupations, whilst according to P.A. Brunt it "may even include landowners"⁽²¹⁾. Thus, it has to be stressed that wherever this title appears, it may cover a multitude of activities and a wide range of profit.

Exploitation of local sea- and landbased resources

The question arises – especially in cases of permanent settlement – as to how far Romans were interested in exploiting local resources alongside their interest in transport, trade, banking, money-lending and other activities connected with commerce. Although the existence of conditions favorable to economic exploitation is not itself any proof of such exploitation, it seems sensible to assume that, when some of the Westerners who traveled

(18) RIZAKIS, 1990, p. 334. On the view that Curius was a Roman *eques* and his job was collecting correspondence see MC DERMOTT 1948. For Curius see also DENIAUX, 1993, p. 487-489; VERBOVEN, 2002, p. 215.

(19) Cic., *Fam.* XIII, 26 and 28. WILSON, 1966, p. 197-198; NICOLET, 1974, p. 950-951, no. 231 (L. Mescinius Rufus); p. 952, no. 233 (M. Mindius); DENIAUX, 1993, p. 526-528.

(20) On recommendation letters for businessmen see DENIAUX, 1993, p. 118-248, VERBOVEN, 2002, p. 302.

(21) For the term *negotiator* and its nature see KNEISSL, 1983; BRUNT, 1987, p. 211; ANDREAU, 2004, p. 71-85; VERBOVEN, 2004; 2007; 2008.

as traders on this route became settlers, they may also have exploited natural resources.

1. Land-based economy: agriculture, stock-breeding and exploitation of notable local products

Romans who had settled in regions where agricultural activities seem to have offered the most profitable opportunities may have additionally, or perhaps even exclusively, invested in land⁽²²⁾. It is no mere coincidence that the only group of Romans in the Greek mainland indisputably involved in agriculture is attested in three inscriptions from fertile Eleia⁽²³⁾. Romans are collectively defined as Ῥωμαῖοι ἐνγαιοδυντες, a term which defines a group of people engaged in agriculture in a foreign region⁽²⁴⁾. Whether all these Romans, or some of them, did possess land in Eleia remains unknown. It clearly shows, however, that Roman entrepreneurs would not have let slip the opportunity to extract profit from the rich soil of Eleia.

Further indications of Romans engaged in the agricultural economy are to be encountered in fertile⁽²⁵⁾ Messenia nearby. Roman residents, perhaps in their capacity as owners of various estates, are mentioned in the long inscription referring to the extraordinary eight-obols-tax, the so-called *oktobolos eisphora* in Messene, dated to the 1st c. BC according to the most recent research⁽²⁶⁾. A further list from Messene (1st c. BC/ 1st c. AD)⁽²⁷⁾, gives names in a full Roman onomastic formula followed by designations of estates in the dative and numerical signs, which are probably to be understood as tax sums. Archaeological finds testify to the existence of rural settlements in Messenia in the Roman period⁽²⁸⁾. One imagines that some of these estates or estates of such a kind would have belonged to Roman residents known from inscriptions to have been landowners in Messenia.

It is of course impossible to connect certain farmsteads or *villae rusticae*, with any particular landowners, Romans or Greeks. It is only thanks to a rare stroke of luck that landowners can be identified. This is the case of the funerary monument of Caius Laetilius Clemens and his wife Marcia Maxima, found in a *villa* on the outskirts of Patras⁽²⁹⁾, where several more villas have been located and where Roman interests consequently included not only

(22) On Romans engaged in agriculture generally in the province of Achaia, see ZOUMBAKI, forthcoming.

(23) *IvO*, 333 (*SEG*, 17, 198); 335; 938+*OIB* VI, p. 215 (*SEG*, 17, 197).

(24) ZOUMBAKI, 1994.

(25) The fertility of the Messenian soil is evident in several further literary and epigraphic sources: Strabo, VIII, 5, 6; Polyb., IV, 4, 1; XXIII, 9, 12; *IG*, V 1, 1379. Cf. ROEBUCK, 1979, p. 2-3.

(26) *IG*, V 1, 1433. The date of the text is disputed; for bibliography and date suggestions see RIZAKIS e.a., 2004, *MES 276. For the most recent suggestion for a date to the period between 70 and 30 BC see MIGEOTTE, 1997.

(27) WILHELM, 1914, p. 116-119 (1st c. BC); *IG*, V 1, 1434 (1st c. AD) (*SEG*, 11, 1950, 1035). TOD, 1926-27, p. 143 accepts the date suggested by *IG*.

(28) RAPP and ASCHENBRENNER, 1978, esp. p. 97.

(29) PETROPOULOS, 2009, p. 49-51 and fig. 1.

trade and banking but also the running of farmsteads with a multiplicity of activities.

To what extent and from what point in time Roman settlers could have been engaged in agricultural activities is not easy to determine. The evidence from the Peloponnese is to be dated to the 1st c. BC. The so-called *Synepeirotai*, the Roman landowners in Epiros, are also attested in the 1st c. BC. It is, however, risky to suppose that the first Romans who are attested to have had contacts with Acarnania and Aetolia in the 3rd c. BC, were linked to agriculture, although in some cases *enktesis* is indeed granted them. It is not known whether grants of *enktesis* are here simply clichés to be found in the honorary decrees or whether the Romans in question were actually settled in the area at such an early time and whether they had indeed acquired and were exploiting the land. As a matter of fact, a Roman who wished to invest in agriculture did not necessarily need to reside in the region. It was enough to entrust the job to trusted slaves and freedmen. If this did indeed occur here, it may have occurred in Trichonion, a town situated in the most fertile part of Aetolia, by Lake Trichonis, an area well supplied with water, as the numerous ancient wells indicate and as Strabo testifies⁽³⁰⁾. If Romans were settled there, agriculture would have been the most profitable activity for them. The aforementioned tombstone originating from Trichonion and bearing the Latin funerary inscription of the *liberta* Lena, dated to the early 2nd c. BC⁽³¹⁾, perhaps implies such a possibility.

There are more zones suitable for agricultural activities in Acarnania and on the shores of the Ambraciot Gulf, where several sites have been identified as rural settlements, even as *villae*. It is remarkable that the main settlement pattern of the Ayios Thomas peninsula in the Ambraciot Gulf is consisted of farmsteads or villas⁽³²⁾. During the Roman period the inlet Pogonitsa was used as a harbor and there are several finds of this period, such as amphoras found in the sea, amphora waster which may indicate pottery-production, and architectural remains which may even have been those of a *villa*⁽³³⁾. Domestic ceramic, rotary querns and architectural remains imply the existence of some further rural farmsteads in this coastal area⁽³⁴⁾. A bath building in the area of Lake Gavogiannis and substantial architectural remains in the area of Ormos Vathy including a Roman bath building, walls constructed of *opus testaceum* and typical Roman black and white mosaic may indicate a Roman presence there⁽³⁵⁾.

(30) For the fertility of Trichonion cf. Strabo, X, 2, 3: ...τὸ Τριχώνιον, ἀριστήν ἔχον γῆν. For the wells, see STAVROPOULOU-GATSI, 2004, p. 345-368, 348, 350. The prosperity that the town enjoyed is shown by the rich finds made during recent excavations. The excavation has brought to light a very important Asclepios sanctuary (*idib.*, 348) and cemeteries with rich funeral gifts (*ibid.*, p. 352 and 354). For finds of the Roman period in Trichonion (mod. Gavalou) see STRAUCH, 1996, p. 283-285.

(31) See n. 11 above.

(32) For the sites on the Ayios Thomas peninsula, STEIN, 2001, p. 67, table 1.

(33) STEIN, 2001, p. 71-72.

(34) STEIN, 2001, p. 72.

(35) STEIN, 2001, p. 70 for ruins in the area of Ormos Vathy, p. 70-71 for ruins in the area of Lake Gavogiannis. For black and white mosaic decoration see CLARKE, 1979; HELLENKEMPER SALIES, 1986.

Archaeological relics on Leukas have been interpreted as farmhouses, or even as villas of the kind known to have been possessed by wealthy Roman landowners *Synepeirotai*⁽³⁶⁾. So, it is possible that Romans who are attested on Leukas from at least the 2nd c. BC onwards were not attracted merely by its crucial location on various sea routes and its naval force, reflected in the iconography of its coinage⁽³⁷⁾, but also by additional local economic opportunities. The importance of Leukadian wine, for example, is echoed on the coins of the island, on which an amphora and vine are depicted. The export of Leukadian wine to Egypt is attested to in the papyri-archive of Zeno (3rd c. BC)⁽³⁸⁾. According to Pliny⁽³⁹⁾, Peparrethian and Leukadian wine was recommended to a Ptolemaic king by the physician Apollodoros. The fact that a local workshop involved in the production of amphoras has been identified on the island⁽⁴⁰⁾ is perhaps to be connected with export of Leucadian wine. Viticulture could have been one of the main engagements of rural settlements on Leukas and it is not impossible that Romans were involved in wine production and trade.

Furthermore, it is possible that the aromatic substance *irinum Leucade*⁽⁴¹⁾ that was produced on Leukas was of importance to Roman entrepreneurs. In any case, a Latin inscription roughly scratched on a triangular tile-fragment found in a cave-sanctuary of Polis Bay on Ithaca (dated to the 1st of October of 35 BC) and mentioning a certain *Epaphroditus Novi, ungentarius de Sacra Via*, an unguent seller from Rome⁽⁴²⁾, is perhaps to be considered as an indication that his business destinations on the extensive perfume trade network may have also included Leukas.

A local resource of Kephallenia, which could have been interesting for Romans, was the fir tree *Abies Cephallonica*, which was available in abundance on Mt. Ainos on the island and was used as an excellent raw material for ship-building. The significance of wood for the island is stressed by the depiction of the pine-cone on coins of Pronnoi and Pale⁽⁴³⁾. It is not known, whether Romans were engaged in exploitation of wood or they were landowners, as agriculture and stock-breeding played a crucial role in the island's economic life. This is particularly evident in the iconography of

(36) PLIAKOU, 2001, p. 154-155.

(37) *BMC Thessaly to Aitolia*, pl. XXVIII 15-16.

(38) In the P.Cair. Zen. IV 59548 (November, 257 BC) in an account of daily wine distributions to certain persons travelling in the retinue of Apollonios, an official in the Egyptian government between the reigns of Ptolemy II and Ptolemy III, for about ten days, there are the entries (11. 114-115) "(one) keramion of honey; one Leukadian jar (of wine)" referring either to Leukadian honey and wine or only to Leukadian wine. Cf. KRUIT and WOPF, 2000.

(39) Plin., *Hist. Nat.* XIV, 76. Further on Leukadian wine see Ath., I, 33 b.

(40) GRAVANI, 2009, p. 53, 57.

(41) Plin., *Hist. Nat.* XXI, 19, 42. For an excellent study on types of perfumes and other aromatic substances attested in the ancient literary sources including *irinum*, see SQUILLACE, 2010.

(42) *IG*, IX 1² 4, 1620. *Commercium unguentarium* was carried out in the fashionable Via Sacra of Rome, as further inscriptions testify, cf. *CIL*, VI 1974; *ILS*, 7610.

(43) SOTERIOU, 2010, p. 99; for coins from Pronnoi see *BMC Peloponnesos*, 89; for coins from Pale bearing pine-cone and sprays see pl. XVII 9.

the island's coinage⁽⁴⁴⁾ and in the disposition and size of rural settlements and *villae*. Seven farmsteads in the area of Same seem to have played a significant role in the economic organization of the hinterland, whilst the villa at Skala had a direct access to the sea⁽⁴⁵⁾.

As the finds make clear, the above mentioned farmsteads in the coastal area around the Ambraciot Gulf as well as on the islands would have generated profit both from their agricultural activities, including cattle breeding or bee-keeping, and from seaborne trade and transport of their products. Access to marine resources must have been equally important⁽⁴⁶⁾, as such resources were especially rich in the Ionian Sea. Archaeological finds from in the region of Ormos Vathy, where a midden of shells of *murex brandaris* has been found, speak for production of purple dye, whilst processing of dying clothes has been identified as one of the activities that took place in an early Roman farmhouse on Leukas⁽⁴⁷⁾.

2. Maritime produce

In the text of *Expositio totius mundi* that we have mentioned⁽⁴⁸⁾, it is stated that Nikopolis "abounds in so many sea fish that it is sick of looking at the large quantity it has of them". The waters of the Ionian Sea and the inlets along the mainland coast offer – even today⁽⁴⁹⁾ – an ideal opportunity for the exploitation of maritime resources. Maritime produce was both a source of food and of luxury goods, namely fish and oysters either for direct consumption or for fish-processing and perhaps for export as well as salt, pearls and purple⁽⁵⁰⁾. The economic importance of fishing for the region is made clear by the appearance of several species of fish and shellfish on coins of Ambracia and Anaktorion and the islands of the Ionian Sea⁽⁵¹⁾. Furthermore, the rich fish resources of Western Greece are mentioned by ancient authors. Athenaeus (III, 92 d) quoting Archestratus of Gela refers to a special fish species, κάρκος, found in the Ambraciot Gulf: "Archestratus

(44) Coins of Classical Period from Krane depicting ram and ram's foot (*BMC Peloponnesos*, pl. XVI) and bull's head (pl. XVII 4-5), from Pale bearing dolphin and ear of bearded corn (pl. VII 18-19) or barley corn and dolphin set inside letter (pl. XVIII 2) and from Same depicting rams and hounds (pl. XVIII 9-20) make clear that agriculture, livestock and hunting were important factors in the local economy.

(45) SOTERIOU, 2010, p. 99-100.

(46) For aquaculture in coastal villas see MARZANO and BRIZZI, 2009.

(47) Leukas: STAVROPOULOU-GATSI, 2010, p. 90 and fig. 6 f. Ormos Vathy and Epirus: STEIN, 2001, p. 67 and n. 8 for further bibliography.

(48) *Expositio Totius Mundi* XII, 371-372: *civitas Nicopolis quae piscem multum marinum habundat ut odire speciem videntem aliquantam*. For this text see n. 1 above.

(49) In two inlets on the Ambraciot Gulf, Lake Gavogiannis and Ormos Pogonitsa, which both opened onto the sea in earlier times, commercial fishing was an important activity until recently. Cf. STEIN, 2001, p. 70-72. In Pogonitsa there are modern fish hatcheries. Large fisheries are today found in nine lagoons (Kokkala, Agrilos, Pogonitsa, Mazoma, Logarou, Tsoukalio and Koftra-Palaioubouka), see TSAMARDA, 2007.

(50) BEKKER-NIELSEN, 2002.

(51) Ambracia and Anaktorion: IMHOOF-BLUMER, 1878, p. 66-68, nos. 32-36; p. 70, no. 48. For dolphins depicted on coins of Kephallenia see n. 44 above.

says: ... if thou go to Ambracia's happy land and chance to see the boar-fish, buy it and abandon it not, even though it costs its weight in gold, ... For that fish is the flower of nectar. Yet to eat of it or even to catch a glimpse of it with the eyes is not ordained for all mortals..."⁽⁵²⁾. Further Athenaeus (VII, 311a) refers to the sea-bass, in abundance in the regions of Kalydon and Ambracia, and Aelian reports about the peculiar way of fishing of the flathead mullet (*Mugil cephalus*), which was to be caught in enormous quantities in the Ionian Sea⁽⁵³⁾.

Ennius and Athenaeus, who make use of the work of Archestratus of Gela *Hedypathia*, also refer to the rich oyster production of Ambracia. It is moreover interesting that Ennius includes in his manual of gastronomy, *Hedypagetica*, a poem by Archestratus referring to the rich scallop resources of Ambracia, also quoted by Athenaeus (III, 92d: ...τούς δὲ κτένας ἢ Μυτιλήνη | Πλειστός δ' Ἀμβρακία παρέχει...). Ennius translates this into Latin with a slight addition, *Mytilenae est pectin Caradrumque apud Ambraciai* ("The scallop is found in Mytilene and in Ambrakian Charadros")⁽⁵⁴⁾. It is apparent that Ennius's passage is an adaption rather than a translation of Archestratus's text, where Charadros is not mentioned. Ennius apparently added this detail to the poem after accompanying Fulvius Nobilior on his campaign in the region in 189 BC and therefore the topography including the town of Charadros was familiar to him⁽⁵⁵⁾.

It is furthermore remarkable that Charadros is attested in an important inscription recording the regulation of the town's border with Ambracia⁽⁵⁶⁾. This inscription, in combination with the literary texts quoted above, leads to interesting reflections regarding early Roman interests in the maritime produce of Western Greece. The inscription contains the word Οἰστρέου (l. 25) which is perhaps a *toponym* in the view of the editors and is derived from ὄστρεον, ὀστρεον, meaning 'oyster, shell'. It was therefore perhaps a place on

(52) Ath., VII, 72 [305e].

(53) Ath., VII, 311a: ...ὁ δὲ σοφὸς Ἀρχέστρατος... κεστρέα τὸν κέφαλον καὶ τὸν θεόπαιδα λάβρακα. εἰσι γὰρ ἐνθάδ' ἄριστοι: ὁ γὰρ τόπος ἐστὶ τοιοῦτος. πῖότεροι δ' ἕτεροι πολλοὶ Καλυδῶνι τε κλεινῇ Ἀμβρακίᾳ.... Ael., *NA* XIII, 19: Ἐν τῷ Ἴονίῳ πελάγει κατὰ τὸν Λευκάτην, καὶ τὴν πρὸς τῷ Ἀκτίῳ θάλατταν, ἐνθά τοι καὶ τὸν ἠώρον καλοῦσιν Ἕπειρον, κεφάλων εἰσι κατὰ Ἰλας, ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις, ἄφθονοι νήξεις καὶ πλήθει πάμπολλα....

(54) Ath., III, 92 d: Τοὺς μὲν Αἴνος ἔχει μεγάλους, ὄστρεα δ' Ἄβυδος, | Τὰς ἄρκτους Πάριον, τοὺς δὲ κτένας ἢ Μυτιλήνη | Πλειστός δ' Ἀμβρακία παρέχει καὶ ἄπλατα μετ' αὐτῶν... Ennius in his manual of gastronomy, *Hedypagetica* (preserved in the Monte Cassino MS. of Apuleius, *Apologia*, 39.2 = *Var.* 34-44 Vahlen), includes this poem in Latin: *Mures sunt Aeni asperaque ostrea plurima Abydi: | Mytilenae est pectin Caradrumque apud Ambraciai*. Cf. also DOUGLAS OLSON and SENS, 2000, p. 241.

(55) This is pointed out by SKUTSCH, 1968, p. 38-39 and accepted by COURTNEY, 2003, p. 23, who does not however agree with Skutsch's interpretation of *charadros*: "Skutsch thinks that c(h)aradrus means either the channel of Ambracia (which it cannot mean; it denotes a mountain-torrent) or a water-course near the town Charadros or –a on the north side of the gulf (but that would be an odd location). It must mean the town itself...; he adds Ambraciai because the place is so insignificant. Finis was added by someone who took caradrum to be a kind of fish".

(56) On this inscription see CABANES and ANDRÉOU, 1985, on Ennius's passage and the topography of the region see especially p. 516-517, 524. For further bibliography and commentary see STRAUCH, 1996, p. 137.

the shores of the gulf, perhaps near the mouth of a river. The reason for the conflict between Ambracia and Charadros was apparently connected with the rights to fishing and exploitation of the river banks and shores of the Ambracian Gulf, which were rich in oysters⁽⁵⁷⁾.

The interference on the part of the 'Roman authorities' mentioned in this inscription (l. 38, Fragment A) implies a date after 167 BC and shows the importance of the case and Roman interest in this region and perhaps in oyster production. Besides, Ennius's reference makes clear the demand that existed in Roman society, or at least in an elite social circle, for special maritime products. How important a matter for Romans the exploitation of the shores of the lagoons of Ambraciot Gulf may have been, becomes more obvious, if we consider the fact that the lagoon of Kalydon was offered to the Roman colonists of Patras for similar exploitation⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Pliny speaks of a further species of oyster from Acarnania that produced a kind of pearl, albeit not of the best quality, for a much better quality was to be found in the region of Aktion⁽⁵⁹⁾. Production of purple dye is attested in the region of Ormos Vathy, where a midden of shells of *murex brandaris* has been found, as is also the case with Leukas and other places in Epirus⁽⁶⁰⁾.

That the Romans were interested in such maritime products is also obvious in the increase of oyster production and consumption following the Roman conquest in the well-investigated oyster industry around the 'étangs', the shallow lakes between Massilia and the Rhône delta of Provence, where salt was manufactured also in farms located around the shores of the 'étangs'⁽⁶¹⁾. A further important product of Ionian waters was probably salt, which is to be found in abundance in the region, where the sea-shores and the lagoons functioned as a natural salt pan. There are no direct ancient sources on salt works, but the Venetian installations for salt extraction on Leukas, set up sometime before 1415, are remarkable⁽⁶²⁾. Although there is no evidence connecting Romans with salt extraction in this area, the increased demand for this commodity, coveted and expensive in Italy, and the Roman interest in fish and oyster production in western Greece suggests that the Romans may have been involved. In any case, a closer look at the sources related to Roman presence in particular places provides increasing evidence for economic exploitation of strategic locations and local resources on the part of Romans, which fully justifies R.M. Errington's statement⁽⁶³⁾ in regard to

(57) STRAUCH, 1996, p. 137.

(58) Strabo, X, 2, 21; Paus., X, 38, 9. Cf. PETROPOULOS, 1991, p. 110; RIZAKIS, 1996, p. 274-287. For Kalydon and its harbor, modern Kryoneri, see STAVROPOULOU-GATSI, 2010, p. 80-84 with bibliography.

(59) Plin., *Hist. Nat.* IX, 56, 115: ...at in Acarnania quae vocatur pina gignit, quo apparet non uno conchae genere nasci.... nec in Acarnania autem laudati reperiuntur, enormes et feri colorisque marmorei. meliores circa Actium,

(60) For processing of dying clothes using murex see n. 47 above.

(61) BRIEN-POITEVIN, 1996; HITCHNER, 1999; 2005, p. 218. Generally on salt see CARUSI, 2008.

(62) LAMPRINO, 1993, p. 61-65; KALAFATIS, 2002; cf. also the website www.aegean.gr/alas/

(63) ERRINGTON, 1988, p. 143.

the Roman and Italiote entrepreneurs in the East: "It is now clear that they turned a hand to pretty well anything that could bring in a nice profit ...".

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ABSTRACT

Romans and Italiote Greeks are attested to have been active in various areas of the Western part of the Greek peninsula and on the islands of the Ionian Sea as early as the 3rd c. BC, long before the formation of the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia. If we ignore Roman magistrates and a few *proxenoi* of Greek *poleis*, whose exact relationship with the *poleis* –beyond conventional diplomatic contacts – is in most cases unclear, it is obvious that the motivation that drove these Westerners eastwards was economic. The nature of their activity is to be either seen in the context of commercial interchange between both sides of Adriatic, which is regularly attested as early as the Geometric period onwards, or it is to be connected with the exploitation of local resources, which were different in each of these regions. Yet tangible professions or occupations of these individuals are not often mentioned in the sources. Terms defining such occupations are sometimes more or less concrete, such as *unguentarius*, *engaiountes*, but in other cases they are general and include various capacities related to certain activities, as, for example, the term *negotiatius* or *negotiator*. There are also cases in which the activities of the foreign settlers are totally unknown or have to be guessed at through indirect references in the sources. Furthermore, we attempt to trace possible occupations in the light of the economic opportunities available in each locality. All these cases are to be considered when studying the evidence from the area in question, that is, Western Greece from the Ambraciot Gulf to Cape Tainaron, including the adjacent islands. Research into such matters might function as a basis for a further study of the role of Roman and Italiot entrepreneurs in the economic and social life of the Greek *poleis* in the area in question and of their role in the economic network of western entrepreneurs located in the Eastern Mediterranean.