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## THE LOOTING AND DESTRUCTION OF ARTWORKS AND LIBRARIES IN PONTUS AND KOMMAGENE

**Abstract:** The paper focuses on robbery and destruction of artworks and libraries committed by the Roman invaders in the Kingdoms of Pontus, Kommagene and Armenia in the 1st century BC. Roman lawyers and intellectuals worked out a set of principles which were regularly applied to all the cases of looting, temples included. The looting of artworks and sanctuaries in the East was not only documented by the extant Graeco-Roman literary sources (Pontus). It can sometimes be substantiated by material evidence (Kommagene).

**Keywords:** **Robbery** and destruction of artworks, libraries and archives; Pontus, Kommagene, Armenia, Mithridates VI, Roman conquest, museography of the city of Rome.

In 73 BC Lucullus besieged Cyzicus and pursued Mithridates VI, king of Pontus, who withdrew to the East. The Roman army under the command of Lucullus and his legates marked its route by fire and sword. In 72/1 BC after a longer siege the Romans captured Amissos and Kabeira on the Lycus River.<sup>1</sup> In 70 BC they seized the capital cities of the Pontic kingdom - Amaseia and Sinope. In 69 BC they attacked the towns and strongholds in Upper Mesopotamia. In the same year Tigranocerta fell into the Roman hands, however they proved unable to capture Artaxata.<sup>2</sup>

We come across only incidental information which refers to the scale of destruction, robbery and confiscation. Enraged by the long resistance Roman soldiers who broke the walls of Amissos, and it was at night, ruthlessly burnt down the city (Plu. *Luc.* 19,3-4). By the way, we learn that Tyrannio, a Greek grammarian, famous for his learning came into the hands of Lucullus' legate L. Licinius Murena, as part of his war spoils (Plu. *Luc.* 19,7). Plutarch perfunctorily

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<sup>1</sup> Kabeira, on the Lykus River, Yeşilirmak, probably modern Niksar, Marek 2010, p. 334, n. 136

<sup>2</sup> Will 1966-1967, 2, pp. 411ff.; Tigranocerta was probably located in the region of modern Silvan, to the North-East of Diyarbakir, Marek 2010, p. 352. I have only recently visited Silvan. I think, that those who believe that Tigranocerta was located there, are right. This is my intuition.

informs us of the seizure of Kabeira and other strongholds in the region and writes that a large amount of treasure was confiscated (Plu. *Luc.* 18,1) (θεσσαυρούς τε μεγάλους εἶρε, scil. Lucullus). In Sinope the conquerors came into the possession of a sacred image of Autolykus, the legendary founder of Sinope, ‘the work of Sthennis from Olynthos and one of his masterpieces’ (Plu. *Luc.* 23,4; Str. 12,3,11 [546]).<sup>3</sup> The statue was found on the beach, carefully prepared for evacuation (App. *Mith.* 83, (371)). The Romans also confiscated a map of the world by Billaros, a masterpiece of ancient craftsmanship (Str. 12,3,11).<sup>4</sup> It might have been a model for the later famous map of Agrippa, a proud showpiece of Roman cartography. We also learn that Sulla’s ill-famed legate L. Licinius Murena took control of Pontic Comana (83 BC), which he ruthlessly plundered not sparing even the holy sanctuary of the Goddess Ma with all its votive offerings (App. *Mith.* 64, 269-70).<sup>5</sup> Sextilius, one of Lucullus’ officers, entered and plundered a royal palace of unidentified location, which was not defended by walls (App. *Mith.* 84,381). In 70 BC another high-ranking officer of Lucullus, M. Aurelius Cotta, plundered the harbour town of Heraclea Pontica and confiscated the statue of Heracles adorned with a golden mace, a bow and arrows. The image of the town’s mythical founder, one of the Argonauts, stood on the agora of Heraclea.<sup>6</sup> In the meantime in Apollonia, Marcus, the brother of Lucius L. Lucullus, confiscated a colossal bronze statue of Apollo, the patron of that harbour town on the west coast of the Black Sea (Str. 7,6,1). Because the statue was very big, nearly 10 metres high, Marcus ordered the idol dismantled and transported to Rome, where it was seen by Pliny the Elder on the Capitol Hill (*HN* 34,39).<sup>7</sup> In 69 BC Lucullus’ division stormed and plundered Tigranocerta ἡ πόλις μεστή ἀναθημάτων (full of votive offerings) (Plu. *Luc.* 26,2). Plutarch emphasised the wealth of the town, where: ‘every private person and every prince vied with the king in contributing to its increase and adornment’ (Plu. *Luc.* 26,2). It is particularly interesting to read in Plutarch’s biography of Lucullus that a company of dramatic actors invited by King Tigranes for the dedication ceremony of a theatre also made up a part of the immense Roman booty (Plu. *Luc.* 29,3-4). Tigranes’ royal diadem was later seen in Lucullus’ hands (Plu. *Luc.* 28,6; App. *Mith.* 86). The carriages and camels of Lucullus were loaded with golden beakers studded with precious stones (Plu. *Luc.* 34,3). After

<sup>3</sup> Jucker 1950, pp. 67f.; Pape 1975, pp. 23, 64; Overbeck, *SQ* 1345-46; O. Touchefeu, Autolykos II, *LIMC* III, 1986, 56 nr 1; A. Villing, Sthennis, in Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon*, pp. 858-860; Overbeck, *SQ* 1343-1349; Hebert, *Schriftquellen* 249, 274, 289, 351, 432, 438

<sup>4</sup> Pape 1957, p. 22. The discoverers of a wreck of a Roman ship dated 80–70 BC found at the shores of Antikythera believe they identified remnants of machinery from Billaros’ globe, Marek 2010, p. 339, n. 144

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Marek 2010, p. 351

<sup>6</sup> Pape 1975, p. 195; Memnon 35, 7-8, *FGH* 434, 8

<sup>7</sup> Pape 1975, p. 23, 54

Lucullus had been recalled to Rome by his envious and influential adversaries in the senate, Pompey, who replaced him, continued the plunder of the Graeco-Oriental kingdoms in Anatolia and Levant. Judging by the wealth of his triumph which surpassed all the triumphs ever seen in Rome, the scale of the robberies committed by Pompey must have been even larger than those perpetrated by his predecessor.

Occasionally we hear of royal libraries and archives. In Kainon Chorion<sup>8</sup> the Roman thieves found royal memoirs (ὕπομνήματα), which were apparently subsequently destroyed, because we do not know anything about them from the later literary tradition. Plutarch mentioned dream books (κρίσεις ἐνυπνίων) in the same archives of Kainon Chorion.<sup>9</sup> These had a chance to survive and influence the later art of the Greek *oniocritica*. The invaders also confiscated the king's private correspondence, which contained the love letters of Monime (ἀναγεγραμμένοι) (Plu. *Pomp.*37). Lucullus also confiscated the secret archives of Mithridates VI in an unspecified place (τῶν ἀπορρήτων αὐτοῦ γραμμάτων ἀλόντων) (Plu. *Luc.*22,4). Plutarch referred to a magnificent library of Greek books which was established by Lucullus in Rome (τῶν βιβλίων κατασκευή) (Plu. *Luc.*42). Undoubtedly Lucullus brought it from the Pontic kingdom of Mithridates VI, who was famous for his love of the Greek culture (App. *Mithr.*112,550). Appian of Alexandria could admit it without fear of reprisal some 200 years after the last Sullans and Marians had departed this world.

Stratonike, the wife of Mithridates VI, handed over a royal stronghold to Pompey. The Romans found a large amount of money there stored in bronze vessels (App. *Mith.*107,503-4). Th. Reinach published a big bronze vase with the inscription of Mithridates VI. The vase was found in Anzio in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> Consequently we have a corpus delicti of the Roman robberies in Anatolia. The chance of such a discovery in Italy is minimal. I would say it is almost unlikely. However, it was another royal treasure which won proverbial fame – the treasure of Talaura (also Taulara). It fell into the hands of the greedy conqueror Pompey. Appian of Alexandria listed 2000 chalices of onyx stone, drinking pots, *psykters* (wine coolers), drinking horns, *klinai* and chairs, horse harnesses and breast bands, all studded with precious stones. Some of those treasures were inherited of Darius, the son of Hystaspes. Consequently it was part of the legendary

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<sup>8</sup> A wonderful description of the stronghold in Strabo 12,3,31, which challenges the breathtaking panoramas of the Pontic Mountains to the NE of Tokat. Strabo referred straightforwardly to the Roman robbery in the following words: ἐνταῦθα μὲν ἦν τῷ Μιθριδάτῃ τὰ τιμιώτατα τῶν κειμηλίων· ἃ νῦν ἐν τῷ Καπιτωλίῳ κεῖται Πομπηίου ἀναθέντος

<sup>9</sup> Kainon Chorion, in the neighbourhood of Kabeira, Marek 2010, p. 337

<sup>10</sup> Reinach 1895, p.284; *OGIS* 1, 367

treasures of the Achaemenids (App. *Mith.* 115,563-3).<sup>11</sup> In his royal propaganda Mithridates VI prided himself on being the sixteenth descendant of Darius (App. *Mithr.* 112,540). Appian also observed that another part of that fabulous Oriental 'cave of treasures' consisted of a great number of precious objects once brought by Cleopatra III to the Island of Cos as furnishings for her beloved grandson (later Ptolemaios XI Alexandros II, 103 BC) whose life was endangered in Egypt. Appian enumerated artworks, precious stones, women's jewellery and a large amount of money (App. *Mith.* 23,93). He emphasised that part of the treasure of Talaura was commissioned by the connoisseur king himself, who was renowned for his sensitivity to beauty, his taste for interior decoration (App. *Mith.* 115, 563-4). The coins of the Pontic Kings from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and, I think, also of Mithridates VI, which belong to the most impressive coins which have been ever struck, corroborate Appian's opinion.<sup>12</sup> Mithridates VI spoke many languages. He was a patron of the arts and sciences.<sup>13</sup> Compared with him, Sulla, Lucullus and Pompey were barbarian semi-illiterates.

Plundered works of art soon became objects of trade, which cannot be labelled any otherwise than criminal. This is the usual story of war and robbery. A royal sword-belt of great value, a masterpiece of Anatolian jewellers, was stolen by one of Pompey's officers and sold to Ariarathes, King of Cappadocia (Plu. *Pomp.* 42,3), while the royal tiara (κίταρις), an unparalleled work of craftsmanship, was secretly offered to Sulla's son (ibid.). Artworks and valuable objects of craftsmanship were acquired not only as war trophies and robberies. We are sometimes informed, even if only perfunctorily, of acts of criminal extortion and blackmail committed on Anatolian urban communities which were burdened with wartime contributions or were unable to pay off the taxes imposed by the Roman state. We learn that many communities in Anatolia and on the Aegean coast were plundered and reduced to slavery by the tax-collectors and money-lenders. As a result these urban communities were compelled to sell their own votive offerings, pictures by great masters from their own galleries and even the sacred idols of their gods (ἀναθήματα, γραφάς, ἱεροὺς ἀνδριάντας) (Plut. *Luc.* 20,1). Saying that the tax-collectors were like 'harpies snatching the people's food' Plutarch probably repeated words already in colloquial usage during the Mithridatic wars; the phrase had in all likelihood been documented by one of his carefully studied sources from the epoch (ὥσπερ Ἄρπυιάς τὴν τροφήν

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<sup>11</sup> Pape 1975, p. 24, the stronghold of Symphorion with the royal treasures and archives (Cass. Dio 37,7,5; Plut. *Pomp.* 36, 6-7)

<sup>12</sup> Seltman 1965, Pl.LVII 2,3; Préaux 1978, 2, p.555: Les rois du Pont ... introduisent sur leurs pièces des légendes en langue indigène, ce qui prouve aussi la vitalité de celles-ci. The coinage of the Seleucids and Lagids was exclusively struck with the Greek characters.

<sup>13</sup> Marek 2010, p. 339: Wissenschaft, Kunst, und Handwerk auf höchstem Niveau fehlten an seinem Hofe nicht

ἀρπάζοντας) (Plu. *Luc.*8,5-6). This cowardly practice of making the weak and defenceless urban communities auction off their artworks was widespread in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. M. Aemilius Scaurus, the edil in 58 BC, displayed numerous artworks during the festivities (*ludi*) which he prepared for the Roman people. His exhibition also included some pictures by the famous school of painters from Sikyon, which the Sikyonians were forced to sell in order to pay their debts (Plin. *HN* 35,127).<sup>14</sup> The Mithridatic wars were preceded by the ruthless and brutal punitive war against the allies or alleged allies of the king of Pontus in Balkan Greece. E. Will comments that the war of 88-86 in Greece was the most destructive of all of those which had ever been experienced by the Balkan Greeks: ‘depuis la première apparition des armées romains en Grèce, jamais le pays n’avait autant souffert: la guerre de Sulla fut atroce... à la fin de cette campagne, réquisitions, pillages, massacres, destructions, représailles laissent le pays exsangue, surtout au Nord du Péloponnèse, et il a été établi que de petites cités disparaissent alors à tout jamais.’<sup>15</sup> Sulla did not spare even the most famous Greek sanctuaries. To acquire money for the war against Mithridates VI he plundered Epidauros, Delphi and Olympia (App. *Mith.*54; Paus. 9,7,5-6; Plu. *Sulla* 12,3). Livy reminded his contemporaries that Epidauros had been full of votive offerings in the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Now, he observed, the visitor could only witness the signs of the robbery committed during the Sullan war (Liv. 45,28,3).<sup>16</sup> The famous sanctuary of the Kabeiroi on the island of Samothrake was also robbed of its ancient votive offerings at the end of the Sullan war (App. *Mith.*63). Apparently the urban communities, terrorised by the Sullan army, were compelled to borrow money at a high interest rate and in quantities well beyond their economic potential. As a result they quickly fell into ruin and were forced to hand over their theatres, gymnasia and anything of value to their creditors (App. *Mith.*63,261).

Some of the plundered art appeared in public at triumphal shows of wealth in Rome. In his triumph of 63 BC Lucullus showed Roman public a golden statue of Mithridates VI, two metres high, his shield studded with jewels, silver vessels, and golden chalices which were carried in twenty lecticas, while mules carried eight costly *klinai* (Plu. *Luc.* 37,3-4) (αὐτοῦ δὲ Μιθριδάτου χρύσεος ἑξάπους κολοσσός, καὶ θυρέος τις διάλιθος, καὶ φορήματα εἴκοσι μὲν ἀργυρῶν σκευῶν, χρυσῶν δ’ ἑκπαμάτων... ἥμιονοι δ’ ὀκτὼ κλίνας χρυσῆς ἔφερον).<sup>17</sup> However, it was the triumphal show of Pompey in 61 BC, which overshadowed all the other triumphs ever been witnessed in Rome by its wealth and display

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<sup>14</sup> Pape 1950, p.51

<sup>15</sup> Will 1966-1967, 2, p.403

<sup>16</sup> Pape 1975, p. 112, n. 167

<sup>17</sup> Pape 1975, p. 23, Jucker 1950, p.60, n.7

of luxury.<sup>18</sup> The Roman people had a chance to see lecticas and carriages filled with gold and precious objects, the bed of Darius, the ancient king of Persia, the throne of Mithridates VI, his sceptre and his golden statue 8 cubits high (more than 3 m). During the spectacle Pompey wore Alexander the Great's royal coat, which was found in the treasury of the king of Pontus (App. *Mith.*116,570). Pliny the Elder added the silver statues of Eupator, and his ancestors Pharnaces I (c.185-170 BC) and Mithridates V Euergetes (c.150-121 BC) (Plin.*HN* 33,154), three golden idols of gods and a mosaic made of precious stones (*HN* 37,14) to Pompey's triumphal list.<sup>19</sup>

We sometimes get incidental information about other precious objects which were stolen by Lucullus and Pompey in Pontus or in the Levant, and subsequently brought to Italy. The statue of *Hercules tunicatus*, Hercules in the gown of Nessos, being burnt alive with his face distorted by pain (by an unknown old master) was dedicated by Lucullus and his son at the Rostra on the Forum Romanum (Plin.*HN* 34,93).<sup>20</sup> The famous gardens of Lucullus in Rome (*Horti Lucullani*), which he purchased in 60 BC, were adorned with the artworks sequestered in Anatolia (Plut. *Luc.*39,2).<sup>21</sup> After 200 years Plutarch still wrote of Lucullus with admiration: 'his costly edifices, his ambulatories and bath, and still more his paintings and statues (γραφάς καὶ ἀνδριάντας) ... splendid wealth which he accumulated from his campaigns' (Plu. *Luc.*29,2). Only to add: 'Even now, when luxury was increased so much, the gardens of Lucullus are counted among the most costly of the imperial gardens.'<sup>22</sup> In his museography of Rome Pliny the Elder observed that Mummius filled Rome with sculpture after his conquest of Achaia and added that '*multa (signa) et Luculli invexere*', the Luculli brothers also brought over a large number of statues (Plin.*HN* 34,36). So we are not surprised to hear of Oriental purple tapestries and carpets and also of beakers studded with precious stones in Lucullus' opulent villa (Plu.*Luc.*40) (στρωμνῶϊς ἀλουργέσι καὶ διαλίθοις ἐκπώμασι), on the north slope of Tusculum facing the city of Rome. Cicero, his neighbour, must have envied Lucullus his gorgeous art collections. He mentioned Lucullus' villa time and again in his writings (*leg.* 3,30; *fin.* 2,107).<sup>23</sup> Cicero's private art gallery accumulated by purchases on the antiquarian market was by no means comparable with the collections brought to Rome by Lucullus.

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<sup>18</sup> Jucker 1950, p.60

<sup>19</sup> Jucker 1950, n.7 p.60

<sup>20</sup> Auctoris incerti...torva facie, sentiensque suprema tunicae...tituli: L. Luculli de manubiis, alter pupillum Luculli filium ex S.C. dedicasse (*HN* 34,93); Pape 1975, pp.47-49

<sup>21</sup> Pape 1975, p.167; Jucker 1950, p.46, n.4, P. Grimal, *Les jardins romains*, Paris 1969, pp.127f.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. G. Kaster, *Die Garten des Lucullus*, Munich 1973

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Pape 1975, p.75

If L. Urlichs was right (1886) in his supposition that Asinius Pollio bought a large part of Lucullus' art collection at auction after the death of Lucullus' son in the Battle of Philippi, we can enrich our list of robberies committed in Pontus by a number of other artworks.<sup>24</sup> Fortunately Pollio's art galleries belong to the best known Roman museums. Pliny the Elder documented the following artworks put on display in the buildings and porticos raised by Pollio, and probably located mostly in the museum by his library: the statue of Aphrodite by Cephisodotus (*HN* 36,24),<sup>25</sup> Arcesilas' Centaurs with Nymphs on their backs (*HN* 36,33),<sup>26</sup> Thespiades of Cleomenes, Oceanus and Zeus by Heniochos (*ibid.*);<sup>27</sup> the Nymphs of Stephanus, Hermerotes by Tauriscus of Tralleis (*ibid.*);<sup>28</sup> Zeus Xenios by Papyllas, the student of Praxiteles;<sup>29</sup> Dionysos by Eutychides (*HN* 36,34),<sup>30</sup> Amphion, Zetos and Dirke by Apollonius and Tauriscus, the sculptural group sequestered in Rhodes (*HN* 36,33-4). Pliny the Elder also referred to *canephores* (*HN* 36,25) and a boy with a cup by Scopas (*HN* 36,22).<sup>31</sup> Some of these sculptures, particularly by the late Hellenist masters, might have been purchased by Lucullus on the Roman antiquarian market (Arkesilaos, Stephanus).

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<sup>24</sup> Jucker 1950, p.69

<sup>25</sup> B. Andreae, Kephisodotos (II), a student of Praxiteles, Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* pp.410-11. Pliny the Elder referred in all likelihood to the famous Aphrodite, known from a number of Roman time copies, who was labelled Venere Capitolina. The ashamed Capitoline Venus, probably a second to the Praxitelean Cnidian Aphrodite ingenious creation of a nude beauty in the Classical Antiquity, was worth a royal collection. She must have been very expensive, if at all available on the antiquarian market; A. Corso, L'Afrodite Capitolina e l'arte di Cephisodoto il Giovane, *Numismatica e Antichità Classiche* 21, 1992, pp.131-157

<sup>26</sup> Arkesilaos (IV), G.Bröker, in Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon*, pp.94-95. Arkesilaos belonged to the clients of L. Lucullus, the son of L. Licinius Lucullus; Overbeck, *SQ* 2268-70

<sup>27</sup> Heniochos (*Cod. Bambergensis*), Entochos (other manuscripts), corrected by K. Urlichs to Antiochos, Antiochos (III), W. Müller, in Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon*, pp.54-55, Overbeck *SQ*, 2222, perhaps identic with Antiochos (IV), the son of Demetrios of Antioch, E. Paul, Antiochos (IV), Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon*, p.55

<sup>28</sup> Tauriskos (II) from Tralleis in Caria, II century BC, B. Andreae, in Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon*, pp.870; see below the Group of Dirke, a work of Tauriskos (II) and his brother Apollonios (*HN* 36,34), confiscated by Cassius Longinus in Rhodos, and transported to Rome by Mark Antony

<sup>29</sup> It is not clear, if Papyllas actually was a student of Praxiteles (2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC), or a sculptor from the circle of Asinius Pollio, U. Gottschall, Papylos, Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* p.620; Overbeck *SQ* 1342

<sup>30</sup> A marble statue in all likelihood by Eutychides from Sikyon, a student of Lysippos (early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC), one of the most popular sculptors of the Hellenistic period, the author of Tyche of Antioch, a masterpiece of sculpture in bronze, which must have been commissioned by Seleucus I, the founder of Antiocheia on Orontes, 301/300 BC, for the newly founded city, M. Flashar, Eutychides (I), Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* pp.242-245

<sup>31</sup> Skopas of Paros, one of the most highly valued of all the Greek sculptors by the Roman viewers and art collectors, 380-330/320 BC, C. Vorster, Skopas (II), Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* pp.827-833

Even so, he must have paid with the money of Mithridates VI and king Tigranes of Armenia. In the art gallery of the Porticus Pompei the visitor had a chance to contemplate such masterpieces of the Greek art as the hoplite of Polygnotus (*HN* 35,58-9),<sup>32</sup> Cadmus and Europa by Antiphilus (*HN* 35,114),<sup>33</sup> or Pausias' large scale painting which pictured the immolation of oxen (*HN* 35,126),<sup>34</sup> Nikias' portrait of Alexander the Great and his paintings of Andromeda and Io (*HN* 35,132),<sup>35</sup> a seated portrait of Calypso, a princess from the East (*ibid.*). Her iconography is still unaccounted for in the Graeco-Roman iconography. The Porticus Pompei was constructed after Pompey's triumph of 61 BC and consecrated in 55 BC together with the theatre. Its painting collection, which we know only from Pliny the Elder's very selective catalogue looks enchanting. The columned porticoes offered the Roman viewer a selection of the most valued old masters of Classical antiquity. Painters like Polygnotus were held only by the most admired and frequented art galleries of the Mediterranean like the Propylaea and the Painted Stoa in Athens or the Lesche of the Cnidians in Delphi. Likewise Antiphilus, a court painter of Ptolemy I. Pliny the Elder included him in a carefully selected list of the best Greek painters (*HN* 35,138).<sup>36</sup> Antiphilus' small size genre scenes and still life were the dream of the wealthiest Roman art

<sup>32</sup> U. Koch-Brinkmann, Polygnotus(I), Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* pp.708-710; Overbeck *SQ* 1042-79; C. Robert, *Die Nekyia des Polygnot* (1892); *id. Die Iliupersis des Polygnot* (1893); Polygnot has his own specialist bibliography. He was one of the most valued Greek painters in the late Hellenistic and Roman times.

<sup>33</sup> W. Müller, Antiphilus (II), Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* pp.58-59.; The Europa painting became synonymous with the Porticus Pompei (*Mart.epigr.*2,14,3); the Roman museums kept a number of paintings of Europas, which are documented by the literary and iconographic sources (*Ov.Met.*2,873-6; *Ov.Fasti* 5,606ff.; Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Cleitophon*; Prologue). A gorgeous Europa mosaic from Praeneste probably is a copy of Antiphilus' Europa mentioned by Pliny the Elder (*HN* 35,114). The painting may be also reflected in Moschus' description of Europa. For bibliography and discussion on the Europa paintings in the Roman art galleries see: T. Polański, *Ancient Greek Orientalist Painters*, 2002, pp.67-88; M. Robertson, Europa, *LIMC* IV, 1-2

<sup>34</sup> I. Scheibler, Pausias, Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* pp.635-6; Reinach, *RecMilliet* 256-62

<sup>35</sup> Nikias of Athens has his own specialized bibliography, see: U. Koch-Brinkmann, Nikias (II), Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* pp.570-573; Nikias worked for Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I. His Hyakinthos was confiscated in Alexandria by Octavianus and transported to Rome, where it eventually adorned the Temple of Divus Augustus (*Paus.*3,19,4; Overbeck *SQ* 1811). Andromeda (Overbeck *SQ* 1816) and Io (*ibid.*) can be identified with a high degree of certainty in numerous extant fresco copies, which adorn walls of the buried Campanian towns and Rome (Casa dei Dioscuri, Casa dei Cinque Scheletri, Casa del Principe di Montenegro, now in the National Museum of Naples; Casa di Livia, Macellum in Pompeii); B. Neutsch, *Der Maler Nikias von Athen*, 1939; K. Schefold, Die Andromeda des Nikias, *Festschrift A.D.Trendall*, 1979; see also Polański 2002 with bibliography and discussion, pp.89-116

<sup>36</sup> Varro compared him to Lysippos (*rust.*3,3,2), Overbeck *SQ* 1512; Theon to Apelles and Protogenes (*prog.*1), Overbeck *SQ* 1904; Petronius to Philoxenos of Eretria (*Satiricon* 2,9), W. Müller, Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* p.58

collectors.<sup>37</sup> It is interesting to observe in this context that Mithradates had good relations with the royal house of Alexandria. In 84 BC he married his daughter Mithradatis to Ptolemy XII, and four years later his second daughter Nysa to Ptolemy of Cyprus. Pausias was one of the most distinguished representatives of the painting school of Sikyon. Pliny the Elder admires his *boum immolatio*, Pausanias his Methe from the Tholos of Epidauros (2, 27, 3). Lucullus paid a lot of money for a copy of Pausias' famous *stephanopolis* (Plin.HN 35,126).<sup>38</sup> Nicias of Athens's paintings were commissioned by Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I. His Young Hyacinthus, which was confiscated in Alexandria in 30 BC, became one of Octavian Augustus' choice paintings. Tiberius ordered to adorn with this painting the pronaos of the Templum Divi Augusti on the Roman Forum (Paus.3,9,4; Mart.XIV, 173). The monumental architectural complex was built for the money and adorned with artworks confiscated in the kingdom of Pontus. Myron's Heracles was put on display in Pompey's temple at the Circus Maximus (Plin.HN 34,57). It is difficult to say anything of the museographic history of these masterpieces. The paintings by Nicias, Antiphilus or Pausias, or the works of Myron were synonymous with wealth. They were so expensive that they were not traded on the antiquarian market. They must have originally been kept in the royal galleries of wealthy monarchs like Mithridates VI, Attalus III, the Seleucids or Ptolemies, and appeared in Rome in outcome of robbery or extortion. In my opinion Pompey plundered them from the art galleries of the Kingdom of Pontus and in Syria from the palaces of the Seleucids. Pompey's biography does not allow for other explanations. He could not have found Nicias', Pausias' or Antiphilus' paintings in the house of Sertorius, who lived the life of a guerilla in the mountains of Spain; nor from the tents of Spartacus and his men. Only rarely do we come across information as exact as this, which says that Pompey owned a collection of gems, once the property of Mithridates VI (Plin. HN 37, 11).<sup>39</sup>

M. Pape drew our attention to an essential and important factor in the history of the plundered art. She aptly remarked that a large part of the artworks made of precious metals and displayed in triumphal celebrations in Rome, was subsequently melted down.<sup>40</sup> Some of them might have been sold at auction to cover the cost of the wars, others simply shared out between generals and their officers.<sup>41</sup> The scale of robbery and destruction may be deduced from Livy's description of the triumph celebrated by M. Fulvius Nobilior after the seizure of

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<sup>37</sup> W. Müller, Vollkommer, *Künstlerlexikon* p.59

<sup>38</sup> Poor Horace could only sigh in admiration of Pausias' perfect tabellae (*Sat.*2,7,95)

<sup>39</sup> Jucker 1950, p.66, n.3; cf. Suet. *Caes.*47; Furtwängler 1900, III, p.304

<sup>40</sup> Pape 1975, p.57

<sup>41</sup> Pape 1975, p.58

Etolian Ambracia. Livy wrote that the conqueror showed the Roman mob 783 bronze and 230 marble statues (Liv.39,5,14).<sup>42</sup> It is symptomatic of this situation that Livy treated the Greek sculptures from Ambracia en masse; except for one instance of the Ambracian Muses we learn nothing about the subjects and authors of other artworks taken in Ambracia.<sup>43</sup> This was of no interest to Livy, whose attitude in this respect reflected the mentality of greedy conquerors, which was characteristic for the Roman aristocracy of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC.

As regards Pontus we are able to collect some valuable information from the literary sources, even if it is scattered and fragmentary. However, we have no archaeology of Hellenistic Amaseia, Sinope, Amisos or Heracleia, which now lie under later towns.<sup>44</sup> In the case of Kommagene the situation is quite the opposite. We have access to the still impressive archaeological sites of the royal sanctuaries of Antioch I Epiphanes in Arsameia on Nymphaios and Nemrud Dagħ, and the *hierothesion* in Kara Kuş raised by Mithridatas II, and Sesönk. The remnants of other royal sanctuaries in the valley of Euphrates have been successively excavated in recent decades. The extensive royal inscriptions commissioned by Antioch I Epiphanes, probably in part composed by the king himself, testify to a sophisticated Graeco-Iranian cultural milieu. The monumental as well as minor scale sculpture in the round, and the reliefs, which are remarkable for their fascinating blend of Iranian and Hellenic artistic traditions, speak in the best possible way of the anonymous sculptors who worked in the studios of Antioch I Epiphanes.<sup>45</sup> They were great sculptors and excellent stonemasons. They created their own unique style, their own Graeco-Iranian iconography, and their own unparalleled aesthetics. The traveller who faced the monumental galleries of gods on Nemrud Dagħ or has seen the royal portrait in the old museum of Gaziantep has no doubt of this.

Julia Balbilla, a late descendant of Antioch I Epiphanes, was considered the Sappho of the Hadrianic times. In her charming Eolic poems incised on the Colossus of Memnon Balbilla takes great pride in her royal ancestors. Her mother was a princess of the blood, and her grandfather Balbillos was a man at the royal court (*Colosse* 29, vv.15-19). Not incidentally perhaps she draws a distant allusion to the sacrilegious acts of destruction committed by the conquerors in the sanctuaries of her native country, when she refers to the impious, barbarous and pitiless King Cambyses, who first mutilated and then butchered the sacred

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<sup>42</sup> Pape 1975, n.47, p.128

<sup>43</sup> Pape 1975, on the Muses of Ambracia, p.128, n.47

<sup>44</sup> The fieldworks in Heracleia Pontica were carried out by W. Hoepfner and F. Dörner in 1961/62, *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1962, pp.583ff.

<sup>45</sup> Dörrie 1964, Waldmann 1973, Dörner, Goell 1963, Wagner 1983

bull Apis (*Colosse* 29, vv.9-10).<sup>46</sup> Her poems also testify to the sophisticated cultural milieu of the royal court of Kommagene. The royal patronage embraced rhetoricians, philosophers, poets, architects, sculptors, priests and theologians, and in all likelihood also historians of the dynasty. This was all brutally destroyed by the Roman invaders.

Arsameia on Nymphaios shows traces of intentional and systematic destruction of the royal monuments, which is still visible even after 2000 years. The stones from the grave chamber of Isias, Antiochis and Ake in Kara Kuş were recycled by the Roman engineers to construct a bridge over Chabinas (mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD).<sup>47</sup> The bridge still hangs over a mountainous valley in a wild and impressive landscape over a gorge on the river.

The plunder of burial grounds was a habit of the Roman conquerors in the 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. Roman colonists who were resettled in Corinth after its destruction in 146 BC carried out systematic robber digs on a Greek burial ground, when they realised that they could find expensive Corinthian bronze vessels, which were sought after on the Roman antiquarian market (Str.8,6,23).<sup>48</sup> M. Agrippa ordered the removal of a monumental stone lion which adorned a grave in Lampsacus (Lapseki) and its transportation to Rome, where it decorated his newly constructed thermae (Str.13,1,19).<sup>49</sup>

The ultimate aim of the destruction of inscriptions is to destroy memory. The very name of Arsameia has disappeared from the written documents of the imperial period. It remained completely forgotten until the day when the great Arsameian inscriptions were rediscovered and read anew.<sup>50</sup> It is interesting to observe that the new Roman rulers closed down or destroyed the old Iranian sanctuaries, while at the same time supporting the Aramaic centres of religious worship in Lacotena (Direk Kale) and Doliche (Dülük), as if they were worried that the sanctuaries raised by the Orontids might become hotbeds of anti-Roman resistance. We do not know the exact chronology of the devastation. The rediscovery of the art and literature of Kommagene came too late to be reviewed and discussed in E. Will's magnificent *L'histoire politique du monde hellénistique*. It was only in 1951 that F. Dörner identified the Arsameia site on Nymphaios and published its inscriptions. The Classical historians mention the kings of Kommagene incidentally and in a general way together with other

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<sup>46</sup> Bernand 1960, 28-32

<sup>47</sup> Wagner 1983, p.195

<sup>48</sup> Pape 1975, p.62, 44BC, n.71, p.130

<sup>49</sup> Pape 1975, p.65, 80, 192, 210; cf. C. Hülsen, *Die Thermen des Agrippa*, 1910

<sup>50</sup> Wagner 1983, p.195

minor Oriental monarchs who came to contact with Rome in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. After some military operations and a siege of Samosata, Pompey came to terms with Antioch I Epiphanes (App.*Mith.*106,497).<sup>51</sup> In 61 BC Antioch I followed in the triumphal march of Pompey in Rome (Plut.*Pomp.*45; App.*Mith.*116).<sup>52</sup> P. Ventidius Bassus besieged Samosata in 38 BC and faced a determined resistance. Dio Cassius remarked that the real cause behind the war was Antioch's wealth (DC 49,20,5). The conflicting sides eventually came to an agreement, which said that Antioch would pay 300 talents' tribute (Plu.*Ant.*34,3-4).<sup>53</sup> The last decades of the kingdom are obscure. We only learn that the grandson of Antioch I, the young Antioch III, died in 17 AD, and that subsequently Kommagene was incorporated into the Roman Empire (Tac.*Ann.*2,56,4; Str.16,2,3).<sup>54</sup> We can judge from Tacitus' allusive and ambiguous words that a popular uprising against Rome followed the king's death and annexation of the country (Tac.*Ann.*2,42,5). Antioch III must have been killed by the long arm of Rome to open up the way for the annexation of his kingdom. It seems to have been an element in a wider plan. We can deduce from the course of events that a group of leading generals and politicians around Tiberius decided to incorporate a chain of minor, vassal, autonomous kingdoms which bordered the Empire. The process actually began earlier with the deposition and exile of Archelaus, the son of Herod the Idumean. Tiberius summoned Rhascuporis of Thrace, Marobodus of Germania, and Archelaus of Cappadocia (Suet.*Tib.*37,4). They were not allowed to return home. Archelaus and Rhascuporis came under surveillance. Tacitus wrote of a political trial and Archelaus' subsequent death in Rome in deeply allusive words: *mox accusatus in senatu, non ob crimina quae fingebantur, sed angore ... finem vitae sponte an fato implevit* (Tac.*Ann.*2,42,2-3; DC 57,17,3).<sup>55</sup> The charges were fabricated. The king died soon afterwards, perhaps committed suicide, perhaps he died of natural causes. Tacitus clearly intended to raise doubts in his readers' minds as regards the real cause of Archelaus' demise. Two Oriental kings, Antioch III and Archelaus, died in suspicious circumstances in the same year AD 17. Their kingdoms were subsequently incorporated into the Empire. The kingdom of Kommagene emerged once again for a short spell as a result of the unexpected decision of young Caligula, who restored his friend Antiochus IV to the throne of Kommagene from exile in Rome (AD 38) (Suet.*Calig.*16,3). Like Cassius Dio, Suetonius alluded to the wealth of the kings of Kommagene, as the real cause of its annexation in AD 17.<sup>56</sup> The establishment of the Arsacids in Armenia and

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<sup>51</sup> Sullivan 1977, p.764

<sup>52</sup> Wagner 1983, p.204

<sup>53</sup> Sullivan 1977, p.768, Wagner 1983, p.206

<sup>54</sup> Sullivan 1977, p.784

<sup>55</sup> Sullivan 1977, *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Sullivan 1977, p.784; Suet.*Calig.*16,3: *si quibus regna restituit adiecit et fructum omnium vectigaliorum et redditum medii temporis, ut Antiocho Commageno sestertium milies confiscatum*

the strategic location of Zeugma/Belkis and Samosata on the Upper Euphrates proved decisive for the future of Antiochus IV and his reinstated kingdom.<sup>57</sup> The Roman military invasion was brutal (AD 72). After a short resistance the sons of Antiochus IV, Epiphanes and Callinicus crossed the Euphrates to the Parthian side (Jos. *BJ* 7, 225-237). When did the Romans destroy Arsameia on Nymphaios? In 17 AD or in 72 AD? So far we have no clues to answer this question.<sup>58</sup>

I focused on the death of Archelaus and Antiochus III to point, even if perfunctorily, to a universal historical pattern which consists of the following components: a brutal law of power, the robbery of cultural assets, and the blood of greedy invaders' victims.

I have mentioned two arch-thieves, Lucullus and Pompey, and occasionally their officers, whose names are related to the history of plundered art. We also have some information about a number of other minor rogues who made art robbery their profession. They were also active in Anatolia, the Caucasus and Syria. In 85 BC C. Flavius Fimbria burnt down Homeric Iliion, the mother city of all the Romans according to the basic Latin primary school curriculum. Fimbria did not even spare the temples and their divine idols. Neither did he spare the lives of those who sought asylum in the legendary temple of Athena. The victims were burnt together with the sanctuary (*App.Mithr.*53,213). Verres also had an Asiatic appendix to the list of his proverbial art collection, which was put together through theft, extortion, and blackmail (*Cic.Verr.*2,1,58).<sup>59</sup> The Asiatic appendix according to the prosecutor Cicero in the legal proceedings of *de repetundis* contained a statue of Apollo Kitharodos among a group of sculptures acquired in Aspendos (53), a golden image of Diana from Perge (54), a collection of vessels and a chandelier once belonging to Antioch XIII (*Verr.*2,4,62-67).<sup>60</sup> A next high-ranking state functionary, who replaced Verres in Cilicia, P. Servilius Vatia, proconsul 78-75 BC, who seized Lycian Olympia and an unnamed local stronghold where he also found treasures (*Cic.Verr.*2,1,57).<sup>61</sup> I would like to emphasise the point once again: Fimbria, Verres and Vatia were only minor thieves when compared with the Luculli brothers or Pompey, who enjoyed an incessant and undying good reputation in the Roman historiography and literature. Roman lawyers joined in a common effort with intellectuals to work out a set of principles which were regularly applied to all the cases of

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<sup>57</sup> Sullivan 1977, p.791

<sup>58</sup> Wagner 1983, p.195

<sup>59</sup> Pape 1975, p.51

<sup>60</sup> Pape 1975, p. 206, 207

<sup>61</sup> Pape 1975, p.75

looting, temples included. We cannot forget that the majority of bronze and marble statues in Italy came from looted temples.<sup>62</sup> This is clear to the reader of Pliny the Elder's museography of Rome. The prevailing majority of the statues in Pliny's catalogues of the Roman antiquities must have been originally either sacred idols which had once been removed from temples, or components of religious architectural decoration, e.g. acroteria or tympanon statues. The looting of temples in the East was not only documented by the extant Graeco-Roman literary sources. It can sometimes be substantiated by material evidence. The Roman invaders removed ancient, authentic metopes from the eastern façade of Nemesis' temple in Rhamnus (dated c.430-400 BC). The metopes were replaced by empty polished slabs. We can surmise that the original relieved metopes were shipped to Rome. Since this was realised efforts have been undertaken to identify one or another of them in the Roman art galleries and in the Museum of Cavalla, so far in vain.<sup>63</sup>

A sacred idol which was transferred to Italy became sacred to the Romans only when it was sanctified anew through a prescribed ritual carried out within the boundaries of the *ager Romanus*.<sup>64</sup> Otherwise it was not regarded as such. The looting of temples of the foreign gods was not regarded as sacrilegious.<sup>65</sup> In other words any barbarous act of plunder committed in sanctuaries in the East was dressed in the exact and linguistically clear legal Latin, the precision of which we so like to praise: *sepulchra hostium religiosa nobis non sunt. Ideoque lapides inde sublatos in quamlibet usum convertere possumus* (Iulius Paulus, *Digesta* 47,12,4). The usual explanation which we come across in the extant Classical writings is the *ius belli*, the law of war (*Kriegsrecht*) (Liv.25,40; Paus.8,46,1).<sup>66</sup> The *ius belli* offered an explanation to Livy for the massacre of the civilians, the brutal looting and destruction of Syracuse in 212 BC (Liv.25,40,1-2). Pausanias was not an admirer by far of the Roman robberies in Balkan Greece. Quite the opposite, his reader can find his condemnation of Sulla and Nero, who plundered Greek sanctuaries in search of artworks. Pausanias only reflected on the usual ways of war, and exemplified his reflections with the Achaeans, who removed the sacred idols from Troy, and the Persians, who did the same in Didyma (494 BC) and Athens (480/79 BC) (Paus.2,10,5).<sup>67</sup> In his orations against Verres, a notorious robber of temples, private persons and urban communities, Cicero clearly distinguished between 'war booty' (*Kriegsbeute*)

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<sup>62</sup> Pape 1975, p.36

<sup>63</sup> Pape 1975, p.55f. W. Dinsmoor, *Hesperia* 30, 1961, pp.199-203

<sup>64</sup> Pape 1975, p.36

<sup>65</sup> Jucker 1950, p.88: Pape 1975, p.36: So galt natürlich eine Tempelplünderung auf nicht römischen Gebiet nicht als Sakrileg.

<sup>66</sup> Jucker 1955, p. 88; Pape 1975, pp.86f.

<sup>67</sup> Pape 1975, p.88

and plain ‘robbery’ (*Raubgut*),<sup>68</sup> and also between ‘*luxuria privata*’ as opposite to ‘*magnificentia publica*’ (Cic.*Mur.*76).<sup>69</sup> Cicero did not question the right itself to plunder in times of war. It was the seizure of foreign goods for private use which made up the essence of his charges against Verres (*luxuria privata*) (Ver.2,1,54-55; 2,4,121). Cicero contrasted Verres’ meanness with magnanimity of Aemilianus and Marcellus, who confiscated artworks and other valuable goods not *ad hominum luxuriam sed ad ornatum fanorum et oppidorum* (Ver.2,4,98).<sup>70</sup> C. Verres, who was a legate of Cn. Cornelius Dolabella, propraetor of Cilicia 80-79 BC, enjoyed only a minor share of the robberies committed by his high-ranking superior, who can hardly stand up to such robbers like the above praised Aemilius Paulus, P. Scipio Aemilianus, and Marcellus. In the same cycle of orations, Cicero, inspired by moral ardour, also praised the already-mentioned P. Servilius Vatia, proconsul of Cilicia, for his seizure of Olympos. The treasure was brought to Rome and shown to the mob in his triumph in 74 BC.<sup>71</sup> Cicero also praised Aemilius Paulus, one of the worst and most dangerous men of his time, for bringing the library of Perseus from Pella to Rome. He did this, Cicero believed, out of parental piety for his sons (cf.Plu.*Aem.*28,6-7; Isid.*etym.*6,5,1).<sup>72</sup> Cicero was not alone in his admiration for that gloomy personality. Plutarch, Diodorus and Polybius emphasise Aemilius’ magnanimity and unselfishness. The skilful phraseology, coined by Roman lawyers and employed by Cicero, one of the most gifted representatives of the Roman judicial class, such as *monumentum imperatoris*, or *ornamentum urbis* was used for decades to justify the plunder of cultural heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean, plunder which reached a historic climax in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. *Cicero lobt die Feldherrn, die ihre Beute für die Ausstattung der Stadt verwendeten*, Pape aptly commented (Cic.*Verr.*2,1,55).<sup>73</sup> Cicero never condemns the robbery of artworks and other cultural goods if committed on behalf of the Roman state. His shameless hypocrisy throws a shadow of silence and oblivion on the brutal elimination of the entire cultural world of the kingdoms of the Attalids, the kingdom of Pontus and Kommagene. However, the justification of killing and plundering was not enough for the Roman intellectuals. Plutarch tells us the ‘moving’ story of Lucullus, the good general, who made every effort to stop his soldiers from killing and looting in Amisos, which was destroyed at night, in a fire. An apocalyptic image. Lucullus wept, unable to stop his enraged soldiers, as Plutarch’s story goes (*Luc.*19,3-4). A similarly naïve story was also offered to the

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<sup>68</sup> Pape 1975, p.4

<sup>69</sup> Pape 1975, p.75

<sup>70</sup> Cruel and brutal military man Marcellus is a model Roman general in Cicero’s opinion, Pape 1975, p.92

<sup>71</sup> Pape 1975, p.77

<sup>72</sup> Pape 1975, n.64, p.129

<sup>73</sup> Pape 1975, p.54

readers of Josephus Flavius. The emperor Titus, like Lucullus, made every effort to prevent the destruction of Herod's Temple in Jerusalem. He even dragged away his soldiers. Can you imagine it? The emperor struggling with a legionary soldier and begging him to save the Judean temple? The truth was quite the opposite. Still today Titus boasts of the destruction and plunder of the most holy sanctuary of the Jews on his triumphal arch in the centre of ancient Rome. The Talmudic tradition is more trustworthy than the account by the court historian Josephus, notorious for his servile flattery.<sup>74</sup> I would like to cite a passage from a brilliant book by Préaux, *Le monde hellénistique*, in conclusion to this section of my paper: la pensée ...des orateurs et des historiens a campé ainsi deux types de chefs, le brutal et l'humain. Thème littéraire et sans doute exclusivement littéraire.<sup>75</sup> Cicero's and Livy's opinions on the robbery of cultural goods were representative for the mentality of conquerors and world owners, the Roman aristocracy in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC. Cicero puts emphasis on the *ius belli*, both Cicero and Livy refer to the formula of *monumentum imperatoris* (fame of the conqueror) and *ornamentum urbis* (adornment of the city of Rome).<sup>76</sup> Their opinions were essentially shared by many other intellectuals, including their Greek colleagues. Polybius recalled the 'law of war' only to admit that robbery makes us stronger, and simultaneously weakens our enemy. However, he did not approve of the looting of temples (Polyb.5,11,3-6).<sup>77</sup> Pape aptly observed that 'auch bei den Historikern ist keine wirkliche Kritik am römischen Vergehen zu finden, denn die meisten uns überlieferten Historiker zeigen eine positive Einschätzung der Römer allgemein. Auch ihre Behandlung der Besiegten wird gelobt.'<sup>78</sup> It is intriguing to see the faces of the defeated which occasionally appear in the Graeco-Roman letters. Polybius remarked that the robbery of artworks instigates anger and hatred in the defeated, in particular when they see their property in the capital city of their conquerors (Polyb.9,10,6). Cicero, carried too far by his prosecutor's anger, turns against the accused to tell us a moving story of tears shed by the people who come to Rome from Greece and Asia Minor, when they witness the sacred images of gods from their temples in the Forum Romanum (Cic.Verr.2,1,59).<sup>79</sup> We can imagine the feelings of humiliation and the shock of sacrilege experienced by the Egyptians who witnessed the removal of the holy obelisks from their sanctuaries in the times of

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<sup>74</sup> bGittin56b2, Speyer 1981, p.71; Josephus wrote that the Tora scroll was one of the attractions of Titus' triumph in Rome, 71 AD, Jos. *BJ* 7,150

<sup>75</sup> Préaux 1978, 1, p.356

<sup>76</sup> Pape 1975, p.86

<sup>77</sup> Préaux 1978, 1, p.354; Plato condemned cruelty against children and women, and burning and destruction of towns. However, he had in mind exclusively the Greeks. The barbarians were excluded from his φιλανθρωπία (*RP* 5,471 a-b), Préaux 1978, 1, p.356

<sup>78</sup> Pape 1975, pp.85f.

<sup>79</sup> Pape 1975, p.137, n.48

Augustus (10 BC), and then visited Rome and looked at one of them standing in the Circus Maximus (now on the Piazza del Popolo). It served as the finishing post in the chariot races. Another one was reused as a sundial, the *chorologion* on the Campus Martius. The spirit of the Roman historiography representative of the mentality of world owners can also be illustrated with two famous Roman heroes, still adduced in our schools as model citizens, remarkable for their moral virtues and republican spirit: M. Furius Camillus and L. Quinctius Cincinnatus. In 396 BC Camillus, who plundered Veii installed a bronze door in his Roman house, apparently a gate from an Etruscan temple in Veii (Plin.*HN* 34,13; Plu. *Cam.*12,1). Livy commented that Camillus did it *incolentium magis quam rapientium modo* (5,22,3), rather for reasons of piety than robbery. In 380 Cincinnatus seized Praeneste. He removed a statue of Jupiter and set it up on the Capitol Hill (Liv.6,29,8-9).<sup>80</sup> Pliny the Elder quoted Methrodorus of Scepsis, saying that in 264 the Romans captured Volsinii, where they confiscated 2000 bronze statues. This robbery was the only reason for the attack (Plin.*HN* 34,34).<sup>81</sup> Methrodorus of Scepsis was one of the intellectuals who gathered at the court of Mithridates VI. Plutarch described him as ἀνήρ...πολυμαθής (Plu.*Luc.*22,2). Here in Pliny's citation we probably find a unique opportunity to read a passage from the lost tradition of the Greek anti-Roman historiography, poetry and rhetoric. Methrodorus' words were not a propaganda slogan. He must have drawn on trustworthy historical sources. An inscription on the base of a statue found in Arena di San Ombono commemorates the seizure of Volsinii by M. Fulvius Flaccus, the consul of 264 BC.<sup>82</sup> In the light of this inscription the evidence adduced by Methrodorus cannot be regarded as a rhetorical fabrication by one *misoromaïos*,<sup>83</sup> which may be translated as an insane fanatic, as he was labelled by the Romans.

In this way we have reached the difficult problem of the alternative, Oriental, anti-Roman literary, artistic and historical tradition which confronted the invaders from the West. The Roman military men had enough power to destroy a large part of the indigenous, pre-Roman tradition. They were soon followed by the Roman bureaucracy, which continued the destruction. The bureaucrats were patient, zealous and greedy. We know very little about the intellectuals who surrounded Mithridates VI. The information is dispersed, fragmentary and mostly distorted by the biased and selective transmission. We are informed of Diodorus of Adramyttion, an academic philosopher and a supporter of Mithridates VI

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<sup>80</sup> Pape 1975, p.152

<sup>81</sup> Pape 1975, p.86

<sup>82</sup> Pape 1975, p.139 n.69; M. Torelli, *Quaderni Istituto Topografia Romana* 5, 1968=Studi di Topografia Romana, *Festschrift M. Colini*, pp.71-75

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Jucker 1950, p.49

(Str.13,1,66).<sup>84</sup> Athenion was a peripatetic philosopher and leader of the anti-Roman uprising in Athens 88BC. He was also a supporter of the king of Pontus. Poseidonius, who caricatured those events in Athens, quoted some of his anti-Roman slogans. Along with Poseidonius, Polybius and Plutarch unanimously and decidedly condemned any idea of armed resistance against Rome.<sup>85</sup> Poseidonius quoted Athenion saying that when the Romans came, they would close down the sanctuaries, the gymnasia would die out, while the philosophers would fall silent (Athen.5,213D).<sup>86</sup> We can hardly deny that he was right. Pausanias remarked that Athens' recovery from the wounds inflicted by Sulla took two hundred years. Athens did not flourish again until the reign of the Philhellenic Emperor Hadrian (Paus.1,20,7).<sup>87</sup> Apellikon of Teos, another peripatetic philosopher, collaborated with Athenion.<sup>88</sup> After Athenion's military defeat his post was taken by Aristion, an Athenian Epicurean philosopher and political emigrant from Roman-controlled Athens, who found asylum and patronage at the court of Mithridates VI.<sup>89</sup> Plutarch acting as advocate for Rome wrote that Aristion was cruel and demoralised (Plu.*Sull.*13).<sup>90</sup> Strong words. The enemies of the Roman generals were cruel and demoralised – said Rome's advocate, though there is no objective evidence for the claim. The generals were certainly not. Deininger concluded that *Peripatetiker und Epikurer erscheinen dabei im allgemeinen auf der Seite der Feinde Roms*.<sup>91</sup> We also hear of Amphicrates of Athens. Plutarch tells his story in a few brief words using highly enigmatic language: λέγεται γὰρ φυγεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς Σελεύκειαν (Plu.*Luc.*22,5). What does it mean 'it is said that he left for Seleukeia'? Seleukeia was a big Greek city in Parthian Mesopotamia. Later Amphicrates found asylum at the side of Cleopatra, the wife of Tigranes, that is at the court of the kings of Armenia. It is difficult to make a story out of the information transmitted by Plutarch. Plutarch's account sounds self-contradictory.<sup>92</sup> Whatever the truth, it seems clear that Amphicrates escaped from Athens when he found himself endangered by the Romans and successively found asylum first in Parthia and later at the Armenian royal court.

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<sup>84</sup> Deininger 1971, p.251

<sup>85</sup> Deininger 1971, p.267

<sup>86</sup> Deininger 1971, p.254f.

<sup>87</sup> Habicht 1998, p.121

<sup>88</sup> Deininger 1971, p.254f.

<sup>89</sup> Deininger 1971, p.255f.

<sup>90</sup> Deininger 1971, n.6, p.259

<sup>91</sup> Deininger 1971, p.245

<sup>92</sup> Plutarch's words that Amphicrates fell into disfavour with the king and ἐτελεύτησε δὲ παρὰ τῷ Τιγράνῃ (*Luc.*22,5) sounds ambiguous. Did he mean that Amphicrates died at the side, in the presence of or at the court of Tigranes? Amphicrates was buried with great honours

The process of devastation and robbery of indigenous, pre-Roman cultural heritage in Asia Minor and Syria did not cease with Rome's annexation of the Greek and Oriental kingdoms. Only occasionally do we learn anything about this. However, what we know is enough to realise that the robbery of artworks also continued in peaceful times under Roman occupation. Now some selected instances: M. Calpurnius Bibulus, governor of Syria in 51 BC, confiscated and offered on the Capitol Hill in Rome the statues of Zeus Keraunios and Athena of Antioch, which must have been sacred idols for the Antiochians.<sup>93</sup> The Aedes Apollinis on the Forum Holitorium was founded by Consul C. Sosius, who adorned the temple with the statue of Apollo Cedrinus confiscated in Seleukeia (Pieria? Isaurica?) (Plin.*HN* 13,53). Sosius was governor of Syria and Cilicia in 38 BC. The Apollo Sosianus gallery also included the Niobe group and her Children (Plin. *HN* 36,28).<sup>94</sup> Its origin is unknown. However, we know very well that the Niobids are symptomatic for the art of Anatolia, and in particular for its western part, which can be seen even today on archaeological sites and in local museums. M. Agrippa commissioned a painting of Ajax and Venus for his newly constructed Baths in Rome (Plin.*HN* 35,26).<sup>95</sup> Pliny wrote that Agrippa purchased the painting. However, it is also documented by Pliny the Elder that Agrippa's celebrated lion from the same Baths (Str.13,1,19) was moved from a cemetery in Cyzicus during the same expedition in 15 BC. Consequently this seems to suggest that the painting was in one or another way extorted from its owners. Acratus, Nero's servant, was commissioned to confiscate artworks for his lord in Greece and Asia Minor (Tac.*Ann.* 15,45,2; 16,23,1; Dio Chrys.31,149).<sup>96</sup> They were to adorn the emperor's newly constructed Domus Transitoria and Domus Aurea. Pausanias documented that Nero carried off no less than five hundred artworks from Delphi (Paus.10,7,1; 10,19,2).<sup>97</sup>

There are a number of studies which have contributed to the research on the alternative, Greek and Oriental literary and artistic traditions. H. Fuchs in his book which marked a milestone in the 20<sup>th</sup> century humanities, *Der geistige Widerstand gegen Rom*, focused on the Oriental cultural resistance to the Roman dominance. Fuchs related the earliest known *Oracula Sibyllina* to Mithridates VI and his literary circle. J. Deininger mainly focused on the Balkan Greeks, however the last chapter of his assiduously written and captivating book refers to the first Mithridatic war. M. Pape discussed the robbery of artworks mostly in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean. W. Speyer meticulously collected scattered pieces

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<sup>93</sup> Pape 1975, p.152

<sup>94</sup> Pape 1975, p.144.; The group of Niobids is ascribed to Scopas or Praxiteles (Plin.*HN* 36,28), cf. *HN* 13,53; 35,99; 36, 34-35

<sup>95</sup> Pape 1975, p.192f., p.80

<sup>96</sup> Pape 1975, p.194

<sup>97</sup> Habicht 1998, p.122

of evidence which refer to the Graeco-Roman censored literature. In a minor but valuable study R. Koch-Piettre discussed the circle of Stoic philosophers at the court of the Seleucids. A. Twardecki has recently presented his doctoral dissertation on poetic epitaphs from the Bosphorus kingdom. A number of them can be dated to the period of Mithridates VI. They supplement the evidence collected by Fuchs and enrich our knowledge of the literary culture of the Pontus kingdom. The discovery of Nemrud Dagh by Sester and the later research carried out by Puchstein, Goell, Dörrie, Waldmann and Wagner recovered the fascinating literary and artistic culture of the kingdom of Kommagene. Their discoveries have brought signal modifications to a picture which actually pointed in this direction, but was by far incomplete until their research brought it out of the shade of oblivion. Here I am thinking of the poetry by Julia Balbilla, a descendent of Thrasyllus, the royal astrologer of Kommagene, which was known earlier from the Graeco-Roman literary sources. The impressive relieved and sculpted monuments together with extensive inscriptions of Antioch I Epiphanes show us a religious reformer and intellectual on the royal throne, a phenomenon comparable with Amenophis IV in Egypt or Marcus Aurelius in Rome. In this way we are gradually regaining an awareness of the lost heritage of great cultural, artistic, philosophical, literary and religious centres, which were intentionally destroyed in a concerted effort by the Roman bureaucrats and military men. We are regaining that tradition as if from below a tombstone, the stone slab of silence, intentional destruction, premeditated devastation; and we are retrieving the earlier, indigenous tradition which was destined by the invaders to be forgotten forever. It is enough to say that of the two geniuses of Greek letters in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, St. John the Evangelist and St. Paul, the former was exiled and the latter executed by the officials of the Roman judicial and bureaucratic system.

Mithridates failed to stop the Roman armies in their march east, but he saved the Bosphoran Kingdom, which for the next centuries remained out of the reach of the Roman army. In his difficult alliance with Tigranes Mithridates also managed to save Armenia's autonomy, which proved to be his long-lasting achievement. There are limits of every imperialism. It hits barriers which cannot be broken by even the most efficient military machines. Only ten years later, in 53 BC, the Roman army was cut down on the now green plain of Charran by the Iranian General Suren. For the next six centuries the kingdoms of the Arsacids in Iran, Bosphorus, and Armenia marked the limits of the imperial growth of Rome in the East.

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