Athens Journal of History

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The ***Athens Journal of History (AJHIS)*** is an Open Access quarterly double-blind peer reviewed journal and considers papers from all areas of history. Many of the papers published in this journal have been presented at the various conferences sponsored by the History Unit of the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER). All papers are subject to ATINER's Publication Ethical Policy and Statement.

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The current issue is the fourth of the seventh volume of the *Athens Journal of History (AJHIS), published by the History Unit of ATINER*.

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Gregory T. Papanikos
President
ATINER

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Athens Institute for Education and Research
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20th Annual International Conference on History & Archaeology:
From Ancient to Modern, 30-31 May & 1-2 June 2022, Athens, Greece

The History Unit of ATINER, will hold its **20th Annual International Conference on History & Archaeology: From Ancient to Modern, 30-31 May & 1-2 June 2022, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of History. The aim of the conference is to bring together scholars and students of all areas of history, archaeology and other related disciplines. You may participate as a stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2022/FORM-HIS.doc).

Important Dates
- Abstract Submission: **1 November 2021**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: 2 **May 2022**

Academic Members Responsible for the Conference
- Dr. Steven Oberhelman, Professor of Classics, Holder of the George Sumey Jr Endowed Professorship of Liberal Arts, and Associate Dean, Texas A&M University, USA, USA, Vice President of International Programs, ATINER and Editor of the Athens Journal of History.
- Dr. Nicholas Pappas, Vice President of Academic Membership, ATINER & Professor of History, Sam Houston University, USA.
- Dr. David Philip Wick, Director, Arts and Humanities Division & Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.
- Dr. Jayoung Che, Head, History Unit, ATINER & Deputy Director of Research, Korean Academy of Greek Studies, South Korea.
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The Social Program Emphasizes the Educational Aspect of the Academic Meetings of Atiner.
- Greek Night Entertainment (This is the official dinner of the conference)
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- Social Dinner
- Mycenae Visit
- Exploration of the Aegean Islands
- Delphi Visit
- Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

Conference Fees

Conference fees vary from 400€ to 2000€
Details can be found at: https://www.atiner.gr/fees

Athens Institute for Education and Research
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15th Annual International Conference on Literature
30-31 May & 1-2 June 2022

The Literature Unit of ATINER is organizing its **15th Annual International Conference on Literature, 30-31 May & 1-2 June 2022, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of Philology. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers from all areas of literature and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2022/FORM-LIT.doc).

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- Abstract Submission: **1 November 2021**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **2 May 2021**

Academic Member Responsible for the Conference

- **Dr. Stamos Metzidakis**, Head, Literature Research Unit, ATINER & Emeritus Professor of French and Comparative Literature, Washington University in Saint Louis, USA.

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On Francesco Guicciardini's Thought and Some of his Considerations on Machiavelli

By Nicoleta Călina[*] & Loredana Maria Grozoiu[±]

Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540), Italian historian, politician and writer, - descendant of one of the most important and faithful families to the Medici family in Florence - received a solid humanistic education and was also the protagonist of the Italian politics in the XVIth century; during the wars between France and Spain for the domination of the peninsula, he became the fair and impartial interpreter of these events in terms of historiography. Upright and of austere character, he is the author of one of the best histories of Italy, written in the spirit of the time, whose prime quality is the historical veracity. Guicciardini fed the feeling of nationality and the aspiration to independence of Italy. In his works he shows the painful efforts of the princes and heads of republics, dragged into continuous wars, trying to defend, to confederate, to seek help in various foreign powers in order to save themselves from the oppression of the rulers. His genius, intuitive and painfully prophetic, discerns the events from the things; he pronounces what he develops as 'safe judgments' and recommends possible remedies to save the nation.

Introduction

Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540), Italian historian, politician and writer, - descendant of one of the most important and faithful families to the Medici family in Florence - received a solid humanistic education and was also the protagonist of the Italian politics in the XVIth century; during the wars between France and Spain for the domination of the peninsula, he became the fair and impartial interpreter of these events in terms of historiography.

Upright and of austere character, he is the author of one of the best histories of Italy - *Storia d'Italia* - The History of Italy - written in the spirit of the time, whose prime quality is the historical veracity. We must add his considerable diplomatic skills. Cavour put him ahead of Machiavelli: politician, performing many high dignities, Guicciardini is an imposing figure.

The marriage with Maria Salviati, in 1508, strengthened the political influence and it granted him the political ascension. After the war against Pisa, in 1509, he ascended very quickly in the international politics and in 1512 he was appointed by the Florentine Republic as ambassador to Spain at Ferdinand the Catholic. In 1512 he stopped writing his first work, *Storie fiorentine - The Florentine Histories*, to assume the diplomatic assignment that we mentioned before, the embassy to the court of Spain, where he remained until 1514. The result of this experience in his

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diplomatic activity will be the political work *Il Discorso di Logrogno - The Discourse from Logrogno* (1512), a proposal for a political organization of the Florentine state, within which Guicciardini sustains the reform in the aristocratic sense of the Florentine Republic.

After the moment when Giulio de' Medici became Pope Clement VII, Guicciardini is sent to govern the Romagna, a region very agitated by the struggles between the richest families. To counterpoint the power of Charles V, he proposed an alliance between the regional states of Italy and France, in order to safeguard the independence of the peninsula. The agreement was signed in Cognac in 1526, but was never put into practice. After the predation of Rome – *il sacco di Roma* - (1527), he was removed from the diplomatic assignments that he had been given.

In 1529 he left Florence and returned to Rome with the intention to enter the service of Pope Clement VII, and was offered the position of a diplomat to Bologna. After the fall of the Republic of Florence and restoration of the power of the Medici family, in 1531, Guicciardini returned to Florence, where he held various duties on behalf of the Medici family and Pope Clement VII, but after 1534, the new Pope Paul III didn't give him any big assignments.

After the return of the Medici family in Florence, he remained in their residence as counsellor of Duke Alessandro. In the latest years, he finished the *Ricordi politici e civili* ("The Political and Civil Memories"), he collected his *Discorsi politici* ("Political Discourses") and wrote the *Storia d'Italia* (*History of Italy*-1537-1540). None of Guicciardini's works was published during his lifetime.

Concise Excursus Through his Most Important Works

"The History of Italy"- *Storia d'Italia* begins with the history of Italy from 1490, which is the year of the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent and ends in 1534, the year of the descent into Italy of Charles VIII of France (after the predation of Rome by the Lanzichenecchi and the death of Pope Clement VII). Written by a "senior official and advisor to three popes", with ambitions of classicism – he was inspired by the "Commentaries" of Caesar -, but with a great modernity.[1]

Fair and impartial critic of his times, in his *Storia d'Italia* (History of Italy) - vast and detailed image of what happened in Italy between the last decade of the Quattrocento and 1534 - he achieved excellent results as an analyst and political thinker. In Guicciardini there is a political realism that follows the idea of a unified Italian state by taking as examples the great national monarchies of Europe, but not taking into account the fact that those had been created through the strength of an enterprising and opened bourgeoisie, while in Italy a petty

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1. V. De Caprariis, *Francesco Guicciardini. Dalla politica alla storia* (Bari, 1950), 28.

bourgeoisie survived, unable to look beyond the narrow limits of the municipality or region.

In *Discorsi politici - Political Discourses* Guicciardini imitates the ancient historians, and makes them the main characters of the time. Their councils are intent to make Guicciardini's contemporaries to seek the salvation of the states which were at that time involved in the ambitions of the foreign rulers, eager to divide Italy. The *Discourses* have a general character because they highlight the conditions of the states of Europe and their relationships with those of the peninsula. It is part of a series of *Discourses* that Guicciardini wrote in 1511, after being appointed ambassador of the Republic of Florence through the Crown of Aragon, ruled at the time by Ferdinand the Catholic. This experience made him understand, in a more detached and professional way, the high-level politics of Florence, which he analyzed in his work.

Il Discorso di Logrogno ("The Discourse of Logrogno") is a juvenile political work written in 1512 in which Gucciardini sustains a reform - in the aristocratic sense - of the Florentine Republic, proposing a system similar to that of Venice. The discourse takes its name from the city where it was written, the current Logroño. In "*The Discourse from Logrogno*" he begins from the analysis of the various political events in Italy, still divided into regional states, to arrive at the influence on the peninsula made by the monarchical states of Europe of that time.

During the same period, Guicciardini also wrote the *Relazioni di Spagna* ("The Relationships of Spain") and *Il Diario di Spagna* ("The Diary of Spain"), and started the first draft of the *Ricordi* ("Memories"). His political thinking is exposed in *Ricordi – "Memories"*[2] and he is the author of a skeptical and disenchanted vision on politics and on the human ability to manipulate reality. "The Memories" relates to various periods of Guicciardini's activity as diplomat and politician, taking its resources from this long and complex experience. Hence the character of the work (the title really means "things to remember" and then, by extension, "thoughts", "reflections"), that faces, with a bitter and disillusioned pessimism, more general problems. These reflections can provide a useful teaching but they don't have, however, absolute validity, because reality does not obey to universal laws, maintaining a changing and unpredictable course.

Between 1516 and 1527 Guicciardini worked for the papal curia, in the service of the Medici popes: Leo X, afterwards Clement VII. In this period, he writes *Dialogo del reggimento di Firenze* ("The Dialogue of the Regiment of Florence") - 1521-1526, in two books. This is his only political-theoretical treaty. The work is a dialogical treaty, under the form of two days of discussion, a few weeks after the expulsion of Piero de' Medici from Florence, among people of different political views: Bernardo del Nero, a partisan of the Medici, Piero Capponi, aristocratic, Paolantonio Soderini, a partisan of the people, Piero

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2. Marin Vătafu, "Antoniade, Trei Figuri Din Cinquecento," in *Gând Românesc*, Cluj, IV, no. 3-4 (1936): 236.

Guicciardini, father of the writer, moderator. It is a general reflection on the state and on human nature. The author imagined a discussion held in Florence in 1494, after the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent. The interlocutors are the writer's father, Piero, Paolantonio Soderini and Piero Capponi, all Republicans, to whom Bernardo del Nero - who was linked to the Medici party - opposes. The latter, starting from a careful analysis of the facts and not from any preconceived ideas, demonstrated to the three of them how illusory their republican faith is.

Guicciardini wanted for Florence a "mixed" government, on the oligarchic - Venetian example, which is superior to the defects of the *signoria* and of the republican regime. It comprised two magistrates formed by representatives of the wealthiest and most illustrious families, being headed by a *gonfaloniere*[3] appointed for life. The aristocracy that Guicciardini had defended was that class of magnates, clever and intelligent people, who had been able to take control of the trade and industry, in alliance with the new mercantile and financial bourgeoisie. For him this was the only class to be skilled in the art of governing, both at the political-administrative and military levels. Guicciardini is a political conservative, looking with suspicion and distrust at the popular movements (e.g., Il Tumulto dei Ciompi), at the absolutism of the prince and he considers as impossible the idea of a national state.

Guicciardini realized that it was absolutely necessary to evaluate the political interference. He admitted, however, the difficulty of restoring the Medici power in that times, offering an alternative to the democratic constitution of a mixed government, which provides a *gonfaloniere* for life, as we mentioned, a Grand Council for the election of the magistrates, a Senate for the preparation of the laws and for the discussion of the matters of major importance. He had the belief that in politics you cannot give absolute rules, general theories or systematic doctrines valid at any time and any place. Forced to privacy for having served the Medici family, Guicciardini wrote three orations in his defense: *Consolatoria, Accusatoria, Defensoria.*

He composed in 1529 *Considerazioni intorno ai "Discorsi" di Machiavelli sulla prima Deca di Tito Livio* - "Considerations on Machiavelli's *Discourses* on the first decade of Titus Livius". Through a precise and rigorous analysis on the work of Machiavelli, Guicciardini tries to show that his reasoning, apparently so tight and convincing, is actually unfounded and arbitrary. The resulting worldview is so entirely relative and fragmentary, without being able to re-compound in the totality of a theoretical system capable to provide concrete and indisputable criteria. In "Considerations on the Discourses of Machiavelli", Guicciardini contested the fact that the national unification is a better goal, preferred to the balance between the various existing political entities, and sustained the fact that the autonomous development of the various cities and *signorie*, besides being the

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3. The battle standard-bearers of the Italian republics.

source of the economic well-being, corresponded better to the ancient customs of the Italians.

The *Considerations on the Discourses of Machiavelli* are the conclusion of Guicciardini's political meditation: to the deep love for the "rules" of Machiavelli, Guicciardini contraposed his empiricism, his refusal to attribute to ancient Rome a valid model for the actual reality.[4]

His main concern was to preserve the old municipal and corporative institutions. *I Ricordi politici e civili - "The Civil and Political Memories"* are more than 400 political and moral thoughts, of varying length, written between 1525 and 1530, intended to be read by family members and descendants (published, like many of his other works, only during the half of the Nineteenth century). In the *Civil and political memories - Ricordi civili e politici* he portrays the truest image of the society of the XVIth century, which is one fine, wise, that dazzled the world with the artistic works of universal genius, but without any faith in the state.[5]

Guicciardini emphasized the renascentist principle of the autonomy of the politics, totally separated from religion and morals; he claimed that history is man's product, and not of the providence, even if luck has an important place in people's lives. The persons who make history are those who have intelligence, strength, cunning, skill, authority. The historical events are indecipherable if referring to a predefined theoretical framework with which we would like to interpret them. In history, the exceptions, the fortuitous circumstances, the details, the necessary "distinguo" make impossible a general or global comprehension of reality. Facts must be understood in their particular circumstances, in each particular case.

The result of the collapse of each political illusion and of a forced renunciation of the political activism, *The Memories* reveal in front of the reality the disenchanted sight of the moralist. It is no coincidence that in those times when story might appeal to certain eternal principles of psychology and human behavior, the same themes and words of Memories will return.[6] *"Ricordi"* ("Memories") is a large collection of scattered thoughts and notes, collected by Guicciardini. Moral and political recommendations are mixed in a work that lacks the systematic nature of the *Storia d'Italia* ("History of Italy"). Some of the main topics in "Memories" are: the discretion and the ingratitude (man cannot control the events, so it is impossible to give universally valid recommendations for action, to dictate general and absolutes principles). You just have to take things by each one, case by case, in their infinite nuances. The hundreds of memories provide, through the

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4. Valentina Lepri and Maria Elena Severini, *Viaggio e metamorfosi di un testo: I "Ricordi" di Francesco Guicciardini tra XVI e XVII secolo* (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 2011), 26.

5. Enrico Zanoni, *La mente di Francesco Guicciardini nelle opere politiche e storiche* (Firenze: G. Barbera Editore, 1987), 11.

6. Emilio Pasquini, *Introduzione ai Ricordi di Francesco Guicciardini* (Milano: Garzanti Editore, 2003), 16-17.

short and incisive form of the aphorism, suggestions for an attentive and efficient action; they valorize the practical and operational dimension of it and represent one of the first attempts at secularization of the political discourse.[7]

The memories were written after the retreat from the political life and all his long efforts appeared to him in the bitter light of the vanity and failure. At the end of this thought, the prevailing pessimistic tone fades into the background: the desire for honor and glory appears as an essential necessity of the human soul.

On the Relationship with Machiavelli's Thought

Guicciardini considered Machiavelli to be a "utopian" rather than a "realistic". On the theoretical side, the comparison with the positions of Machiavelli is conducted primarily in *Considerazioni intorno ai Discorsi del Machiavelli sulla prima deca di Tito Livio* Considerations on Machiavelli's Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius, written around 1529 in two books, and unfinished. They are reflections through which Guicciardini analyzes some statements or particular theoretical nuclei of Machiavelli, criticizes and deconstructs the thought of Machiavelli rather than to advance some alternative proposals or to build a different conceptual system.

Despite the common secular view, based on the "verità effettuale" ("actual reality"), Guicciardini remained anchored to an absolute and radical empiricism: he believed only in the experience and in the need to judge each case, due to the fact that each event or historical phenomenon is unique and unrepeatable and it cannot be analyzed starting from abstract and universal categories.

Although aware of the limit opposed by Fortuna to the human activity, however, Machiavelli believed in history as a rational and human construction and finds within the virtue the basis and the legitimacy of the freedoms of man and of his active and energetic capacity to build and modify the history according to his purposes and plans.

The meditation of Guicciardini began, however, from the bitter recognition of the incapacity of the individual to succeed in changing the course of the events and in reducing them to rational schemes. There is in him the consciousness of an extreme complexity and irrationality of the reality that cannot be exhausted by any formula. Therefore, it is useless to expect to establish general rules of action, because an unpredictable reality disturbs the patterns in which we would like to force it. To the *virtue* of Machiavelli, he shall therefore replace *la discrezione* (the "discretion"), which is the ability to analyze and understand the single facts in their infinite nuances, in order to insert their action in their tumultuous course,

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7. Lepri and Severini, *Viaggio e metamorfosi di un testo: I "Ricordi" di Francesco Guicciardini tra XVI e XVII secolo*, 2011, 34.

without being overwhelmed, while preserving its own "particularness", that is its own interest, its goals and projects.

As Machiavelli, Guicciardini believed that man is a phenomenon of nature subjected to the fixed and immutable laws, but, unlike his great friend, he believes that humans are naturally inclined to good than to wrong and if in reality he does more often bad than good, this is due to the fact that the temptations are many and the human consciousness is weak; he also belied that just doing the evil, man can more easily and more often to achieve his gain. This self-interest, which Guicciardini called "particulare" ("particular"), is actually the latch that triggers all the human actions: it most often corresponds to the material wealth, to the power, but it can also become ennobled, corresponding to the interests of the State, to the glory, to the fame.

To realize the "particular", both in a political and in a domestic way, one cannot refer to the history and draw lessons from events already occurred to resolve the facts of the present, because throughout history the events are never repeated: even when a present circumstance seems to reflect an episode from the past history, in fact the situation is quite different, as different are the persons who have to deal with it.

But if history cannot give us universal laws of behavior, our personal experience can refine in us the "discretion". And man has to follow only his relationship with the contingent reality, because the interest in wanting supernatural and invisible things it is a vain and simple mental exercise. And in respect of this consideration, he shared with Machiavelli the need to look after the "verità effettuale" ("real truth"). To the contemporary Italian situation he gave a different assessment: it was not possible for him to make from Italy at that time a unitary state, and opted instead for a confederation of small states, possibly under the form of a republic but still governed by "savi" ("wise men"). He was opposed to the temporal power of the popes (although he used it for his personal gain) and shared with Machiavelli the desire to see Italy freed from foreigners.

Significant in this regard is the following thought from Guicciardini: "I would like to see two things before I die; but I doubt that I would see it, even that I lived a lot: a life of well-ordered republic in our city, Italy liberated from all barbarians and of the tyranny of these popes."

It is no accidentally that Guicciardini made a remarkable political career. But who has been more "awarded" by the story? Which of them two could benefit from a greater historical realization of his own deals? Can we say that Guicciardini was more "realistic" than Machiavelli when he thought when Italy could oppose, only with the resources of the papacy or of a provisional league formed by the greatest Italian states, to the power of nations such as Spain or France? Was he more realistic than Machiavelli when he rejected the idea of building a non-mercenary army?

The policy of Guicciardini has been more successful than that of Machiavelli, but we cannot say that it has had more reasons.

Before of the foreign invasions, the deliberations come first. Some decisions were not taken inside the peninsula, but at the courts of Madrid or Paris. Hence, the need to send right and able ambassadors at the foreign courts in order to learn to use a wise policy, to induce the sovereign to the wishes and views of the policies of governments they represented. Thus, in various centers of the peninsula, the loss or the preservation of the own independence, the calamities or gains that derived from the wars of Italy, depended on the ability of the ambassadors. Guicciardini outlined the specific conditions of the European powers, and calculates the hopes or the fears that they can get from them.[8]

The virtue that the politician must possess, for this purpose, is the discretion, which is the ability to discern with insight and based on experience, the individual events (therefore, the analysis prevails on the synthesis). In this sense, Guicciardini opposed Machiavelli; he did not accept the constant reminder of the ancients (because he thinks that past cannot help us to live the present, due to the fact that it isn't a logical sequence of historical facts), nor he appreciates the extraction of the universal laws from history. Facts cannot be traced within a unitary vision, nor can somebody pass from the particular to the general: future remains unpredictable. Hence the strong intellectual pessimism of Guicciardini, which is also manifested on the conception of man: in his opinion, human nature is fundamentally inclined to evil, at least in the moment in which someone accepts to live in society.

To this idealistic politics of Machiavelli, Guicciardini opposed a policy that he called "realistic" but that would be better described as "opportunistic"; the policy of that diplomat, who is expert in the art of negotiating and advising, very attentive to his own "particulare", that is, to his own dignity, reputation and political career. For "particulare" we must not understand the material gain.

Guicciardini divided the ambition into negative and positive. It is negative when the person who uses it in order to realize his own projects, does not scruple to trample on the basic human values (conscience, honor, humanity).

La fortuna (the luck): Guicciardini said, unlike Machiavelli, that a ruler could ascend the throne only by having *la fortuna* ("the luck") in his favor. *La fortuna* is so much more important than the virtues of each person.

The man in the social-political relationships must be able to know that: the dissimulation and the lie can serve as a useful tool to achieve their own goals. Guicciardini affirms, unlike Machiavelli, that a ruler could ascend the throne only by having the luck (*la fortuna*) in his favor. *La fortuna* (the luck) is so much more important than the virtue.

Some other Guicciardini's thoughts on the being and the appearing: the family should know how to educate their child and give him a good moral education. On the "various natures of men" Guicciardini warned on the extreme complexity of the real and on man's inability to fully control it, to impress to it the

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8. Zanoni, *La mente di Francesco Guicciardini nelle opere politiche e storiche,* 1897, 40.

seal of his rationality, and he also warns on the extreme precariousness of our lives. Guicciardini's analysis is not limited to the field of politics, but it covers the whole human aspects.

Having abandoned all that was absolute, Guicciardini detached himself from ideality and watched the corrupted society, but within which there still remained many good things. He researched the depths of the human heart, he studied all the social classes, he examined the various forms of government, and he expressed his opinion on each one, on its virtues and defects, trying to adapt them to the republic of Florence.[9]

During the sixteenth-century, Italy - as she enjoyed the triumphant splendor of the arts and philosophy and the prosperity of many cultural centers that gave birth to artists and thinkers - is attacked by the French, Germans and Swiss who want to destroy its independence. A century earlier, in the fifteenth century, the popes and the Medici family strove to end the wars, to seal treaties, to organize new leagues to maintain the balance between the Italian states. During the sixteenth century, however, each state of the peninsula searches in the confederations only its particular interest. The supreme goal of the political science in all nations is that to form the strong and independent states and to establish, with a sure criterion, the political rights of the citizens to safety and preservation of free institutions: the necessity, therefore, of the political thinker, to ponder and be precise the functions of the government and the powers of the citizens under the idea that besides the rights there are also the duties.

He noticed that the continuous changing of forms of government of Florence had diminished its prestige and studied the duties of the citizens, the fact that each class had to have its place within the social hierarchy and the limits that a well-ordered constitution had to offer to the governors and to the governed ones. According to him, the selfish and ambitious aristocracy tends to restrict the State, to exploit it only in its benefit, expelling the people from any participation in the government.[10]

The best government is the one, according to Guicciardini, that respects the republican appearances, as Augustus in Rome, and Lorenzo de' Medici did in Florence. Adding the minds to the virtues and to all the peculiar vices of each of the forms of government, there was the need to seek for a form that would satisfy and harmonize all the interests, to calm all the passions, to make the citizens content and happy in the enjoyment of a fair and safe freedom, away from the dangers that could come from the outside of the form of state.

Within the medieval form of states, freedom was frequently confused with the possession of power and with the proscription of the opposite party. There was not yet developed the sense of civic duty that would, in his turn, be the legal and practical basis of freedom.

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9. Ibid, 10.
10. Ibid, 19.

Conclusion

Guicciardini fed the feeling of nationality and the aspiration to the independence of Italy. In his works he showed the painful efforts of the princes and heads of republics, dragged in continuous wars, trying to defend, to confederate, to seek help in various foreign powers in order to save themselves from the oppression of the rulers. His genius, intuitive and painfully prophetic probably discerned the events from the things, he pronounced safe judgments, and he recommends possible remedies to save the nation. He is always serene in the examination of the facts, but reveals his fears and his love for Italy, which would like free by the Spanish with the help of the French.

In his vast collection of letters there is engraved the cry of sorrow for the misfortunes that plagued the Italian states and the bitterness against the ferocity of the invaders and against the princes, captains, soldiers, unable to face the fortune and win it. His writings form one of the greatest and wise documents on the Italian states situation in the sixteenth century, serving to illuminate an entire epoch. There is a sense of nostalgia in Guicciardini for the noble and pure people; he is a powerful Florentine genius, a natural product of the times, deep, skeptical, practical and brilliant, expressing his deep observations with an elegant style.

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Appendix 1

LA HISTORIA
D'ITALIA
DI M. FRANCESCO GVICCIARDINI
GENTIL'HVOMO FIORENTINO.
Divisa in Venti Libri.
Riscontrata con tutti gli altri Historici, & Auttori, che del-
l'istesse cose habbiano scritto, per
THOMASO PORCACCHI
DA CASTIGLIONE ARRETINO.

IN VINEGIA, PRESSO GIORGIO ANGELIERI.
M. D. LXXXIII.

Stratification and Role of the Elite Muslim Women in the State of Awadh, 1742-1857

*By Naumana Kiran**

This paper focuses on stratification and role of the elite Muslim women in the State of Awadh during the second-half of the eighteenth, and first-half of nineteenth century India. It evaluates the categorization of women associated with the court and the division of political and domestic power among them. It also seeks their economic resources and their contribution in fields of art and architecture. The study finds that the first category of royal women of Awadh, including queen mothers and chief wives, enjoyed a powerful position in the state-matters unlike many other states of the time in India. Besides a high cadre of royal ladies, three more cadres of royal women existed in Awadh's court with multiple ratios of power and economic resources. Elite women's input and backing to various genres of art, language and culture resulted in growth of Urdu poetry, prose, drama and music in addition to religious architecture. The paper has been produced on the basis of primary and secondary sources. It includes the historical accounts, written by contemporary historians as well as cultural writings, produced by poets and literary figures of the time, besides letters and other writings of the rulers of Awadh. The writings produced by the British travelers, used in this paper, have further provided an insightful picture and a distinctive perspective.

Introduction

The study of Muslim women of Awadh, like women of all other areas of India during the 18th and 19th centuries, is a marginalized theme of study in historiography of India. It never meant that women were inactive or not performing well on national, state or other levels. They had been doing an excellent job in many echelons and the need is to investigate their services and role in politics and other fields of life. This paper is an attempt to find out stratification of Awadh's Muslim women associated with the court specifically. It seeks to discover what role they were playing in politics in the state of Awadh: directly or indirectly? What was their contribution in the fields of art, architecture and literature, and what role had they played in the War of Independence against the British East India Company (BEIC)? This paper negates the idea of Knighten, author of *The Eastern King,* that the royal ladies regarded men as a superior order of being, listened to their views as the child listen to those of his parents, adopted their views, and embraced their opinions with unhesitating confidence that bespeaks child-like simplicity and implicit faith.[1] This paper finds that all Royal women of Awadh were not dependent on the males, and many of them were not

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1. Muhammad Taqi Ahmad, *Tarikh Badshah Begam* (Allahabad: K. Mitra, 1938), iii.

only independent in their own decisions, but also guided the male counterparts of the royal family; even the Kings and Nawabs. In some cases, they proved to be more sensible and prudent than the Nawabs and Kings. There were many high-spirited royal ladies, who were exceedingly ambitious and self-willed including Sadr un Nisa Begum, Bahu Begum, Badshah Begum, Kishwar Sultana and Hazarat Mahal, and others.[2] The elite women of Awadh were equally literate and had interest in cultural activities.

Awadh, known as Avadh, Oude or Oudh, is located in the north-eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, which is the heart of the Indo-Gangetic plain. The origin of its name is traced back to Ayodhya,[3] the capital of the ancient kingdom of Kosala.[4] Muslims occupied the region in the twelfth century and it became part of the Mughal Empire in the 16th century A.D. The majority of the population of the region was Hindu and Muslims always remained in the minority,[5] even until the annexation of the state by BEIC. The state of Awadh was established by Mir Muhammad Amin, an Iranian Shia. He was appointed as governor of Awadh on 15 September 1722 by the Mughal emperor, where he established an independent dynasty gradually, under Mughal sovereignty and adopted the title of Sada'at Khan Bahadur. He established the capital of his state in Faizabad,[6] but later the capital was shifted to Lucknow[7] in 1775. Nawab Sada'at was succeeded by his nephew and son-in-law Mirza Muhammad Muqeem, entitled as Safdar Jang, in 1740. Shuja-ad-Daulah succeeded Safdar Jang in 1754. Asif ud Daula took over in January 1775 and ruled until September 1797.[8] Wazir Ali could rule for only a year and was replaced by Sa'adat Ali Khan, who was recognized by the BEIC also.[9]

Early Nawabs of the state were capable rulers and resisted against BEIC. However, the last five rulers of the Dynasty including Ghazi al-Din Hydar (r. 1814-1827), Naseer al-Din Hydar (r. 1827-1837), Mohammad Ali Shah (1837-1842),

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2. The detailed discussion on all these women will follow at appropriate places in the paper.

3. Kosala was an ancient kingdom, covering area of the modern state of Awadh, in the late Vedic period.

4. Maulana Mohammad Najam ul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh Vol. 1* (Udipur: np, 1910), 33-34; Munshi Ram Sahai, *Ahsan-ut Tawareekh: Tarikh-i- Subah Oudh* (np: Munshi Puran Chand, n.d.), 7.

5. Veena Talwar Oldenburg, *The Making of Colonial Lucknow* (Delhi: OUP, 1989), 263; Ashirbadi Lal Srivastava, *The First Two Nawabs of Oudh* (Lucknow: The Upper India Publishing House Ltd, 1933), 263.

6. Faizabad, known as Fyzabad during British colonial rule, was the first capital of the state of Awadh. It is situated on river bank of ghaghra (also known as Saryu river).

7. It is currently capital of the Indian State of Uttar Pradesh. It is located near Gomti river.

8. Maulana Mohammad Najam ul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh* (Udipur: np, 1910), 494.

9. W. H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* (Karachi: OUP, 1973 reprint), 473-474.

Amjad Ali Shah (1842-1847) and Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847-1856) were benevolent and humane, but were powerless due to 'increasing economic and political encroachment'[10] of the Company's officials. Finally, the Company annexed the State in 1856, whereas Wajid Ali Shah, the last ruler, was retired with a stipend. He lived in Calcutta and spent the last many years of his life there.[11] During the War of Independence of 1857, freedom fighters appointed one of the sons of Wajid Ali Shah, only 10 years old, under supervision of Hazrat Mahal, as King of Awadh and started a rebellion. That situation continued for almost seven months. The British forces diverted back to Awadh in 1858 and defeated the disorganized, disunited force of Awadh within two to three days.[12]

Stratification of Women Affiliated with the Court

The influential women, affiliated with the Court and the royal family, can be categorized into four sections. The most dynamic and vibrant section consisted of the Queen-mother, grand-mother and the Chief Wives of the Kings. This group was in a position of directly interfering with the state-affairs and ruled both directly and indirectly. Sadar un Nisa Begum, Bahu Begum, Badshah Begum, Kishwar Sultana and Hazarat Mahal[13] are a few examples of the women making up this section.

The second category of such women consisted of the most favourite courtesans of not only Kings but also of the prime Minister or Ministers, in some cases. This group's emergence in the state of Awadh was observed since the days of Shuja ud Daula, and in many instances, they had influenced the state's affairs indirectly. Jalalu, Surfraz Mahal and Beeba Jan[14] are a few representatives of this segment of women.

There was another less powerful but active or radical category of royal women; the sisters of the kings or some daughters of the Nawabs. They had altogether negated the institution of marriage and preferred to spend lives alone. They were prone to be dependent on males and wanted to live as they liked. They adopted unusual methods to convince the Kings to increase their monthly stipends. Daughters of Nawab Shuja ud Daula are major representatives of this section of royal women. They initiated women activism in the society of Awadh

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10. Nawab Husayn Ali Khan, "Tarikh-i-Husayniyyah," in *Perspectives on Mughal India: Rulers, Historians, Ulama and Sufis,* edited by Sajida Sultana Alvi (Karachi: OUP, 2012), 78.

11. Mohammad Baqir (Ed.), *Tarikh-i-Mumtaz* (Lahore: Urdu Markaz, n.d.), 3-4. He wrote many letters to his wife from there in which he had written about his hardships.

12. Abdul Haleem Sharar, *Hindustan Mein Mashriqi Tamadun Ka Akhri Namoona* (Lahore: Merkantil Press, n.d.), 58-60.

13. The detailed account of all these women has been given in the following pages.

14. The details of all these women have been given in the following pages.

for the rights of women. This section of royal women included less influential or common wives of the Nawabs or Kings also.

The fourth category of women whose rise was observed only during the last years of the state was of employees of the royal household, especially of kitchen and the affiliated departments. Some of them were Barati Khanum, Jugna Khanum and Naurozi Begum.

Politics and the Muslim Women

Generally, the perception had been developed by orientalists that Muslim women of the Indo-Pak sub-continent were confined to four boundaries and restricted to purdah which was a hindrance to the way of their political and social activism. But the royal women of Awadh in the 18th and 19th centuries, representing multiple groups had proved this kind of assessment wrong. All four categories of royal women of Awadh were performing active, and even more dynamic role than males, but with a diverse ratio of power and wisdom. Most of the royal women observed purdah, but it was their strength, not weakness.

Prominent Begums of Awadh

The most dominant part in politics of the State was played by powerful begums of the royal family. Nawab Begum Sadar un Nisa— the imperious daughter of one Nawab (Sada'at Khan Bahadur), wife of another (Safdar Jang), mother of the third (Nawab Shuja-ad-Daulah) and grandmother of the fourth (Asif ud Daula)—was the first conspicuous lady of the Muslim royal family of Awadh. She was talented, wise, illustrious, chaste and a virtuous lady.[15] She was the single wife of Safdar Jang, the second Nawab of Awadh, unlike common custom of that period among the ruling families. Safdar Jang had great affection for her.[16] Begum Sadar un Nisa accompanied her husband to deal with the rebellious faction when horror and disorder spread in Awadh after the death of Sada'at Khan Bahadur,[17] the first Nawab of the State. Being the daughter of the first Nawab, her companionship to her husband in dealing with the opponents proved to be fruitful, and peace was restored with the great haste. She encouraged, and even counseled, Safdar Jang to deal with the issues in that time of crisis.[18] In September 1750, Safdar Jang faced a defeat against *Pathans*.[19] The

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15. Ashirbadi Lal Srivastava, *The First Two Nawabs of Oudh* (Lucknow: The Upper India Publishing House ltd, 1933), 83.

16. Ibid, 253.

17. Sa'adat Khan did not have any son so the state was inherited to his eldest son in law.

18. Tarikh-i-Farah Bakhsh cited in Srivastva, *The First Two Nawabs of Awadh*, 93.

news spread like wild fire that Safdar Jang had been killed while fighting. The conspirators raised Imtiaz ud Daula, a courtier, to be seated on the throne of Awadh. Begum Sadar un Nisa kept her senses in control and raised an army of 10,000 soldiers; she appointed her son as commander of the forces and supervised the force to defend the city of Faizabad. The opposition forces were muzzled for the time being which waited for the confirmation of the news of Safdar Jang's death.[20] Safdar Jang returned back safely after few days. Begum Sadar un Nisa's wisdom and quick action saved the state from bloodshed and rebellion.

Safdar Jang was again in trouble and had to fight in the second Afghan War. He was facing finance problems. At that time, his wife came up with the whole of her property including Rs. 1,10,000 and 4,000 gold coins. With that, he recollected himself, gathered his forces and successfully fought the war.[21] Begum Sadar un Nisa remained a source of not only encouragement and support, but also had come up with the material help and accompanied her husband physically and practically in restoring order, dealing with the enemies and in successfully catering with the rebellious faction in case of absence of the Nawab from the capital. These traits present her as equal partner or key player of state-making and building.

Begum Sadar un Nisa remained effective and helpful during Shuja ud Daula's period also. She helped her son in many difficult times. On the issue of a Rajput girl who was kidnapped by the orders of Shuja ud Daula, the third ruler of Awadh and son of Sadr un Nisa; a misunderstanding had been created between Hindu and Muslim nobility. Some of the King's relatives including Muhammad Quli khan and Mughal courtiers wanted to dismiss Shuja ud Daula. At that occasion, Begum Sadar un Nisa called Ram Narain, a closest Rajput associate of Safdar Jang and reminded him of all the favours done by Nawab Safdar Jang towards him. She solicited him to be polite and patient towards Shuja ud Daula. She advised him not to overreact on a minor issue of a common Hindu family and to instead be supportive to Shuja ud Daula. As a result, he requested the Queen-mother to call Ismail Baig and *sardars* (leaders) of Mughals to issue the same advice. She called, talked to them and convinced them. They deferred their campaign of Shuja ud Daula's dismissal, only then.[22] On the death-bed of Shuja ud Doula, his mother came and issued three pieces of advice to him on the basis of her long experience. She emphasized that he should release *Pathans* and fix stipends for their livelihood; to release stipend of inhabitants of occupied areas;

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19. Pathans are an ethnic group, mostly settled in North Western region of Pakistan but are scattered in the whole of Indo-Pak Subcontinent region. They are popular since ages as fierce fighters.

20. Ibid, 163.

21. Ibid, 175.

22. Syed Kamal ud Din Hyder, *Swanehayat-Salateen Awadh* (Lucknow: Valashkor, 1879), 51-52.

and to give reasonable freedom to the people of Faizabad in their daily movement. However, he did not listen to the advice of the Queen-mother.

Begums of Awadh had decision-making power in their hands with regard to the appointment of the next Nawab, after the death of the one. Begum Sadar un Nisa had to take Bahu Begum, the chief wife of Shuja ud Daula in her confidence, while appointing the next Nawab after death of Shuja ud Daula. She advised Bahu Begum at the time of Asif ud Daula's accession that Asif ud Daula was not a serious administrator and was involved in deleterious activities, so he should be appointed on the throne just as a formality and that actual administration should be given to Saadat Ali khan, another son of Shuja ud Daula. Bahu Begum refused, while saying that she had only one son, whether good or bad, she would not be in favour of giving power to any other son of Shujah. Grandmother was highly disappointed, but agreed.[23]

The grandmother, on the second day of appointment of Asif ud Daula, imparted some advice to him. Begum Sadar un Nisa said while advising the new Nawab, that he should work with seasoned administrators and military generals including Eluch Khan, Raja Soorat Singh and Raja Butar Chund, who had been trusted fellows of his father and grandfather. She asked him to work according to the advice of these ministers, but Asif ud Daula was not ready to listen to his grandmother, so sidelined the above ministers.[24] Grandmother continued her efforts to keep the state of Awadh on track through her advice to Asif ud Daula in the future also.

In the period of Asif ud Daula, another royal lady besides Sadar un Nisa emerged as a powerful figure in the court. She was Bahu Begum (Aliya Begum), mother of Asif ud Daula, sister of Najam ud Daula,[25] daughter of Motam ud Daula (governor of Gujrat) and foster child of King Muhammad Shah. She was Chief wife of Shuja ud Daula and was given high respect and esteem by royal family of Awadh due to her respectable lineage.[26] Bahu Begum was given the charge of overseeing the whole treasury during the life of Shuja ud Daula because she had proved herself as the most trustworthy individual. She had given the whole of her wealth to her husband at the time of his treaty with the British in 1764. Besides government treasury, she was owner of a lot of *Jagirs* (land grants or estates) and utilized profit, earned from her agricultural land, for her personal benefits. She wanted to rule the state of Awadh through her son, and practically behaved like a ruler during the initial months, but Asif ud Daula resisted.[27] Asif ud Daula was extravagant and started teasing his mother only a few days after

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23. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh* (Udipur: np, 1910), 6-7.

24. Ibid, 18.

25. He was the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from 1765 to 1766 and was the second son of Mir Jafar.

26. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 30-31.

27. Karen Chancey, "Rethinking the Reign of Asaf ud Daula, Nawab of Awadh, 1775-1797," *Journal of Asian History* 41, no. 1 (2007): 15.

his father's death for money again and again. He wanted to go for entertainment with a big troop. His mother had to give him money, very reluctantly, in two installments i.e. Rs. 60,000 and Rs. 40,000. That was the start of the rift between the mother and the son. She advised him not to be too profligate.[28] Shuja ud Daula had left the whole property to his mother and wife, not to the son, before his death.[29] The conflict between the Begums, especially the mother and the son, had reached to such a level that he was reluctant to live in the same city with his mother. He finally left Faizabad and settled in Lucknow, while upgrading its status as the capital.[30]

Bahu Begum had appointed her forces in the territory under her control and replied all moves of the King Asif ud Daula wisely and tactfully. On listening to the rumor that Asif ud Daula wanted to annex her *jagirs*, she wrote a letter to the British Resident and asked him for help, but he did not take any action at that time.[31] A small force of Nawab interfered in Begum's villages but that was dealt with dexterously by the forces of the Begum. Unfortunately, the *jagirs* of Bahu Begum had been annexed by Asif ud Daula in 1196 hijra. He himself came to Faizabad with his forces. Bahu Begum shifted to the palace of her mother-in-law, Sadar un Nisa Begum. On second stage, the *jagirs* of grandmother were also occupied by the state.[32] Bahu Begum wrote a letter to his son and another to the British authorities, abashing his son on his very cruel act against his grandmother and her dependents. Finally, the *jagirs* were restored with the order of the British resident as that act of Asif ud Daula had been rejected by the British authorities in London.[33] Later, Bahu Begum ruled in her vast *jagir* as a powerful ruler, without interference from the Nawab of Awadh.

Wazir Ali Khan, the disputed son of Asif ud Daula, ascended to the throne with the approval of Bahu Begum and the Company after his death, but controversy started and a wide-spread opposition was generated due to his behavior, aggressive policies and low birth rates.[34] The British authorities also developed robust feelings against Wazir Ali Khan because he was highly anti-British in his behavior and policies. Begum supported him just to have a hand in the administration of the state. She, on observing large scale opposition,

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28. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 29-30.

29. Julie Stone Peters, "Theatricality, Legalism and the Scenography of Sufferings: The Trial of Warren Hastings and Richard Brinsley Sheridan Pizarro," *Law and Literature* 18, no. 1 (2006): 21.

30. Abdul Haleem Sharar, *The Lucknow: The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture* (New Delhi: OUP, 2001); *The Omnibus Addition*, 45.

31. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 170-171.

32. Ibid, 228.

33. Farah Bakhsh, in Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 226.

34. Michal H. Fisher, "Political Marriage Alliances at the Shi'i Courte of Awadh," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 25, no. 4 (1983): 603.

withdrew her support.[35] The dismissal of Wazir Ali Khan in 1797 was the unanimous decision of the Begums as well as of the nobility.[36] The Resident and Bahu Begum wanted to replace him with another son of Nawab Shuja ud Daula, and step son of Bahu Begum, Saadat Ali Khan. He was living in Banaras at that time. He was brought back from Banaras and ascended on the throne with the help of the British resident, who held *darbar* for a congregation ceremony.[37] Bahu Begum was instrumental in the whole process of this unnatural shift of power.

Bahu Begum was on good terms with the British resident. She was such a forceful character that the British resident wrote a letter to her and asked about her opinion about Sa'adat before his nomination as the King of Awadh. She further requested that the resident restore her remaining property which was occupied by her son, Asif ud Daula. In addition to it, she requested to begin the process of paying monthly salaries to all royal ladies that was smooth, regular and on-time.[38] The ownership of the big *jagirs* was left with Bahu Begum and Sadr un Nisa until the end of their lives. The ladies preferred to live in Faizabad.[39] During Sa'adat's regime, Bahu Begum ruled in Faizabad and other areas of her *jagir* as a forceful and independent ruler.[40] Her forces and servants interfered in the administrative and judicial matters of the state of Awadh also. Nawab met with the governor general and informed him of the situation. The governor general ordered that Begum should not interfere in the matters of the state and that administration and justice should be ensured by Sa'adat's authority with the help of the British resident.[41] Bahu Begum had to agree but she did not appreciate the occasional interference of the government, and still most of the matters were handled by her employees under her supervision.

Bahu Begum died at the age of eighty six on 18th December 1815.[42] She appointed the Company as trustee of her property and through it, Ghaz iud Din, King of Awadh, was responsible to look after the affairs of her *jagir*. The administration of a lot of her factories, lands and business, etc. was in the hands of Bakhtawar Singh Brahmin, assistant of the resident and Munshi Hyder, and

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35. Purnendu Basu, *Oudh and the East India Company, 1785-1801* (Lucknow: Maxwell Company, 1943), 163.

36. Nawab Husayn Ali Khan, *Tarikh-i-Husayniyya* cited in Sajida Sultana Alvi, *Perspectives on Mughal India: Rulers, Historians, Ulema and Sufis* (Karachi: OUP, 2012), 77.

37. Sharar, *Lucknow: the Last Phase*, 49. For further details on this episode, see details in Sleeman, Chapter 4, volume II.

38. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 5.

39. Vil. III, 125.

40. Chancey, "Rethinking the Reign of Asaf ud Daula…," 15.

41. Hyder, *Swanehayat-Salateen*, 159.

42. S. N. Singh, *The Kingdom of Awadh: Its History, Polity and Administration* (New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 2003), 68.

trusted employee of the Begum.[43] Later, the profit of Bahu Begum's property was paid directly to the Company's treasury.[44]

With the death of Bahu Begum, another royal woman, Badshah Begum, the chief consort/wife of King Ghazi ud Din Hyder, emerged as a strong character. She was daughter of Munajjamul Mulk, a Rizvi Syed. The family migrated from Mash'hed and enjoyed high social status.[45] She, an educated and learned lady, had a very good training in theory and practice of science of astronomy. Ghazi ud Din Hyder, with the accession on the throne, entitled Badshah Begum as Bilkis us Sitwat. She was entrusted with the full powers inside the palace and to administer her newly granted *jagir*, pargana of Salan. She presented a *nazar* (gift) of Rs. 25000 to Ghazi ud Din in the coronation ceremony.[46] She was owner of a big *jagir* and recruited a number of soldiers and appointed them on her *jagir* and other areas under her authority.[47] She had been described as an 'illustrious lady" and "the most wonderful woman in the world"[48] by Capt. White, the author of *The Murdered King of Oudh.* Gazi ud Din Haider usually followed her advice.[49]

Unfortunately, conflicts developed between Ghazi ud Din and Badshah Begum due to malevolence of some ministers who disliked the influence of Begum on the king and her habit of dictation on the ministers. In Tarikh-i-Husayniyyah, it is mentioned that Aqa Meer was one of the ministers responsible for the unpleasant relationship between Ghazi ud Din and Badshah Begum.[50] According to another tradition, Mutama ud daula, the deputy to the king, created misunderstandings between the king and his chief wife. She wanted to make a nephew of her chief maid Faiz un Nisha, Fazal Ali, as deputy or Prime Minister, in the best interest of the state. Misunderstandings were settled for the time being with the involvement of the British resident. The King revived relations with his wife.[51]

Badshah Begum remained equally powerful during her son, Naseer ud Din Hyder's ruling period.[52] He listened and followed the orders and advice of the

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43. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 129-130.

44. Robert Wilberforce, *Dacoity in Excelsis or the Spoliation of Oude by the East India Company: Faithfully Recounted with Notes and Documentary Illustrations* (London: J. R. Taylor, 1954), 63.

45. Taqi, *Tarikh-i-Padshah Begam*, 3-4.

46. Michael H. Fisher, "The Imperial Coronation of 1829: Awadh, the British and the Mughal," *Modern Asian Studies* 19, no. 2 (1985): 264.

47. Taqi Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Padshah Begam*, 20.

48. Ibid, vii.

49. Ibid, 6.

50. Nawab Hussain Ali Khan, "*Tarikh-i-Husayniyyah*" in *Perspectives on Mughal India*, 80.

51. Taqi Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Padshah Begam*, 20

52. Naseer ud Din Hyder was step son of Badshah Begum but she brought up the child with extra care and love.

Queen-mother obediently.[53] However, conflicting relationships developed between both son and the queen mother. Naseer ud Din was addicted to alcohol and could not develop an interest in administrative affairs.[54] The gap was filled by Badshsash Begum who was there to direct the Ministers. She, on behalf of King Naseer ud Din, issued an order that the mourning period would continue until 20th Safer and that no celebration or marriage ceremony would be held in this period. Otherwise, the culprits would face wrath of the King. The decision was taken back with the interference of the Resident only.[55] The other reason of conflict between both of them was Qudsiya Mahal, one of the wives of Naseer-ud-Din. Badshash Begum disliked her and did not consider her a trustworthy and faithful lady. Qudsiya, finally, committed suicide and the king blamed Badshash Begum for it. He remained under grief for many days to come.[56] The conflicting relations between the mother and the son were transformed into rivalry due to the evil character of some ministers who did not want to work under the orders of the Begum. It reached its lowest ebb in April 1835 when royal forces attacked the palace of Badshash Begum. Begum and her forces resisted well and many of her male and female servants were killed while fighting. Begum and her remaining servants took refuge in *imam bara* (religious temple of Shias) constructed by her within the palace. Nawab Roshan-ud-Daula intervened and requested the King to let the Begum go to Almas Bagh.[57] Permission was granted and Begum, along with her servants, spent one night there without food and other necessities. Later, arrangements were made for her permanent stay and her remaining things were departed there with the orders of the King.[58] The sad episode had taken place due to malicious designs of selfish ministers who did not want to see power in the hands of a respectable woman. Meanwhile, in 1837, Naseer ud Din Hyder was poisoned and died.

Badshah Begum wanted appointment of her grandson, Munna Jan, as the new King. The name of Muna Jan's mother was Afzal Mahal.[59] She brought Munna Jan in *Barah Dari*, the throne room where a congregation ceremony was taking place whereas the British resident went there with Nasir u Doula Muhammad Ali Khan, son of Nawab Sa'adat Ali Khan for the said ceremony. The British Resident tried to stop Badshah Begum but she forcefully placed Munna Jan on the throne. Although the resident and his assistant presented a directive from the Governor General about Munna Jan's ineligibility to be seated as the king, yet the Begum continued with her orders. Some of her soldiers attacked the Assistant resident, also. Consequently, the Resident called its troops

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53. Taqi Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Padshah Begam, 17.*

54. Hyder, *Sawanehayat-Salateen*, 265.

55. Taqi Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Padshah Begam*, 14.

56. Hyder, *Sawanehayat- Salateen*, 329.

57. There were houses under state's authority, which were not in good condition.

58. Hyder, *Sawanehayat- Salateen*, 327.

59.Taqi Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Padshah Begam*, 89.

to attack the congregation function. Some people died of gunshots. Munna Jan tried to escape but he and the Begum were arrested. At the same time, Nasir ud Daula was installed on the throne with the title of Mohammad Ali Shah. Both Badshah Begum and Munna Jan were kept in Chunnar Gargh[60] with the monthly allowance of twenty four hundred from Lucknow royal treasury.[61]

A controversy had been created on the royal lineage of Munna Jan. The resident did not want the appointment of Munna Jan, so the British forces supported the other, whereas, Col. Sleeman, after twelve-years of the coup, supported Munna Jan's claim to be member of the royal family. He mentioned that Afzal Mahal was mother of Munna Jan. She was of humble birth and had a fair reputation among those who knew her. Badshah Begum, during the last days of her life in the prison, always declared that she had seen the birth of the boy i.e. Munna Jan. Later, she developed extraordinary affection for him. His deeds were remarkably like Naseer ud din and his facial features were also like him.[62]

Badshah Begum spent the last years of her life in the prison. Her active political career indicates that she was such a dynamic politician that she resisted and performed well while having conflicting relations with her husband Ghazi ud din Hyder and a son at such a time when both of them were in power. Her role was significant in the appointment of the Kings. She was the best example of resistance also, unlike many other royal figures, as she took a stand against BEIC and forcefully fought for that stand. She was stronger than many males of her time.

The next influential and active royal lady was Queen mother of Wajid Ali Shah, Janab Aliah Queen Kishwar. She was daughter of Nawab Hussain ud Din Khan or Imam ud Din. Her real name was Taj Ara and she was chief wife of King Amjad Ali Shah (ruling period 1842-1847) and mother of Wajid Ali Shah, the last ruler of the state of Awadh. It was she who finalized the terms of the last treaty between the State of Awadh and the Company. The Resident General Ottram had a meeting with Queen Kishwar at the *zard* palace before getting a signature on the new treaty from the King. She was astonished and requested the Resident to intercede for her son and avert the impending calamity.[63] The Resident regretfully said that he did not have that kind of right. Queen mother's request of a grace period for the improvement of the administration was also rejected by the Resident. The meeting with the mother was followed by the meeting with the

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60. They were most probably imprisoned in the historical Chunnar fort, which is currently located in Mirzapur District, UP, India. It had previously remained in the possession of Safdar Jang also. It was the same fort where Ranni Jindan, mother of Ranjeet Singh was imprisoned later.

61. Ibid, 80-89.

62. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* Karachi: OUP, 1973 reprint), 199.

63. G. D. Bhatnagar, *Awadh Under Wajid Ali Shah* (Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, 1965), 146.

King on 4 February 1856. The King was informed formally who was reluctant to sign the treaty and was in high grief. The Resident utilized the services of Queen mother again to get signatures on the treaty of annexation. He promised to arrange an annual stipend of one lakh rupees to the royal family in the name of Wajid Ali Shah, if she could manage to get signatures on the said treaty, which would be paid by the Company.[64] She played an instrumental role, and no doubt, there was no other practical option to be followed.

It was again Queen mother who led the royal troupe to England to file a petition against the 'shameful occupation'[65] of their kingdom by the BEIC in place of Wajid Ali Shah. Maseeh-ud-Din Alvi was lawyer and ambassador of the ex-King.[66] Queen mother led the case in the British parliament and the court with the argument that Awadh was an unresisting ally and it was annexed without reasonable cause.[67] They were hopeful of the decision in their favour, but selfish associates of Wajid Ali Shah convinced him to accept the offer of a high annual stipend from the Company in place of the state. He announced the withdrawal of the case from the court.[68] Queen Kishwar was so upset with the decision that she died in Paris on her way back to India. One very significant but unheeded contribution of Queen Kishwar was her strong stand against declaring her a 'British subject.'[69] She was asked by the British authorities in London to take a British passport, if she was interested to travel back to India via Mecca, but she rejected it altogether. She believed in her independent identity and was not ready to officially declare that Awadh was annexed.[70] This step of the Queen includes her name in the list of all those nationalists who resisted against the British occupation.

The last but not the least mighty character in the list of such royal ladies was Hazarat Mahal,[71] mother of Prince Birjis Qadar, one of the wives of Wajid Ali Shah.[72] She led the revolt in Lucknow. Birjis ascended the throne under supervision of her mother Hazarat Mahal. She was a brave leader and had a

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64. Ibid, 150-151.

65. Wilberforce, *Dacoity in Excelsis or the Spoliation of Oude*, iii.

66. Maseeh-ud-Din Alvi, *Safeer-e-Awadh* (Lucknow: Dar un Nazir Press, n.d.), 93.

67. Wilberforce, *Dacoity in Excelsis*, iv.

68. Ibid, 99.

69. Simran Vijan, "Malika Kishwar (1803-1858): The Queen Who Ventured beyond the Zenana," *Indian Women History* (Jan 2020).

70. Ibid.

71. She belonged to a very poor family of slaves and was sold to the palace as royal attendant in very young age. She, however, managed to reach to the position of King Wajid Ali Shah's wife and mother of a prince due to her wit, intelligence and beauty. For details please consult: livehistoryindia.com/herstory/2019/04/12/begum-hazrat-mahal-a-revolutionary-queen.

72. Munshi Ram Sahai, *Ahsan ut Tawareekh* (Lucknow: Tamanai Borum Chad, n.d.), 19; Hyder, *Sawanehayat*, 8.

practical, good sense of leading the force. She extended respect to the soldiers but was helpless to lead the forces directly due to prevailing *purdah* tradition.[73] She could rule for seven months only amid confusion and utter lawlessness. Her army was divided into many factions and all factions were fighting for their personal gains. A parallel court was also established under Ahmadullah, scholar-saint in Lucknow besides Hazarat Mahal.[74] It further divided Lucknow society and forces into Shia and Sunni factions. This new kingdom was disintegrated within only two or three days once the bombardment was started by the British forces.[75] Hazarat Mahal fled to Nepal with thousands of other fugitives. Only Hazarat Mahal and Birjis Qadar were given refuge by the state with a small amount of stipend.[76] Awadh was re-occupied by the British completely in January 1858.[77] Hazarat Mahal was one of the most prominent symbols of resistance among the list of royal women, who fought the game of 'do or die.' She led the resisting forces at the time when majority of the members of royal family including last King of Awadh were not in favour of fighting against the British. Her resistance was the longest against British usurpers among her contemporaries.[78] She did not make compromise with the prevailing circumstances and decided to rise in rebellion against the usurper.

This group of powerful royal women of Awadh had proven themselves as parallel partners of the state-machinery. On one side, Begum Sadar un Nisa, Bahu Begum and Queen Kishwar were fulfilling their duties of faithful associates of their counterparts in the game of politics and were successful in many cases. Then on the other side, Badshash Begum and Hazarat Mahal had tried to resist against the government and the BIEC. They were more courageous and audacious than many other male members of the royal family and had shown resistance in the difficult times.

Institution of Courtesans/Tawaif

The second cadre of influential women in Awadh can be named as courtesans, the most neglected section of women in the writings of history. This institution describes the life-style of Awadh. They were an influential female elite

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73. Elite women's confinement to the female circles and surroundings was the tradition of the elites especially of the royal women and it was considered disrespectful for the women of royal families to come in the public without a veil or even with veil. They could talk to the males other than of their blood relations from behind the curtains.

74. Farqui Anjum Taban, "The Coming of the Revolt in Awadh: the Evidence of Urdu Newspaper," *Social Scientist* 26, no. 1/4 (1998): 18.

75. Sharar, *The Last Days*, 67.

76. Ibid, 76.

77. Sahai, *Ahsan-ut-Tawareekh*, 99.

78. Michael H. Fisher, *The Multiple Meanings of 1857 for Indians in Britain*. Retrieved from: http://www.csas.ed.ac.uk/mutiny/confpapers/Fisher-Paper. [Accessed 9 June 2021.]

section of the society, not only in Awadh but also in all Hindu and Muslim courts of pre-colonial India.[79] They, like many other courts of medieval India, were concerted with the Royal court and courtiers. They had influence and association with the royal family, nobility, merchants, courtiers, etc. They were highly active in urban areas. They manipulated men and means for their own social and political ends.[80] They had deep influence on the male identity which was then distant away from the ideal of warriors of Mughal times.[81]

There was inner stratification of *tawaifs* also. This elite section was associated with the court or upper hierarchy. The other categories were *thakahi* and *randi.* They were ranked lower in stratification.[82] The influence of this section of women was observed for the first time in Awadh during the time of Nawab Shuja ud Daulah, who was slave to his sexual needs. He always kept a group of *tawaif* with the royal caravan in case of travelling or even during military campaigns or sometimes, such women were locally arranged. His death had happened due to a knife-wound on his upper-leg, which was given by a noble girl, who mistakenly had been kidnapped for sexual pleasure of the king. The knife was poisoned and Nawab Shujja got sick after that event.[83] The poison spread in his whole body and he died within few days. Nevertheless, the rise of courtesans had been started in the court of Awadh.

Nawab Asif ud Daula was kind towards dancing girls and gave heavy prizes to even common dancers.[84] Mukhtar ud Daula, Prime Minister of Asif-ud Daula, was involved extremely in love of a *tawaif*, perhaps Jalalu. She was a clever and highly cultured lady. Mukhtar did what that lady wanted. She actually ruled in place of Mukhtar ud Daula. Mukhtar, on instigation of Jalalu had created misunderstandings between the King and the Queen mother, and later, convinced Asif ud Daula to take a heavy amount of money from Bahu Begum. Mukhtar, after getting approval from the King, led the campaign to Faizabad for exploring money. There were only eunuchs in the palace. Begum was reluctant but she had to give Rs. six million through the British Resident. Later, the Begum developed hatred for her son and started favouring other sons of Shuja ud Daula.[85]

King Naseer ud Din Hyder lived so excessively in the company of such women that most of his styles had been transformed into womanish. He spoke

79. Lata Singh, "Visibility the 'Other' in History: Courtesans and the Revolt," *Economic and Political Weekly* 42, no. 19 (2007): 1678.

80. Veena Talwar Oldenburg, "Lifestyle as Resistance: The Case of the Courtesans of Lucknow," *Feminist Studies* 16, no. 2 (1990): 2.

81. Simonetta Casci, "Lucknow Nawabs: Architecture and Identity," *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no. 36 (2002): 3711.

82. S. N. Singh, *The Kingdom of Awadh: Its History, Polity and Administration* (New Delhi: A Mital Publication, 2003), 30-31.

83. Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 145.

84. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 26.

85. Ibid, 54-56.

like women, sang like women, behaved like women and even dressed like women. This, combined with his religious ardour, "made him influenced to perform practically, while celebrating birth ceremony of Imam to play role of a pregnant woman."[86] King would take a bath and went to the city in palanquin in rich female costume. In December 1849, the King divorced one of his courtesan wives, Surfraz Mahal, and sent her to Mecca for pilgrimage. She had been cohabiting with the chief singer, Gholam Reza, and with some other royal men, even with the ministers. The king was highly dejected on finding it true.[87] Moral degeneration was also part of the life of such wives.

The courtesans had become cause of sever conflicts among courtiers and respectable persons also. Two sons of Aga Meer, Minister of Ghazi ud Din Hyder, were kidnapped by Eesa Mian, a fake saint. He developed liaison with a dancing girl, Beeba Jan. The girl was not happy on furious attitude of Eesa Mian and took refuge with *Khasmahal,* the Chief consort of Aga Meer. He wanted the release of the girl. The issue was settled peacefully only with the involvement of the British Resident. Beeba Jan was released and in response to it, the two sons of the ministers were handed over to their parents.[88]

Overall, the courtesans were politically conscious and knew where to accept the commandments and where to reject and react. They were well connected with the local elites and had plenty of revenue since the 1780s.[89] They whole heartedly supported the War of Independence in 1857,[90] some of them even became part and parcel of the activities of the freedom-fighters. They were fearful of the shift of their position from high cadre courtesan to common prostitutes,[91] so decided in favour of the revolt. Although they were not a respectable class in moral terminology, their resistance had value. This group gained much power in the later period of the dynasty and at most of the occasions, this group of women interfered indirectly, through the royal men with whom they had illicit relationships.

Less Influential Royal Women

There was a large group of royal women who were less influential due to their position in the court, but this group was comparatively more active than the first two groups. This group included sisters, daughters, wives other than the chief wife and other relatives. Shuja ud Doula had twenty-five daughters; only one was married, Izzat un Nisa Begum. All others did not want to marry due to

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86. Sharar, *Lucknow: the Last Phase*, 57.

87. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections,* 46-47.

88. Ibid, 10-18.

89. Lata Singh, "The Visibilty of the 'Other'..", 1680.

90. Oldenburg, "Lifestyle as Resistance…", 3.

91. Kokila Dang, "Prostitution, Patron and the State: Nineteenth Century Awadh," *Social Scientist* 21, no. 9/11 (1993): 175.

their inability to obey their husbands. They spent their lives like liberal men. Initially, they were paid Rs. 70 per month. Later, Nawab Sada'at Ali Khan raised the stipend to Rs. 250 as a monthly salary. All of them were discontented of less salary. They got reactionary and attacked a government's bungalow in Pitch *Muhallah* (street) while closing Shaikhan door and doors of Hasan *Bhaagh* (garden). They looted everything from the house while claiming that it was their father's property. Nawab increased their monthly salary to Rs. 500 per head. They were still dissatisfied and reminded Nawab Sada'at that they were like him. Nawab's attitude was polite towards them. During Ghazi ud Din Hyder's period, three sisters, Anjumannisa, Zaibunnisa and Jeena Begum went to Lord Myre, in Benaras, with the petition of less salary. He extended respect to them and said that he will settle the matter on his visit to Lucknow. Ghaziuddin increased their monthly stipend to Rs.700 per person.[92]

Shams un Nisa Begum, wife of Asif ud Daula, daughter of Nawab Intizam ud Daula and granddaughter of Nawab Qamar ud Din, Prime Minister of Mughal emperor in Delhi court, was one of the less active royal ladies. She did not have any child and could not develop cordial relations with her husband. Asif ud Daula left her in Faizabad while leaving the city and settled a new capital in Lucknow.[93] She lived in Machli Bhawan and was given with the *jagir* of Partab Ganj and Nawab Ganj with Rs. 60000 annual income. In addition, Rs. 60 were fixed for her kitchen on daily basis. A small part of her *jagir* was taken over by the Nawab on which she got infuriated and went to live in her *jagir*. She could not revive relationship with her husband and died there after a few years.[94]

The royal ladies of this cadre were found to be involved in palace intrigues also. Queen mother Dowager, with the help of the King Amjad Ali Shah, used power against some wives of the King. The King was informed by the Queen mother, Dowager, that having a mark of 'Sampun" on the neck of any wife of the King could be harmful for his children. The King checked the mark with the help of the chief eunuch and discovered that eight of his wives had that mark. He immediately ordered them to leave the palace with all of their belongings and the ladies had to follow the orders.[95] Chief wife of Wajid Ali Shah, Azam Bahu, daughter of Nawab Ali Khan Bahadur was another less powerful lady. She was fed up of the many love-affairs of her husband. She tried to successfully cater with those girls but later, she had to make compromises.[96]

This third category of royal women had some very active ladies besides less active. Some of them did not make any compromises, but others had to. This group of royal women was mostly active in the palace conspiracies or was

92. Qaisar ut Tawarikh, in Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh,* 309-310.
93. Michael H. Fisher, "Political Marriage Alliances…," 603.
94. Hyder, *Sawanehayat-Salateen*, 81.
95. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections,* 107-108.
96. Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh Vol. V*., 55.

operating for their own financial benefits. Their share in political life of the state was less visible.

The Employees of the Royal Household

Some associated ladies like head cook, governess, etc. also got influence and power with some kings. Faiz un Nisha was the closest associate of Badshah Begum and the most trustworthy. She was foster mother of her son/heir apparent, Naseer ud Din. She even accompanied the Begum in many of her political and domestic designs including the murder of one of the wives of Ghazi ud Din i.e. Subh Daulat.[97] Mir Fazal Ali, nephew of the same Faiz un Nisha was appointed as *Naib* (Prime Minister) of Naseer ud Din in 1827 on advice of Badshah Begum.[98] She controlled the affairs of the State directly through Mir Fazal Ali. During Naseer ud Din's period, Barati Khanum (king called her duda) was in charge of the kitchen. King trusted her a lot; even some ministers also conveyed their wishes or requests to the King through her. The state affairs had reached the King through Barati Khanum. Two other ladies, Jugna Khanum and Naurozi Begum worked under Barati Khanum and were also very influential. This group of women was very rich and celebrated *taziya*[99] and other Shia rituals with great pomp and show.[100] Their influence reached to such a level that the Resident scolded Naseer ud Din and reminded him of the real status of the King. King thought that Naurizi Khanum had leaked out the news of the bad state of affairs so she was dismissed and sent out of the palace.[101]

It was unusual in the history of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent that female royal employees could enjoy this level of power and esteem, which they had earned in Awadh.

Literary, Architecture, and Cultural Activities

History of Awadh is unique in the sense of its cultural, literary and creative development. A lot of such works had been produced there which were exemplary.[102] Persian and Urdu both flourished, and the contribution of women was equally visible in this regard also. Bahu Begum patronized the men of

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97. Subh Daulat had given birth to the only male-child of Gazi ud Din i.e., Naseer ud Din Hyder.

98. Taqi, Tarikh-i-Badshah Begum, 5 and Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections,* 272.

99. Tazia is a Shia ritual in which a replica of Hazrat Imam Hussain's (grandson of Holy Prophet (PBUH)) tomb is taken in form of a procession.

100. Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh,* 337.

101. Ibid, 338.

102. Moeen ud Din Aqeel, *Janubi Asia Ki Tarikh Naweesi, Noeeyat, Rawaiyat and Mayar* (Lahore: Nashriyat, 2015), 83.

literature and historians also. Faiz Bakhsh Kakori, author of *Tarikh-i-Farah Bakhsh* was an employee in the *jagir* of Bahu Begum. His book covers the period of Shuja ud Daula, Asif ud Daula and Sada'at Ali Khan. He had written a lot of eye-witness accounts. His book *Shahma-i-Faiz* was an autobiographical work as well as historical. He had access to such facts and files, where common a historian could not reach because he was a trustworthy employee of Bahu Begum. His third work was a social history of Awadh. In another work, he had written about land lords, friends, relatives, etc. who lived in Lucknow, Faizabad and other areas.[103]

Aqleel Mahal, one of the wives of Wajid Ali Shah, was named as Mumtaz Mahal by the last King of Awadh, also had literary taste. She was granddaughter of Shuja ud Daula and had a son, Qira Hussain Mirza. She did not accompany Wajid Ali Shah to Calcutta and was left behind in Lucknow. Wajid Ali Shah wrote a series of letters to her and wished that all his letters be compiled in the form of a book. Being a faithful wife, she collected all of the letters and got it published in the form of a book with the title of *Tarikh-i-Mumtaz*.[104] The letters are of high literary taste and show a passionate relationship of husband and wife.

Women became directly the theme of poetry, produced in the state of Awadh, which was the first time in the history of the Muslim rule in India. Wajid Ali Shah had written such poetry in abundance in which he had mentioned his love affairs clearly with the indication of one or more women including courtesans, maids, passer-bys or others.[105] Nawab Mirza Shauq, "in his poems became the lover of beautiful veiled women and made his poetry the 'scourge of conventional morality.'[106] The language of his *masnavis*[107] was so beautiful, frank, pure and clean that even honorable and decent people could not abstain from reading and enjoying it. Wajid Ali Shah, on the contrary, had showed shamefully low taste and used obscene language.

The institution of courtesan meant to preserve the high culture of Lucknow. They were the real protectors of the cultural norms of Lucknow and practically shaped the development of modern music, dancing and singing. Lucknow court was a celebrated 'center of musical entertainment.'[108] Women, especially courtesans, had great aesthetic sense. The other centers of India followed the styles, introduced by the courtesans of Awadh.[109] Some of them, like Zohra and Mushtari, were not only poetesses but also were singers and dancers. Jaddan was

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103. Ibid, 85.

104. Mohammad Baqir, *Tarikh-i-Mumtaz: Letters of Wajid Ali Shah to Aqleel Mahal* (Lahore: Danish Gah-i-Punjab, 1952), 11.

105. Sharar, *Lucknow: the Last Phase*, 63.

106. Ibid, 63.

107. It is a genre of poetry, collection of anecdotes.

108. Jon Barlow and Lakshmi Subramanian, "Music and Society in North India: From the Mughals to the Mutiny," *Economic and Political Weekly* 42, no. 19 (2007): 1784.

109. Lata Singh, "Visibility the 'Other'…" 1678.

another singer and dancer.[110] They introduced music and dancing as a profession. Court of Wajid Ali Shah was immune to such performances on a daily basis. Drama also flourished during Wajid Ali Shah's period with active involvement of the skillful courtesans.[111] One group of men and women were employed and trained, especially for the drama, *Daryaye Ta'shque* (Ocean of love), in the art of dancing and singing. They were taught a number of couplets to be recited in the appropriate places. With the start of the War of Independence, the development of music was stopped to a large extent.[112]

Begums of Awadh were also fond of constructing buildings, especially religious edifices and buildings for the welfare of their dependents. Begum Sadar un Nisa constructed an imam bara and a mosque behind Moti *Baagh.* Her dependents were very happy and satisfied.[113] Bahu Begum laid the foundation of Nagariya and Ali Ganj, on the other side of the river. These were new colonies for her associated people.[114] In the palace of Awadh, Badshah Begum had built twelve tombs for each of the twelve imams, besides a mosque, adjacent to every tomb. One building similar to the tomb of Hazrat Abbas was also constructed.[115] The buildings constructed by the Begums were symbols of their power, religious inclination and high sense of social welfare besides fine taste.

Rulers of Awadh were practicing Shia faith with scrupulous care and regularity and adopted pure Shia rituals on the state level. The most prominent rituals were the holding of *Majlis* (mourning assembly), *Soz Khawani* (a special form of music i.e., sad songs) and taking out *tazia* processions.[116] Sleeman had also mentioned the hectic schedules during the Islamic month of *Moharram*.[117] Mourning of *Moharram* and *taziyya* was the most important aspect of royal women's lives in Awadh. Some innovations had also been introduced by the royal ladies especially Badshah Begum, including celebration of *chhati* ceremony of Imam Mehdi, celebrated every year in the month of Shaban and secondly, eleven beautiful Syed girls were declared as wives of eleven imams and were kept in the royal palace with high respect and status.[118] Begum spent days and nights in prayer and worship. As Mirza Naseer –ud Din Hyder was brought up by Badshah Begum, so he was highly careful of these practices in his life.[119]

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110. Sharar, *Lucknow: the Last Phase*, 145.

111. Syed Masood Hasan Rizvi, Adeeb and Ayesha Irfan, "The Royal Stage of Lucknow," *Indian Literature* 54, no. 5 (2010): 112.

112. Subramanian, "Music and Society in North India…," 1784.

113. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh,* 337.

114. Sharar, *Lucknow: The Last Phase*, 48.

115.Taqi Ahmad, *Tarikh Badshah Begam*, 9.

116. Sharar, *The Lucknow: The Last Phase,* 215.

117. W. H. Sleeman, *Journey through the Kingdom of Oudh in 1849-1850* (Lucknow: Helicon Publications, 1989), 1.

118. Taqi Ahmed, *Tarikh Badshah Begam*, 9.

119. Ibid, 6, 9.

Badshah Begum, with her religious innovations and involvement of the King and associates in the religious ceremonies, had controlled the cultural life of the court.[120]

Most of these rituals gradually were adopted by Shias of the other parts of India also. Courtesans also compelled themselves to sing 'religious songs of mourning'[121] during the days of *Muharram.* All other activities were banned and the days were spent in complete sorrow during that period.

The cultural norms and innovations of the royal women had a deep impact on common women also. Common women were fond of *soz khuwani.* Especially during days of Muharram, matchless sounds of dirges could be heard from every street and *muhalla.*[122] Common women had a lot of occasions in their lives to celebrate. Most of the Muslim families had sufficient financial resources and the women could spend money on such occasions. Celebration of *Chhati,* cutting of the hair of baby, *aqiqa,*[123] *bismillah*[124] (at the age of four), start of the commencement of their education, circumcision, *roza kushai,*[125] *aqdi-i-Nikhah*[126] were common festivities among the women.[127]

The tradition of *majlis,* with inclusion of *marsiya* and *soz khawani,* had great impact on noble and common women of Awadh. Due to regular assemblies, taste for poetry and music had become part of noble women's life, which was specific to only this part of the Indian Muslim society.[128] *Soz khawani* had given vitality to music especially to Urdu music.

Financial Resources

The financial resources and economic status of all groups of elite women affiliated with the court, varied from group to group. Begums of Awadh had plenty of wealth. Every Chief Wife was granted with *jagirs* or estates: extensive in size and rich in agricultural yield. They were all in all to manage the affairs of their *jagirs* and to utilize the resources. Begum Sadar un Nisa, Bahu Begum, Badshah Begum, etc. were even more financially sound than the *Nawabs* or Kings.

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120. Manisha Choudhry, "Domesticity, Religion and Politics: Exploring Life in Royal Palace of Awadh," *International Journal of Social Science Tomorrow* 1, no. 4 (2012): 2.

121. Mushirul Hassan, "Traditional Rites and Contested Meanings: Sectarian Strife in Colonial Lucknow," *Economic and Political Weekly* 31, no. 9 (1996): 543.

122. Sharar, *Lucknow: the Last Phase*, 149.

123. Islamic ritual of animal sacrifice on the birth of the baby.

124. Ceremony related to the start of taking lessons of Muslims' Holy book i.e., Holy Quran.

125. This ceremony was celebrated on the opening of the first fast of the child.

126. Marriage ceremony.

127. Ibid, 203-205.

128. Ibid, 217.

They came up with their own money on many occasions to help the *Nawabs*. Begum Sadar un Nisa controlled a big *jagir* and a substantial amount of money, which was spent on the state on the basis of need, besides the needs of the Begum and affiliated band of servants and other dependents.[129] Bahu Begum was owner of the *jagirs* of Gonda and Faizabad during the life of Shuja, and later other *jagirs* were also given to her. Besides that, she was in charge of the royal treasury. The control of finances by Bahu Begum proved to be the major cause of conflict between her and her son, Nawab Asif ud Daula. Chief wife of Asif ud Daula was owner of the *jagirs* of Partab Ganj and Nawab Ganj with Rs. 60000 annual income. Nawab Saadat Ali Khan gave Nawab Ganj as *jagir* to his favorite wife, Tat Mahal. Its annual income was one lac twenty thousand. She had ownership of jewelry of one crore also.[130]

The finances of the Chief wives or the other wives were always given priority, even while signing treaties with the British. Article six of the treaty between Nawab Shuja ud Daula and the Company said that 2 lac out of 76 lacs revenue would be fixed for the stipend of the Begums and princesses of the royal family.[131] Financial resources of some of the wives, with names, of the Kings was part and parcel of the loan agreements between the Company and the state. While taking third loan from Awadh, the Company agreed to pay back the loan with 5 percent interest. Additionally, the Company pledged to pay monthly allowances of Rs. 10,000 and 2500 respectively to Nawab Mubarak Mahal Sahib and Sultan Mariyam Begum, and the wives of Ghazi ud Din Hyder.[132] Such large estates of lands and jewelry were later extracted by governor general Warren Hastings.[133]

These Begums were mostly very kind and gave a large part of their wealth in alms to the poor. Begum Sadar un Nisa was very generous and spent most of her time in prayer. A lot of poor were paid with the monthly stipend from her *jagir*'s income.[134] Bahu Begum had fixed stipends for many of her relatives and poor families on a monthly basis. Her nephews, Nawab Qasim Ali Khan, Asghar Ali Khan and Akbar Ali Khan, were paid Rs.1000 each.[135] She was so careful about the livelihood of all of her dependents that she made arrangements with the help of the Resident to pay them monthly allowances even after her death.

The courtesans, the leading section of *tawaif*, also had a lot of financial resources. Although they were not paid with the fixed income and all were not allotted with the *jagirs*, they skillfully gathered a heavy amount of wealth. The

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129. Details are given on the above pages.

130. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 105.

131. Knowsley Pamphlet Collection, *Oudh or How to Make and Unbreak a Treaty* (Calcutta: J. F. Bella my Englishman Press, 1856), 12.

132. Mir Litvak, "A Failed Manipulation: The British, the Oudh and the Shi'I Ulma of Najuf and Karbala," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 27, no. 1 (2000): 70.

133. Veena Talwar Oldenburg, *The Making of Colonial Lucknow, 1856 -1877*, VI.

134. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 226.

135. Hyder, *Sawanehayat*, 145.

males of the royal family and the courtiers were in habit of visiting such women on payment of money, property and costly gifts to them extensively. Many of them were even granted big and luxurious homes to live in and to serve the specific people. They were the highest taxpayers with the heaviest income-earners and property-holders.[136] The British authorities, after annexing Awadh, were astonished to study the tax records and financial files which were clear indications of wealthy status of the courtesans.

The third group of women, however, was not financially sound. They even had to show resistance and had to fight for the increase in their monthly income on various occasions. Wives, khurd mahals, sisters, daughters, all were paid with the monthly income.[137] Each Sahib-i-Mahal was given Rs. 5000 since the time of Naseer-ud-Din Hyder.[138] There were few female employees of the royal household including Barati Khanum and Naurozi Khanum who could collect money extensively.

Conclusion

Awadh, a Shia state, was comparatively more liberal than many Sunni states of India in the period of resistance against foreign powers. Royal women, especially of the first group i.e., Begums of Awadh, had enjoyed high status since the beginning, which further increased with the passage of time. One of the reasons could be that state was inherited to son-in-law of its founding father, and as Sadr un Nisa Begum was daughter of an ex-Nawab, wife of the second Nawab and mother of the third Nawab, her power and esteem was countless even during the period of Shujja ud Daula. She directly interfered to settle some issues related to the Hindu Rajput family being Queen mother. Her views, commandments and even financial resources were part and parcel to the policy-making and the state structure since the establishment of the state. The ministers of the state listened to her and obeyed her. She practically set the trend for future royal ladies who did not face as much difficulty to get acknowledgement from their male counterparts to be politically active. Bahu Begum was equally powerful during a long period to come because she was given high esteem by her husband, Shuja ud Daulah. She had complete authority of the royal treasury and was owner of an enormous estate. She was one step away than Begum Sadar un Nisa as she was on very cordial terms with the BEIC also through its resident. The Company's officials had also accepted her power. Badshah Begum was comparatively a different case. She led a coup against the sitting King and the Company which took her to the height of resistance. She set a great example of resistance. Another royal woman

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136. Oldenburg, "Lifestyle as Resistance…," 1.
137. Najmul Ghani, *Tarikh-i-Oudh*, 5.
138. Sahai, *Ahsan-ut-Tawareekh*, 124.

who proved to be more courageous and dynamic was Hazarat Mahal. She can be quoted as the best model or symbol of resistance against the colonial power. She fought a war of do or die. Many courtesans were also supporting that difficult war for their personal interests, or regaining their past glory of ruling indirectly while having closer links with the royal family and other courtiers. Courtesans' political power, though indirect, is also undeniable. They were behind many court skirmishes and intrigues and the men of the royal family listened and followed them. That glory of the courtesans could never be revived.

Besides politics, the Awadhian women were not behind men in bringing revolution in multiple fields of literature and art including poetry, music, singing, dancing and drama, etc. Begums of Awadh appointed historians and literary figures in their *jagirs* and promoted education. However, the role of courtesans in elevation of various domains of art is irrefutable. It was due to them that music, dancing, singing and even drama was promoted and performing in all these fields was recognized as a profession. These fields of earning money were then not looked down upon. They introduced the concept of respecting the workers of this profession; however, on limited scale. Furthermore, elite women were also fond of constructing buildings like their men and some masterpieces, especially religious buildings, were constructed by them. In the later period, space for women had been created by royal men who were involved in merrymaking, wine, women and other unproductive works. The status and role of royal ladies of Awadh in politics, economic matters, promotion of art, literature and architecture, etc. is definite, which needs recognition and appreciation.

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Epidemics and Wars: Comparative Archaeology and Anthropology of Ancient Greek Mass Burials

By Reine-Marie Bérard[*] & Dominique Castex[±]

The high number of dead bodies to deal with in time of mortality crises (events marked by an unusually high number of dead in a limited amount of time) often leads to modifications in the traditional funerary practices of a society. This contribution questions the way Ancient Greeks, from the 8th till the 3rd century BC, handled such mortality crises, focusing on mass burials. In a first methodological part, we discuss the means to identify funerary sites related to mortality crises, using the methods of archaeothanatology. By confronting archaeological features (taphonomic processes, position of the remains, grave type, offerings, etc.) and bioanthropological data (number of dead, sex, age, pathologies, etc.), we will first define the main characteristics of mass burials. We will then question how to discriminate between mass burials linked to war, epidemics, massacres and famine, underlining the major importance of historical sources in this process. The second part is dedicated to the study of various cases from Athens, Paros, Chaeronea, Tanagra and Greek Sicily and their interpretation. We will argue that epidemic mass burials are the most difficult to identify, since they may present innumerable variations in terms of osteoprofiles and archaeological features. Finally, we will question our abilities, as archaeoanthropologists, to evaluate the impact of epidemics on the funerary treatment of the dead in the Ancient world.

Introduction

The high number of dead bodies to deal with in time of mortality crises (events marked by an unusually high number of dead in a limited amount of time) often leads to modifications in the traditional funerary practices of a society. This contribution questions the way Ancient Greeks, from the 8th till the 3rd century BC, handled such mortality crises, focusing on mass burials. It is only with the development of specific methods for funerary archaeology in the 1980s and the subsequent possibility to identify simultaneous deposition of several individuals within the same structure that past mortality crises have started to reveal some of their secrets. Osteological collections constituted in times of crisis have opened the way to two new grounds of investigation: the first one concerns the treatment of the dead and the changes in funerary traditions in times of mortality crises; the other aims at defining the nature of these crises on the bases of biological data drawn from the examination of the skeletons. Accumulated findings and their analysis gradually led to fruitful interdisciplinary synthesis

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work. The study of the second plague pandemic which affected the world from the 14th to the 18th century and the modifications of the funerary practices during the First World War of 1914-1918 were two of the main laboratories for such investigations, respectively in the field of epidemic and armed conflicts. But some other medieval and modern crises, particularly devastating, also had a strong impact on their contemporaries, leaving traces in textual and iconographic evidence. The comparison of these documents with the funerary archaeological data available for the same periods has given birth to various profitable works. History, archaeology and biology were integrated in order to provide complementary information to approach past societies' attitudes to massive simultaneous deaths and apprehend the causes behind the constitution of some of these complex funerary structures. Step by step, at the interface of several disciplines, a methodological strategy progressively developed, now allowing inquiries on older epochs for which the sources are less complete and diversified.

This paper hence aims to investigate the archaeological evidence for mortality crises in Ancient Greece from Archaic to Hellenistic times. For this period, archaeological documentation is relatively rich, but most of the funerary structures that can be connected with a turmoil context have only been the subject of isolated works. We will first discuss the methodological procedure required to identify and analyse mortality crises in archaeology, then present various case studies from the Aegean and colonial world probably linked to distinct sorts of crises (war, epidemic, famine and massacres). A new approach will be tested on the wide-ranging types of data available so far in order to discuss, and possibly re-discuss, their respective relevance for the interpretation of the sites and their inter-relationship. It will also be an opportunity to point out the data that are presently missing and which exploitation would be necessary to allow a comprehensive apprehension of the different types of mortality crises of the past. In doing so, we hope to humbly contribute to the constitution of a corpus of specific methods for the excavation and study of mass burials of the Ancient world.

Identifying Funerary Sites Related to Mortality Crises

Demonstrating Simultaneous Deaths

To archaeologists, the presence of several dead within the same burial pit usually suggests the hypothesis of an abnormal mortality, sign of a human group's adaptation to the situation of handling a large number of bodies in a short time. However, the only possibility of proving this is to make certain

observations based on archaeothanatological methods.[1] The examination should focus on the articular relationships between the different bones present in the grave. Firstly, the existence of maintained anatomical connections represents fundamental evidence confirming the primary deposition of all the individuals. This means that the bodies decomposed in the same place where they were first deposited and then found by the archaeologists, thus immediately eliminating the hypothesis of an organized ossuary where the bones may be arranged by type (long bones, crania, etc.) Secondly, if the osteological observations reveal juxtapositions and superpositions of skeletons with the preservation of anatomical connections, it is then possible to affirm the simultaneous deposition of individuals and the grave may be called 'multiple'. This excludes the prospect of a 'collective' sepulture, which refers to a burial formed by successive depositions of bodies over time.[2] This latter type of grave indeed usually shows a classic mortality profile and the introduction of each new body causes bone dislocations on the earlier individuals already reduced to skeletons. The terms 'multiple' and 'collective', widely employed by French archaeologists, are still debated.[3] The word 'multiple' is still rare in English-language literature, and is not always differentiated from the term 'collective'. It is more common to find the expression 'mass grave' or 'mass burial', for which there is no real consensus but which seems specifically applied to multiple burials containing dozens of bodies lying in various positions and orientations.[4]

It must be kept in mind that, although multiple burials provide the most reliable archaeological evidence of excess mortality, they were not systematically used in times of crisis. Various French archaeological examples from medieval and modern periods show that some burial sites, clearly constituted in times of

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1. H. Duday, *The Archaeology of the Dead: Lectures in Archaeothanatology* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2009).

2. Castex et al., "Revealing Archaeological Features Linked to Mortality Increases," *Anthropologie (Brno)* 52, no. 3 (2014): 299-300.

3. B. Boulestin, "Faut-il en finir avec la sepulture collective (et sinon qu'en faire)?" *Bulletin de la Societe Prehistorique Francaise* 116, no. 4 (2019): 705-723.

4. C. J., Knusel and J. Robb, "Funerary Taphonomy: An Overview of Goals and Methods," *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 10 (2016): 657. In this paper, we use both the terms 'multiple burial' and 'mass grave' indifferently. Though there is no commonly accepted definition of what should be called a mass grave, the term is intended here as a multiple grave containing many human corpses. If some authors have proposed to reserve the term for graves containing at least six dead (M. Skinner, "Planning the Archaeological Recovery of Evidence from Recent Mass Graves," Forensic Science International 34, no. 4 (1987): 267-287), the United Nations places the limit at three or more corpses (W. D. Haglund, M. Connor and D. D. Scott, "The Archaeology of Contemporary Mass Graves," *Historical Archaeology* 35, no. 1 (2001): 57). In fact, we will see, throughout this article, that the context is more important than the number of dead to define what a mass grave is.

pestilences, consist of individual graves;[5] this more careful treatment of bodies, following traditional burial practices, could be explained by the lesser virulence of certain epidemics or by the demographic structure of the populations affected. It is easily understandable that all intermediates exist between funerary sites with single tombs very close in time and mass graves. In the case of individual deposits, we obviously lose information on the simultaneous decomposition of several corpses, but other observations can be considered: prevalence of burials excavated directly in the earth, size and orientation of the pits, unusual positions of the bodies are all archaeological clues that may let us identify particularities in the funerary practices of the populations concerned, and therefore suspect a crisis. We can also mention examples where there are very few skeletons compared to the available surface and consequently the remains are not superposed. Evidencing a single digging is then a strong argument for simultaneous depositions, as well as the relative location of each skeleton in the grave, the positions of some being influenced by those of others.

However, tracking the simultaneity of death has some limits, firstly when it comes to cremation. Indeed, it can be assumed that cremation was practised during some crises, particularly in periods of epidemics. This was the case, in particular, for cholera epidemics in the modern era.[6] Such cases deprive us of identifiable archaeological evidence. While it is feasible to prove the grouping of burnt bones of several individuals within the same burial structure, it is impossible to affirm that the cremation of these persons was simultaneous and to discuss the length of time between their deaths.

It is also often accepted that the simultaneity of the body depositions necessarily demonstrates the coincidence or proximity of the death time of the individuals. Nonetheless, certain cases, although rare, can lead to misinterpretations. Indeed, some specific environments, for example very cold climates that assure prolonged conservation of the bodies, can lead, when the temperatures are more favourable for digging, to the concomitant burial of many individuals from the same community who died at different times.[7] In some other cases, due to the poor preservation and/or poor representation of the skeletons, it is not possible to conclude on the simultaneous nature or not of the deposits.

To interpret multiple burials as a sign of an actual phase of crisis, it is also crucial to be able to detect whether they are the result of an isolated event (e.g., poisoning or accident involving members of the same family or group) or

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5. e.g., B. Bizot, D. Castex, P. Reynaud and M. Signoli, *La saison d'une peste (avril-septembre 1590). Le cimetiere des Fedons a Lambesc* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2005).

6. H. Popu, *La depouille mortelle, chose sacree: a la redecouverte d'une categorie juridique oubliee* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009).

7. Duday, "Archaeological Proof of an Abrupt Mortality Crisis: Simultaneous Deposit of Cadavers, Simultaneous Deaths?" in *Paleomicrobiology: Past Human Infections*, edited by D. Raoult and M. Drancourt (Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer, 2008), 49-54.

whether they evidence a mortality peak, or a real meltdown (which usually implies several contemporary multiple graves).

Identifying the Cause of Death

Here again, the archaeological context can play a key role and provide information which, as previously mentioned, determines the biological studies. Burial directly in the earth is a feature common to the great majority of the victims of mortality crises, independently of the chronological background and the nature of the turmoil.[8] This characteristic can occasionally lead to suspicion of abnormal mortality and let us distinguish between graves constituted in times of crisis and those resulting from natural mortality.

The material accompanying individuals in their graves may help indicate the type of a mortality crisis. Armour and weapons found in situ, sometimes with artefacts still in the bones, easily suggest a preliminary diagnosis of armed conflict.[9] Furthermore, when projectiles, military buttons, and in some cases identity plaques are present, it is often possible to attribute the deaths unequivocally to acts of war.[10] Nevertheless, caution is required because epidemics may occur in the wake of war.[11] Also, in the archaeological context, other types of objects, religious or not (medals depicting some saints, amulets and talismans, jewels made from materials known to be prophylactic, such as amber, pendants in the shape of a Christ's head, crosses, etc.), may lead us to suspect that the burials were linked to a high level of infectious mortality, and in particular to the plague.[12] However, deposits of such offerings are generally restricted,

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8. D. Castex and S. Kacki, "'Bring out your Dead': Funerary Practices in Epidemic Times and Their Variation with Respect to Medical Knowledge," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeothanatology*, edited by C. Knusel and E. M. Schotsmans (Abingdon: Routledge).

9. e.g., R. Figueres, "Sur les traces de la bataille de Visby," *Questes. Revue Pluridisciplinaire d'Etudes Medievales* 14 (2008): 22-37; A. Beyneix, "Neolithic Violence in France: An Overview," in *Sticks, Stones and Broken Bones. Neolithic Violence in a European Perspective*, edited by R. Schulting and L. Fibiger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 207-222); S. Vassallo, "Guerre et mort a Himere: les tombes de soldats grecs tues dans les batailles de 480 et 409 avant notre ere," in *Violences de Guerre, Violences de Masse. Une Approche Archeologique*, edited by J. Guilaine (Paris: La Decouverte, 2016, 51-60).

10. F. Adam, *Alain Fournier et ses compagnons d'arme: une archeologie de la Grande Guerre* (Metz: Editions Serpenoise, 2006); C. Rigeade et al., "Anthropological Approach of Catastrophic Burials from the 18th Century (Martin du Nord Street, Douai, France)," *Comptes rendus Paleovol* 5, no. 7 (2006): 901-907; Cabot, "La bataille du Mans des 12-14 decembre 1793: les archives du sol," *Corps* 1: 273-281.

11. Castex et al., "Bioarchaeological Study of a Mortality Crisis. Cemetery of St. Benedict in Prague, Czech Republic (17th-18th Century AD): Methodological Approach," *Anthropologie (Brno)* 49, no. 1 (2011): 79-88.

12. Bizot, Castex, Reynaud and Signoli, *La saison d'une peste (avril-septembre 1590). Le cimetière des Fédons à Lambesc*, 2005; Kacki et al., "Prevention, pratiques medicales et gestion

especially in the medieval and modern periods; a common feature of the funerary practices in times of epidemics is the scarcity of furniture accompanying the deceased. Finally, it should be mentioned that finding specific substances, related to an original handling of the corpses, may indicate an epidemic backdrop. In particular, the use of lime is frequent in plague burials at the end of the second pandemic (17th-18th century), in accordance with instructions from the political authorities to accelerate the decomposition of bodies and limit odours. However, lime is also present, and always for the most recent periods, in the context of military conflicts.[13]

Sometimes, topographical markers, such as headstones or crosses, have also materialized the remembrance of a mortality crisis. This was especially the case for some plague cemeteries.[14] The presence of this type of commemorative structure, coupled with archival research, may in some cases motivate an archaeological diagnosis.

Where burial sites, possibly created in times of crisis, are correctly dated, investigations on contemporary historical texts and files can lead to establish specific causes of death (e.g., identification of the site as a plague cemetery, a battle site, slaughter-related pit). Although there are many uncertainties about the documents that can be examined during such times (disorganization of society, losses, negligence, disrupted records, mortality linked to events for which the authorities have an interest in hiding the truth, such as political massacres, etc.), written sources can provide answers to the various questions that are raised by the presence of multiple burials. For the most recent periods, they make it possible to situate the burial site in its geographical, political and chronological environment (plan, notarial acts, etc.)[15] They can be used to identify the origin of the crisis (community counts, census, enumeration, hospital or military accounts, chronicles...)[16] In an epidemic context, historical sources can further contribute to discussions on contemporary medical knowledge and conception of the mortality crisis (prophylaxis, treatment of the sick, notion of contagion and epidemic, sanitary regulations, isolation of the infected, burial instructions, handling of

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sanitaire au cours de la deuxieme pandemie de peste," in *Archeologie de la Sante, Anthropologie du Soin*, edited by A. Froment (Paris: La Decouverte, 2019), 119-133.

13. Cabot, "La bataille du Mans des 12-14 décembre 1793: les archives du sol," 2017.

14. M. Signoli et al., "Decouverte d'un cimetiere de pestiferes du XVIIe siecle (Puy-Saint-Pierre, Hautes-Alpes, France,)" in *Peste: Entre Epidemies et Societes*, edited by M. Signoli, D. Cheve, P. Adalian, O. Dutour and G. Boetch (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2007), 131-136.

15. Bizot et al., *La saison d'une peste (avril-septembre 1590). Le cimetière des Fédons à Lambesc*, 2005; Adam, *Alain Fournier et ses compagnons d'arme: une archéologie de la Grande Guerre*, 2006.

16. e.g., for epidemics Signoli et al., "Paleodemographie et demographie historique en contexte epidemique," *Population* 57, no. 6 (2002): 821-847; Cabot "La bataille du Mans des 12-14 décembre 1793: les archives du sol," 2017.

cadavers…)[17] Although papyri and epigraphic inscriptions are more informative on the question of the burials and space management than on their exact location, they also can provide testimonies on mortality crises. More complex and limited (since they use documents with imprecise dating), this type of inquiry is still rare.[18]

In the absence of this archaeological and historical information, but obviously also as a complement, it is necessary to have access to diverse biological investigations of the skeletons in order to prove that all individuals assembled in multiple burials died from the same sudden event.[19] The most visible clues concern brutal deaths, mainly due to inter-human violence. We will thus try to identify specific pathological lesions linked to the cause of death. The detection, by macroscopic analysis, of signs related to battle trauma authorizes the rapid characterization of war or massacre contexts. More detailed studies using increasingly performant medical imagery techniques can take into consideration the different parameters of these lesions (location, size, direction and angulation) and eventually allow a reconstruction of the weapons and gestures that provoked these traumas.[20] However, this research is not informative in the case of sudden lethal infectious mortality crises (e.g., plague, cholera) because these acute diseases do not have time to develop bone lesions. Another point of discussion in palaeopathology is to try to define the health state of the population (growth stress markers, indices of nutritional deficiencies) that might indicate a favourable and aggravating context during an epidemic crisis.

In addition to investigation on any pathological lesions detected on the skeletons, it can sometimes be demonstrated that the individuals were grouped according to their age and/or sex.[21] Depending on the nature of the crisis which affects a community, or part of it, at a specific time and place, the selection mechanisms of the population will be different in terms of age and sex. The study of the mortality profile may inform us about the type of the crisis. Indeed, each epidemic has its own demographic signature, in the same way that a group of

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17. Castex and Kacki, "'Bring out your Dead': Funerary Practices in Epidemic Times and Their Variation with Respect to Medical Knowledge," in press.

18. It is a research line of the project ANR-19-CE27-0012, *Pestilences and human societies: emergence, evolution and bio-cultural transformations*, led by D. Castex. One of the aims is to draw up a historical corpus of antique epidemic crises supported by different textual evidences.

19. Castex, "Identification and Interpretation of Historical Cemeteries Linked to Epidemics," in *Paleomicrobiology: Past Human Infections*, edited by D. Raoult and M. Drancourt (Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer), 23-48.

20. e.g., A. Boucherie, M. L. S. Jorkov and M. Smith, "Wounded to the Bone: Digital Microscopic Analysis of Traumas in a Medieval Mass Grave Assemblage (Sandbjerget, Denmark, AD 1300-1350,)" *International Journal of Paleopathology* 19 (2017): 66-79.

21. This is what French researchers call study of 'recruitment' by age and sex, which simply consists in discussing: who is present, who is absent?

young males will allow us to consider a possible military recruitment, while an age and sex distribution more in conformity with a natural mortality, with the presence of men, women and children, will rather suggest a massacre.[22]

When an epidemic crisis is suspected, the hypothesis proposed about its nature based on demographic parameters can be confirmed with absolute assurance by paleomicrobiology studies. Since the original works of the late '90s,[23] examinations of series supposedly linked to plague have multiplied and the expansion in paleogenomics has driven spectacular advances in knowledge of the evolutionary history of the *Yersinia pestis* bacterium during its different pandemics.[24] Other studies have allowed recognizing additional pathogens such as *Salmonella enterica*, responsible for typhoid fever[25] or *Rickettsia prowazekii*, accountable for typhus.[26] By permitting the identification of these pathogens, paleomicrobiology, a research field in constant progression, has enabled archaeology to transcend some of the limitations it traditionally faced. Discussions concerning the rise and spread of certain epidemics can now emerge on the basis of older sites without written sources.

Attempt to access to the knowledge of abrupt mortality crises of the past thus requires the development of interdisciplinary investigations, tackled from the intersecting angles of human and social science (history and archaeology) and biology. For obvious reasons, such research is generally easier for recent epochs, as they may offer precious information from written sources. However, if archaeological and textual sources have long been considered complementary, they often appear contradictory.[27] Synthetic reports, devoted to great mortality that occurred mainly in the Middle Ages, have allowed us to test the importance

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22. e.g., Castex and Kacki, "Demographic Patterns Distinctive of Epidemic Cemeteries in Archaeological Samples," *Microbiology Spectrum* 4, no. 4 (2016): 1-11. See below for other examples related to the Ancient world.

23. M. Drancourt et al., "Detection of 400-Year-Old Yersinia Pestis DNA in Human Dental Pulp: An Approach to the Diagnosis of Ancient Septicemia," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 95 (1998): 12637-12640.

24. M. A. Spyrou et al., "Historical Y. pestis Genomes Reveal the European Black Death as the Source of Ancient and Modern Plague Pandemics," *Cell Host & Microbe* 19 (2016): 874-881; M. Keller et al., "Ancient Yersinia Pestis Genomes from Across Western Europe Reveal Early Diversification During the First Pandemic (541-750)," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116, no. 25 (2018): 12363-12372.

25. A. G. Vagene et al., "Salmonella Enterica Genomes Recovered from Victims of a Major 16th Century Epidemic in Mexico," *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 2, no. 3 (2018): 520-528.

26. D. Raoult et al., "Evidence for Louse-Transmitted Diseases in Soldiers of Napoleon's Grand Army in Vilnius," *The Journal of Infectious Diseases* 193, no. 1 (2006): 112-120.

27. Castex et al., "Bioarchaeological Study of a Mortality Crisis. Cemetery of St. Benedict in Prague, Czech Republic (17th-18th century AD): Methodological Approach," 2011.

of archaeological and anthropological data in the context of calamities, in particular epidemics, and therefore to focus inquiry on older times. Based on the methodological precepts briefly presented here, we will now tackle different case studies centred on ancient Greece, a period that has been relatively unexplored in such contexts. The specific characteristics of each site will be discussed, as well as the strategy adopted to attempt to interpret them and the questions that some of them still raise.

Cases Studies from Archaic and Classical Greece

Numerous excavations were led in the Ancient Greek world, from the 19th century onwards. Mass graves were punctually discovered, but rarely compared and analysed according to the methodological procedure we have just exposed, confronting historical, archaeological, anthropological and biological sources. The following examples, taken from the Greek Aegean and colonial area from Archaic to Hellenistic times, will give us an opportunity to discuss the varying importance of these sources and criteria for the interpretation of different types of mass burials. We will go from the clearest towards the more enigmatic cases.

War

Wartime multiple sepultures are no doubt among the easiest mass graves to identify, following the list of criteria established earlier, especially in the Ancient Greek World where such graves are mentioned by various authors[28] and were often marked by explicit inscriptions. It is for example the case in Classical Athens, when soldiers began to be entombed every year at state expense in a particular area of the Kerameikos Cemetery, the 'Demosion Sema' (public cemetery) mentioned by Thucydides (II, 34) and described at length by Pausanias (I, 29).[29]

War dead was cremated and buried by tribe in a tomb separated in ten trenches (one per tribe) each year. Ten different headstones erected on the graves, specifying the date and place of the battle, gave the lists of the dead men's names, sometimes their status and function. Similar monuments and funerary steles exist

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28. See for example Pausanias, *Periegesis,* I, 32, 3 for the description of mass graves related to the battle of Marathon; Herodotus, IX, 85 for Platea; Pausanias, *Periegesis*, IX, 40, 10 for the tumuli of the battle of Chaeronea, etc.

29. A lot has been written about this state cemetery. See lastly N. T. Arrington, *Ashes, Images, and Memories: The Presence of the War Dead in Fifth-Century Athens* (New York: OUP USA, 2015), with anterior bibliography.

in other cities like Tanagra and Thespies.[30] In such cases, recognizing wartime mass graves is quite straightforward.

But even in the absence of explicit inscriptions, identifying mass burials linked to war is generally relatively easy. Indeed, soldiers being mostly male individuals in their 20's or 30's, the age and sex ratio of the deceased clearly appears as an important indication to single out a military mass grave[31]. Besides, other clues to label a mass grave as a soldier's burial are the traumas connected to the fatal wounds. Such traumas were for example visible on the bones of some of the 254 skeletons, laid in seven rows in the large quadrangular pit discovered in Chaeronea in 1879[32] (maybe the tomb of the Thebans who died fighting Philipp in 338 BC[33]) or on the remains gathered in the nine mass burials of Himera (Sicily), related to the two battles of Himera between Greek and Punic armies in 480 and 409 BC[34] (see Figure 1). Many arrowheads and spearheads were found still embedded in the bones.[35] On this site, the very precise examination of the skeletons has even permitted to reconstruct the way some of the fatal blows were inflicted. It is interesting to underline that Diodorus claims (XIII, 75) that many Greek warriors, including Syracusans, were left unburied on the battlefield after the second battle of 409 and were only gathered one year later The impressive mass grave illustrated here (Figure 1) may thus have pertained rather to soldiers from Himera itself, buried by local populations, while allies were left unburied by their fellow companions fleeing away in emergency in front of defeat in order to try and protect Syracuse, threatened by the Carthaginese fleet.

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30. P. Low, "Remembering War in Fifth-Century Greece: Ideologies, Societies, and Commemoration Beyond Democratic Athens," *World Archaeology* 35, no. 1 (2003): 98-111.

31. See Castex and Kacki 2016 on the importance of age and sex ratio to determine the causes of death in ancient mass graves.

32. W. K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War, Part IV* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 136.

33. Pausanias, *Periegesis*, IX, 40, 10.

34. About these battles, see Diodorus Siculus, XI, 20-28.

35. See, between other publications of the same author: Vassallo, "Le battaglie di Himera alla luce degli scavi nella necropoli occidentale e alle fortificazioni. I luoghi, i protagonist," *Sicilia Antiqua* 7 (2010): 30-31.

Figure 1. *Mass Burial from the Battle of 409 BC, Himera, Sicily*
Source: Soprintendenza BB.CC.AA di Palermo.

Some cases are more challenging to understand, though they clearly seem to pertain to military loss, such as the *polyandria* ('[the grave of] many men', a term used by the Ancient themselves to designate multiple burials mainly related to war events[36]) of Paros. Excavated since the mid '80s by P. Zapheiropoulou and dated around 730 BC,[37] these two mass graves consisted in two big pits whose sides were made of massive stone slabs. They yielded respectively 40 and 120 amphorae, each lidded by a small vase. Inside the urns were the burnt bones of at least 120 adult males aged approximately between 18 and 45 years old, which skeletons show traces of battle wounds; some had weapons parts still stuck within.[38] Two of the amphorae bore figural depictions, presenting violent fight scenes and an individual *prothesis*, that is the typical Greek ceremony of exhibition of the dead body.[39] The interpretation of these pits as wartime mass graves seems thus highly probable.

36. e.g.: Plutarch, *De Erodoti Malignitate*, 42; *Alexander*, IX; *Titus Flaminius*, VII; *Moralia*, 372E; 823E; 872E; Dio. Hal., 1.14; Strabo., 9.4.2. See also: C. W. Clairmont, *Patrios Nomos. Public Burial in Athens During the Fifth and Fourth Centuries: The Archaeological, Epigraphic, Literary and Historical Evidence* (Oxford: BAR, 1983), 368-372, for various occurrences and uses of the term in Pausanias' *Periegesis*.

37. See lastly A. Agelarakis, *Parian Polyandreia: the Late Geometric Funerary Legacy of Cremated Soldiers' Bones on Socio-Political Affairs and Military Organizational Preparedness in Ancient Greece* (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing Ltd, 2017), with previous bibliography on these two *polyandria*.

38. Agelarakis and Zapheiropoulou, "The Warriors of Paros," *Archaeology Magazine* 58, no. 1 (2005): 30-35.

39. F. Croissant, "Batailles geometriques pariennes," in *Alba Della Citta, Alba Delle Immagini?*, edited by B. d'Agostino (Athens: Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene, 2008), 30-62.

Nonetheless, it is worth emphasizing that one of the main criteria usually taken into consideration to identify a mass burial is not met in Paros. Indeed, as was previously underlined, it is very difficult, when not impossible, to establish the simultaneity of death when burnt remains of several people are gathered, especially when – as here – the bones of each person are isolated in distinct containers. Such a separation surely indicates that every warrior had been cremated on his own pyre. As far as we know, they could well have died and been cremated decades apart before the placing of their urns in a same pit. Technically, it thus is unattainable to assess the coincidence of death of all the individuals. Nonetheless, the unique funerary treatment that they underwent, the monumentality and centrality of the grave in the necropolis, and the original use of iconographic discourse on two vases for the very first time in the history of Parian ceramics allows us to favour the hypothesis of a soldier mass burial. It may be related to the Lelantine War that opposed Chalcis and Eretria (and the rest of the Hellenic world after them) between 750 and 650 BC, or perhaps to one of the numerous – and unfortunately poorly documented – conflicts between Paros and Naxos.[40] Without a decisive argument, we will probably never know whether the Paroikia warriors died in Paros, or if they fell in foreign land and were brought back home in ashes to be buried in an exceptional honorary place in the middle of what was about to be the new Parian cemetery. Either way, the tremendous importance of archaeological remains appears clearly here since they allow us to apprehend historic events and to frame political systems that no other source documents.[41]

Massacres and Executions

Mass burials related to massacres and executions may at first seem to have a lot in common with multiple military sepultures. Indeed, they are often likewise characterized by a high number of individuals buried simultaneously and presenting sharp or blunt force traumas, sometimes with part of weapons such as arrows or spearheads still embedded in their bones. Alike military mass graves, depending on who took care of burying the remains and in which conditions, the grave may be well-ordered and showing signs of affliction for the dead or, on the contrary, hastily prepared with a lack of vigilance obvious from the messy disposition of the bodies. Despite these possible similarities, massacres mass graves usually differ from warriors' multiple burials by the selection of the deceased. Indeed, slaughters are not only exclusively directed against soldiers, but may also concern civilians and therefore contain both men and women,

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40. Agelarakis and Zapheiropoulou, "The Warriors of Paros," 2005, 34.

41. On the importance of wartime mass graves for our understanding of Ancient Greek political systems and ideologies, see R. M. Bérard, "La politique du cadaver," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 75e année, no. 1 (2020): 1-38.

adults, children and old people[42]. A combined study of the biological profile and the perimortem traumas of the dead is thus determinant to identify massacres mass burials.

Mass burials related to executions, that is killing perpetrated not by out-of-control enemies or invaders, but by regular authorities as a punishment in a more-or-less legal context may show a selection of the deceased quite similar to combatants' mass burials.[43] It is for example the case in the Phaleron necropolis, near Athens, where several multiple graves containing only men who perished in their 20 to 50s were discovered. In 1915, a first pit yielded 17 individuals, all adult males. Some of them wore metal clamps around the neck and limbs, indicating that they probably were prisoners put to death through the practice of pillory exhibition.[44]

More recently, in March 2016, archaeological excavation undertaken by the Ephorate of Antiquities of West Attica, Piraeus and Islands brought to light three nearby mass burials in trenches, probably related to three successive episodes in a same period, for a total of 78 people,[45] all males,[46] mainly in their 20-40s.[47] Many clues led archaeologist Stella Chryssoulaki[48] to interpret these pits as the inhumations of captives and convicts executed together. First, these men had their hands tied at the moment of death, 55 by iron bonds (see Figure 2), 23 by perishable bonds, maybe of rope of leather.

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42. On the notion of massacre and its relation to war, see D. El Kenz (Ed.), *Le massacre, objet d'histoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005).

43. Indeed, in the Ancient Greek world especially, death penalty mainly hit men.

44. A. Keramopoulos, *Ο Αποτυμπανισμός. Συμβολή Αρχαιολογική Εις Την Ιστορίαν Του Ποινικού Δικαίου Και Την Λαογραφίας* (Athens: Hestia, 1923); S. Pelekidis, "Ανασκαφή Παλαιού Φαλήρου," *Αρχαιολογικό Δελτίο* 2 (1916): 13-64.

45. 46 men in the first trench, 16 in the second and 16 in the last.

46. At least all the individuals whose sex could be determined from an anthropological examination of the remains.

47. Four of them were much younger, though, probably adolescents between 12 and 15 years old at death. For the bioarcheological study of this mass burial, see A. Ingvarsson-Sundström, *Bioarchaeological Field Analysis of Human Remains from the Mass Graves at Phaleron, Greece* (Stockholm: Opuscula, 2019).

48. S. Chryssoulaki, "The Excavations at Phaleron Cemetery 2012-2017. An Introduction," in *Rethinking Athens: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Polis before the Persian Wars, International Workshop at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitat Munchen (Munich, 23th-24th February 2017)*, edited by C. Graml, A. Doronzio and V. Capozzoli (Munchen: Utzverlag, 2019), 103-114.

Figure 2. *The First Mass Burial of the 2016 Excavation in Phaleron Necropolis, Showing Men with Their Hands Attached with Iron Bonds*
Source: Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Ephorate of Piraeus and the Islands, Giannis Asvestas.

Besides, the absence of regularity in the way they had been placed or rather thrown inside the pits showed that no care was taken in the burying process. In some cases, it actually seems likely that the men were executed directly on the edge of the pit in which they simply fell as they died. Indeed, many of them exhibited signs of perimortem blunt force trauma on the temples. These were, no doubt, the cause of their death, suggesting killing by a violent blow at the head. Interestingly, Plutarch (*Life of Pericles* 24.2) says that the Samian Duris accused Pericles of executing the Samian generals responsible for the siege of Milet in a similar way: after exhibiting them for ten days on the public agora, he would have killed them by smashing their skull with a club (ξύλοις τὰς κεφαλὰς συγκόψαντας). Though Plutarch himself gives little credit to this hearsay, this passage still appears to confirm the existence of a mode of execution quite similar to the one observed on many skeletons of the Phaleron mass pits. While the selection of the dead in terms of age and sex, and the presence of many perimortem traumas make this burial similar enough to a wartime burial, it is thus mainly this systematic character of the observed lesions on a high number of dead that strongly suggest an execution.

What is remarkable though is that, despite the fact that these men were clearly executed and notwithstanding the general lack of attention in their mortuary treatment, they were not totally deprived of funerary offerings. Indeed, a few objects laid beside them: an arrowhead in the chest of one man, and a

dagger in contact with the tibia of another in the third pit could be related to their injuries and death. But there were also some personal ornaments such as rings in the second trench and, more surprisingly, in the first trench, two vases traditionally used in funerary context for libations. Their type determined the dating of the tomb between the second and the third quarter of the 7th c. BC. Historical sources concerning this period suggest – though the hypothesis remains unprovable and quite risky at this stage – that these men could have been some of the plotters led by Cylon who tried to establish tyranny in Athens around 625 BC.[49]

In this case the interpretation of the mass burial thus relies on a combined study of anthropological features (sex, age at death and pathologies), taphonomic ones (form of the grave, simultaneity and lack of care of the depositions), archaeological artefacts (offerings and traces of decomposed ties) and historical sources, concerning both the mode of killing and its possible cause. But the presence of links or shackles is not always to be related to some kind of execution.

Slave Multiple Burials?

A 4th century shaft discovered in Pydna (Ancient Macedonia) in January 2000, containing 115 dead, raises questions about how to perceive mass burials of individuals of subaltern status.[50] Indeed, these individuals had been thrown into a 4 m deep rectangular rock-cut pit, all mixed up in various positions, showing no sign of care in the layering of the bodies whatsoever. Four different layers were observed, probably equating to four phases of deposition, not strictly contemporary. Few humble artefacts accompanied the dead, mostly related to clothes and personal ornaments (for example fibulae and ring), while no offerings or objects pertaining to any kind of funerary rituals (such as perfume or banquet vases) is mentioned. Iron bonds (a neck band, an arm shackle, an isolated leg fetter and a pair of leg fetters) were found on four of the dead, which led the archaeologists to assume that these people may have been slaves who died in four main episodes separated by a short amount of time (corresponding to the four layers of bodies).

The biological data helped the scientists in their interpretation of this atypical grave. Indeed, the anthropological study indicated that men and women occurred in almost equal frequency, and that various age categories were represented, from children to adults, with a very high mortality rate of adolescents and young adults. Mature adults were rarer, and senile (over 50 years

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49. This conspiracy is briefly mentioned by Herodotus (V, 71–5.72), Thucydides (I, 126.2 – I, 126.12) and Plutarch (*Life of Solon*, 12.1–12.14).

50. S. Triantaphyllou and M. Bessios, "A Mass Burial at Fourth Century BC Pydna, Macedonia, Greece: Evidence for Slavery?" *Antiquity* 79, no. 105 (2005).

old) totally absent. While no sign of violent ante-mortem trauma (fractures, sharp blows, etc.) has been observed, the anthropologists underlined the poor general health state of these people. Many of them showed signs of physiological stresses such as enamel hypoplasia, Harris lines, anaemia, *cribra orbitalia*, etc. suggesting dietary and nutritional deficiencies during growth. The prevalence of affections of the musculoskeletal system was also very high, with an important rate of enthesopathies, strong muscular attachments, and arthritic changes that affected even very young individuals of both sexes, especially on the joints of ankles and wrists. All these signs denote that these individuals endured poor alimentation during childhood and were exposed to heavy physical labour from their youngest age. All these biological clue concords with the archaeological features to indicate that these people were of low status and probably pertained to subaltern working classes. The authors thus suggest that they may have been slaves who died before their time because of their poor health state and rough living conditions. This conclusion, though highly interesting, raises questions about the funerary treatment of slaves in the ancient Greek world, about which we actually hear very little from the texts[51]. We only know from inscriptions that slaves who had died on the battlefield were usually buried with their comrades,[52] with the exception of the battles of Marathon where slaves fought for the first time with the Athenians but were buried separately (Pausanias, *Periegesis*, I, 32.3) and Platea, where the Spartans buried the helots in a separate grave from the *homoioi* (Herodotus, IX, 85). From an archaeological point of view, only a few burials and cemeteries have been interpreted as possibly linked to slaves.[53] But the distinction between slaves and subaltern classes remains delicate if not totally impossible to draw from the mere archaeological records, all the more since there were many different kind of slaves status and attitudes towards slaves in the Ancient Greek world[54].

Returning to the interpretation of Pydna's mass grave as a slave burial, it does not really question the precise cause of death of so many persons in a short period, that is to say the origin of the mortality crisis we are dealing with in this case. Considering that there was no sign of violent inter-human perimortem interactions on the bones, the possibility of war or massacre victims can indeed be ruled out. Starvation or epidemics remain the two most probable options. To

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51. A. Lindenlauf, "Thrown Away Like Rubbish - Disposal of the Dead in Ancient Greece," *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 12 (2001): 95.

52. D. Kurtz and J. Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 198-199; Low 2003, 102.

53. See a possible case near the Greek colony of Poseidonia-Paestum, in Southern Italy: Contursi; G. Zuchtriegel, *Colonization and Subalternity in Classical Greece: Experience of the Nonelite Population* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), chapter 3.

54. Y. Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); P. Hunt, *Ancient Greek and Roman Slavery* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2017); S. Forsdyke, *Slaves and Slavery in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

decide between these two, one would need to access the complete biological profile of all the dead (while, when the paper presenting this research was published, only around half of the skeletons had been studied by anthropologists). Though almost no work has been dedicated up to date to the comparison and differentiation of the biological profile and death toll of famine and various types of epidemics[55], it could be a first step in that direction. Finally, it could be interesting to attempt an analysis directed at searching for possible pathogens agents on these skeletons, that could be the sign of a death correlated to epidemics – as has been suggested in the case of an exceptional mass burial from the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens.

Epidemics?

Apart from the already mentioned numerous wartime mass burials, the Kerameikos cemetery has yielded a unique mass grave, interpreted by its discoverers as linked to an epidemic, maybe the great plague that struck Athens during the first year of the Peloponnesian War according to Thucydides.[56] It was a huge, 6 m long, roughly round pit, dug between the Sacred Way and the Street of the Tombs.[57] Though pierced by two later pits that disturbed its global apprehension, it appeared that this structure contained several dozen dead. Based on the density of skeletons in the preserved area of the grave, archaeologist Effie Baziotopoulou suggest it originally gathered around 150 individuals. The bodies had been put in many layers, first with some order and care, regularly spaced out. Then, rush seems to have increased and the corpses were placed with less attention and less room between them, in various positions and orientations. As for the biological profile of the dead in this grave, there were both men and women, and also a few immature who were deposited in or under big pot sherds.

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55. See A. De Lépinau, D. Castex, H. Brzobohata, J. Frolik, F. Velimsky, et al. "Entre peste et famine: caracterisation d'une crise de mortalite par l'etude de trois sepultures multiples du site de Kutna Hora - Sedlec (Republique tcheque, XIVe siècle,)" *Bulletins et memoires de la Societe d'Anthropologie de Paris*, in press.

56. Thucydide, II, 47-54.

57. E. Baziotopoulou-Valavani, "A Mass Burial from the Cemetery of Kerameikos," in *Excavating Classical Culture; Recent Archaeological Discoveries in Greece*, edited by M. Stamatopoulou and M. Yeroulano (Oxford: BAR, 2002), 187-202.
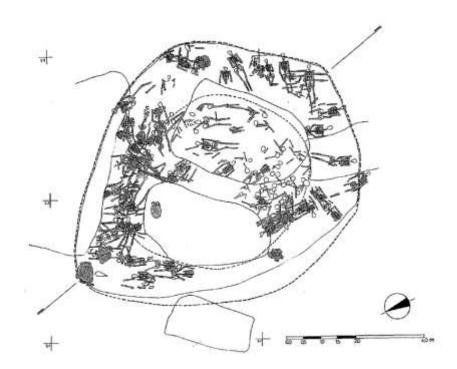
Figure 3. *Map of the Mass Burial Excavated in 1998 in the Kerameikos Cemetery, Athens*
Source: Baziotopoulou-Valavani 2002, Figure 3, p. 191.

Apart from these sherds, close to 30 vases were found, mainly in the lower levels of the grave, those showing the greatest care towards the dead. Among them were a few drinking vessels, but predominantly perfume vases including many *lekythoi* and even white-ground *lekythoi*, known to be exclusively funerary offerings.[58] Their typology allows to date the grave around 435-420 BC. These offerings demonstrate some kind of funerary concern for these dead, especially in the first phase of the mortality crisis. This feature clearly distinguishes this mass burial from the one in Pydna and is pretty uncommon when compared with epidemics mass burials of later periods. Finally, it is the sense of precipitation visible in the rough positioning of the last deceased that appears to the archaeologists as a decisive argument to suggest that these individuals may have died of epidemics rather than famine – that would not have raised, according to them, the same sense of panic and haste. One could nonetheless underline that starvation and epidemics often walk hand in hand in history.

This first archaeological explanation has led a determinant role in the anthropological study of the grave. Indeed, if no detailed publication is up-to-now available on the macroscopic examination of the skeletal remains and the possible presence of traumas, stress markers or musculoskeletal indicators, that would allow knowing more about the life condition and history of these

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58. Kurtz, *Athenian White Lekythoi: Patterns and Painters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

individuals, DNA analysis was conducted and released on three teeth, sampled from three dead in this grave. Anthropologist Manos Papagrigorakis concluded that these teeth contained the DNA of a bacterium that could be related to *Salmonella Enterica,* responsible for modern typhus.[59] This result has been contested by B. Shapiro[60] and R. Littman,[61] on two grounds. First, they affirmed that the bacterium could be an undetermined contemporary one currently existing in the soil (an argument refuted by Papagrigorakis, insisting on the attention paid to the non-contamination of the samples). Their second claim was that the bacterium was not that close to modern Typhus bacterium, and could be something totally different. Though Papagrigorakis recognized the uncertainty of his hypothesis, he still argues that nothing his contesters said could rules out the possibility of these individuals to have died of Typhus.[62] He finally concludes that it was, probably, the famous disease described by Thucydides as the great 'plague' of Athens. Interestingly, the ancient historian claims that the number of dead was so high that panic struck the city and that many of them were simply left unburied. This pit could thus demonstrate another way of facing mass death in Ancient Athens, midway through normal funerary practices and burial denial all in all.

Despite this debate and doubt, this mass burial is thus particularly interesting since it could represent one of the earliest cases of epidemics mass burial known up to this day. To confirm this interpretation, though, one should analyse the detailed biological profile of all the individuals gathered in this grave, especially their repartition in age categories.[63] Only when a complete pathological survey is done, including data on bone growth and stress markers, will it possible to cast away definitely the chance of famine and precise the possible type of epidemic. It would then be necessary to look for accurate statistics on the death

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59. M. J. Papagrigorakis, C. Yapijakis, P. N. Synodinos and E. Baziotopoulou-Valavani, "DNA Examination of Ancient Dental Pulp Incriminates Typhoid Fever as a Probable Cause of the Plague of Athens," *International Journal of Infectious Diseases* 10, no. 3 (2006): 206-214.

60. B. Shapiro, A. Rambaut and M. T. P. Gilbert, "No Proof that Typhoid Caused the Plague of Athens (a Reply to Papagrigorakis et al.)" *International Journal of Infectious Diseases* 10, no. 4 (2006): 334-335.

61. R. J. Littman, "The Plague of Athens: Epidemiology and Paleopathology," *Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine* 76, no. 5 (2009): 456-467.

62. Papagrigorakis, C. Yapijakis, P. N. Synodinos and E. Baziotopoulou-Valavani, "Insufficient Phylogenetic Analysis may not Exclude Candidacy of Typhoid Fever as a Probable Cause of the Plague of Athens (reply to Shapiro et al.)" *International Journal of Infectious Diseases* 10, no. 4 (2006): 335-336.

63. It would also be very interesting to try and understand if this mass grave was linked to the same event as the second nearby mass grave, mentioned by the authors in the same publication (Baziotopoulou-Valavani, 2002) but without any details. The only thing we know is that it was a rectangular pit which yielded at least 27 well-ordered individuals.

toll and demographic impact of typhoid fever in ancient societies. In this regard, confronting the Athenian findings with that retrieved from 16th century Mexico about the terrible disease that decimated indigenous populations of the Americas during the first contact period will be fundamental.[64] The Kerameikos cemetery has therefore still a lot to tell us and need further investigation to uncover clear evidence of epidemics-related mass burials in the Ancient Greek World.

Conclusion

As we hope to have demonstrated in this paper, different types of mortality crises motivate distinct types of funerary practices and sites, more or less easy to identify. If mass burials related to acts of war are both relatively simple to apprehend and frequent in the archaeological record of the Ancient Greek world, recognizing epidemic burials appeared to be much more difficult. Though many written sources describe the panic generated by the abundance of bodies in times of epidemics and the incapacity of the living to take care of them, we actually know very few archaeological contexts that can clearly be linked to such events, particularly in Ancient Greece but more generally in ancient societies. This rarity is not without raising questions: what happened to the numerous dead who passed away during massive epidemic outbreak? What was their funerary treatment? Were some of them simply deprived of any kind of formal burial, are their burials still to be found, or are we just incapable of recognizing them, either because they were cremated, or placed into single burials, following the traditional funerary practices of the community they belonged to? Whatever the answer, it clearly appears that epidemic, even more when concomitant with times of starvation, more than any other type of massive death cause, challenges our abilities, as archaeoanthropologist, to evaluate the impact of mortality crises on the funerary beliefs and behaviours of the Ancient world. Establishing the precise nature of a possible epidemic disease in archaeological environments raises many problems. It cannot be straightforward (as it may be the case for contexts easier to apprehend, such as wartime burials) and requires to call upon detailed analysis concerning the biological profile of the dead. In the absence of precise data for the sites under study here, we were not able to offer definite conclusions. Let us hope that new discoveries and comprehensive publications will allow in the future for a better understanding of this fundamental matter for our knowledge of ancient societies, both from a biological and cultural point of view.

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64. Å. J. Vågene, M. G. Campana, N. M. R. García, C. Warinner, M. A. Spyrou, et al. "Salmonella Enterica Genomes Recovered from Victims of a Major 16th Century Epidemic in Mexico," *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 2, no. 3 (2018): 520-528.

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Hellanicus as Peripheral and a Critic of Athens?
Notes on a Study of a Fragmentary Historian

*By Matheus Vargas de Souza**

This paper explores the possibility of imagine Hellanicus of Lesbos as a politically critical author. Many works suggest that Hellanicus was a partisan of Athens or at least a sympathizer of that polis. *However new approaches have proposed that authors like Herodotus criticized the external politics of Athens, even in subtle ways. Therefore this paper argues the possibilities of thinking on Hellanicus as a peripheral critic of Athenian politics and on the limitations the fragmentary condition of the texts imposes.*

Introduction

Recently the debates on the political alignment of Herodotus have regained strength through some works that questioned the relations between the *Histories* and the political actions of the Athenian hegemony. One of the most recent works about this theme argued, like others, that Herodotus uses his narrative constructions of the past to create images that could reflect his contemporary context for the audience.[1] However, most importantly, the associations between past and present were completely free, which gave Herodotus the opportunity to stay in a very comfortable position. Safe from the implications of a rigid political alignment declaration, Herodotus did not stop presenting his modest and continuous detractions, while presented the past as a mirror of the different facets of Athenian tragedy; at least in the final version of his *logoi*, when these were connected and revised.[2] It's important to say that this argumentation explored the text of the *Histories* profoundly and it depended on the access of most of the nine books. Without reading big excerpts of the books, everything would be mere assumptions.

These kinds of argumentation bring us some questions about the possibilities of understanding (or at least questioning) the political alignment of different

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1. Souza, *Ἀθηνέων κατήκοοι: estudo sobre as Histórias de Heródoto e sua crítica ao Império Ateniense,* Masters Dissertation (Rio de Janeiro: Programa de Pós-Graduação em História – Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, 2020). For other recent works related to this topic, see Irwin, 2007, 2009, 2018; Munson, 2012. There is a vast bibliography about Herodotus' critical stance toward Athens. For one of the most relevant, see Souza, 2020, 30-59. The title of this paper is directly related to one of the chapters of his work, entitled 'Heródoto periférico e crítico de Atenas' (Peripheral Herodotus and critic of Athens).

2. Souza, *Ἀθηνέων κατήκοοι: estudo sobre as Histórias de Heródoto e sua crítica ao Império Ateniense,* 2020, 155, 157, 185-186, 194.

authors from Antiquity. There are many works about this subject, about Thucydides or some tragedy and comedy writers, for instance. Nevertheless, there is an uncountable number of authors that haven't reached us and probably never will. From some of them, we have a restricted number of fragments and these are the only material we use to (try to) understand their production and their political inclinations. In this paper, I will discuss some ways to understand one of those authors who rest in a fragmentary condition. Exploring the profound fragilities of conjecturing anything about these authors, I will suggest that an analysis like the one made on Herodotus, completely impossible to do on Hellanicus, is the only way to understand the political alignment of an author who didn't expressly write it.

Interpreting Hellanicus

Hellanicus of Mytilene has been traditionally crowned as the father of horography in Ancient Greece. This interpretation commonly comes together with the whole theory about the development of Greek historiography created by Felix Jacoby. A theory that was full of a linear development idea, in an evolutionist meaning, by the way. In this theory, it's important to note, Thucydides is the ideal *telos* of the Greek historiography, and all the other authors are evaluated by this criterion.[3] In fact, the hegemony of Thucydides in historiographic theories at Jacoby's time is a kind of second-wave, since the 19th century, that elected Thucydides as the masterpiece of Greek historiography, culminating in the model of Jacoby, based on Ancient arguments such as Dionysius' and Cicero's.[4] However, Jacoby became the most important reference to the fragments' studies of Greek historians, especially because of his prolific opera. Joseph Skinner, in a recent paper, has remembered the relevance of Jacoby, despite the recent criticism on imprecisions of Jacoby's work.[5] It is impossible to declare something about Hellanicus' fragments, for example, without talking about Jacoby's theories. Furthermore, it is impossible not to criticize it nowadays.

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3. Marques, "Historicizando as categorias de Felix Jacoby: os gêneros historiográficos da Antiguidade e sua classificação pelos modernos," in *Fronteiras Mediterrânicas* (Porto Alegre: Editora Fi, 2019), 230, 234-237.

4. Payen, "A constituição da história como ciência no século XIX e seus modelos antigos: fim de uma ilusão ou futuro de uma herança?" *História da Historiografia*, no. 6 (2011): 120-121; Marques, "Historicizando as categorias de Felix Jacoby: os gêneros historiográficos da Antiguidade e sua classificação pelos modernos," 2019, 235-236; Skinner, "Writing Culture: historiography, hybridity, and the shaping of collective memory," in *Histos Supplement 11 – Shaping Memory in Ancient Greece: Poetry, Historiography, and Epigraphy (*2020), 199.

5. Skinner, "Writing Culture: historiography, hybridity, and the shaping of collective memory," 2020, 198.

One of the relevant points Jacoby has imposed on the studies of Hellanicus is a claimed inspiration of Herodotus upon the birth of horography, as a kind of inspiration for local and patriotic narratives.[6] It is interesting to see that a contrary possibility had been thought by B. Perrin, some years before Jacoby. There was indeed much freedom in these interpretations: before Jacoby, Perrin was saying that many titles of Hellanicus' works were in fact subtitles of an entire opera.[7] Jacoby, of course, tried to crystalize a chronology that made his theory plausible and placed Hellanicus as a kind of minor successor of Herodotus. In his mind, there was a clear evolutive chronology between Hecataeus and Thucydides, where Herodotus was a kind of an intermediary author and where Hellanicus and others were different forms of evolution in the rational Greek historiography, nothing but different and insufficient if compared with Thucydides.[8] This is probably the first point we could contradict in Jacoby's vision of Hellanicus. In fact, recent studies have pointed out a significant possibility that Herodotus would have lived until after the 420s BC, probably seeing the end of the Peloponnesian War in 404 BC.[9] If these propositions are correct, it makes Herodotus' production date of the *Histories* later than the production of Hellanicus' work, which is 407 BC. I will point this out later in this paper, but, for now, it must be clear that there is a possibility that Jacoby's statements are partially wrong. And I say 'partially' because it is not impossible that Herodotus has inspired some of Hellanicus' writings, but what needs to be considered now is that the opposite direction of influence could have happened as well.

Some of Jacoby's notes have been questioned in the last decades and one of the most recent and relevant responses to the German philologist is the one delivered by John Marincola. Defending the necessity of a new taxonomy for the different kinds of ancient historians, Marincola is one of those who asked for a less teleological comprehension of the Greek historiography development, as well as a less rigid categorization.

> […] enquanto Jacoby parte de uma pergunta a priori, de caráter evolutivo, Marincola faz o contrário, pois seu propósito é entender a lógica interna da narrativa do autor em primeiro lugar para só depois (talvez) interpretá-lo dentro do conjunto.[10]

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6. Marques, "Historicizando as categorias de Felix Jacoby: os gêneros historiográficos da Antiguidade e sua classificação pelos modernos," 2019, 238.

7. Perrin, "The Iereiai of Hellanicus and the Burning of the Argive Heraeum," *The American Journal of Philology* 22, no. 1 (1901): 40.

8. Nevertheless, Perrin's considerations over Hellanicus had indeed an evolutionist sense, in the traditional primacy of Thucydides. See note 4.

9. Irwin, "The End of the Histories and the End of the Atheno-Peloponnesian Wars," in *Interpreting Herodotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 279-334; Souza, *Ἀθηνέων κατήκοοι: estudo sobre as Histórias de Heródoto e sua crítica ao Império Ateniense,* 2020.

10. Marques, "Historicizando as categorias de Felix Jacoby: os gêneros historiográficos da Antiguidade e sua classificação pelos modernos," 2019, 244. "[...] while Jacoby starts

There is a problem, however, with no clear answer. The different criteria proposed by Marincola have a literary sense. To inquire if the text has a narrative or non-narrative aspect, for example. Even if we discover if the text is more or less synchronic, or diachronic, or if it is a kind of ethnography, or horography, even if we find out what is the relation between the text and time, generations, or understand the way how the text presents the facts in time, there is no clear way to look for a political alignment in the text. I agree with the propositions of Marincola, but what I mean is that these propositions are insufficient if we want to find concrete relations between the historiography and the political events of its own time. Unfortunately, and we shall see this further in this paper, the studies on the fragmentary Greek historians are completely arrested in a limited study of its categories, development, and meaning for Philosophy of History. It seems that all those authors are condemned to serve only thoughts about the origins of History, without any clear understanding of the political actions of writing those different histories in different times and places across Ancient Greece. I insist: the act of thinking about the origins of History and the many historiographic possibilities that have been produced in different cultural contexts is self-justified. That is not my point of disagreement. However, this aspect isn't either relevant to me when I'm looking for the possibilities of thinking about the political implications of some of those many historical writings. Finally, I believe that there is an enormous field insufficiently explored to discuss what were the political implications of those historical writings in those *poleis*.

There are, of course, some works that followed this path and I will approach those who thought about Hellanicus later in this paper. But for now, we need to remember the notes of P. A. Brunt upon the studies on fragmentary authors of Antiquity. In his words:

> […] scholars have often been too precipitate in characterizing and evaluating lost histories on the basis of evidence that is irremediably insufficient, and that in particular too little account is commonly taken of the relevant characteristics of the authors who preserve the "reliquiae", their reliability in quoting or summarizing, and their own interests and purposes. What follows is necessarily a mere sketch with a few illustrations of some habits of ancient writers in quoting, paraphrasing, or epitomizing earlier works, to which in my judgement too little attention is often given. The *style* of a lost author can hardly be inferred from an epitome.[11]

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with a question *a priori*, of an evolutive aspect, Marincola does the opposite, because his purpose is to understand first the internal logic of the author's narrative and later (maybe) to interpret it on the whole."

11. Brunt, "On Historical Fragments and Epitomes," *The Classical Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1980): 477-478.

He suggested that the idea of 'reliquiae' would be a better concept rather than 'fragments' because of the many imprecisions inherent to the many references of some authors to others that we can't read because they are lost.

> 'Fragments' and epitomes reflect the interests of the authors who cite or summarize lost works as much as or more than the characteristics of the works concerned. Our best evidence for the scope and content such a work does indeed consist in summaries, especially if they are relatively full and give indications of the distribution of the material in books. Only long excerpts reveal something of an author's quality, and then we need to be assured that they are representative. The most detailed narratives of secondary writers, whose credibility is no more than that of the authority or authorities they followed, also deserve the most respect [...] they are likely to be the most accurate reproductions of lost works, whereas brief notices in other works which seemingly contradict them may themselves be inexact or misleading reports by a careless epitomator.[12]

One of the most important points of Brunt is that we can't comprehend much of any work if we don't read a considerable amount of its material. For him, to know a text by its fragments is contradictory and he pays attention to one of the great questions about the fragmentary *corpora* of the Greek historians, which is the question of their style. He argues that is impossible to understand clearly the style of an old writer if we don't have access to a great part of his work.[13] And that explains the priority given by Brunt for the reading of bigger excerpts, practice with which I agree. I suggest that more than the style, we stay unable to understand clearly the political filiations of the text. And I say it because any historiographical text has a political alignment and a political impact, as it manipulates the foundations of a collective identity through the uses of collective memory and characters of the past with their meanings and actions. The recent propositions of Joseph Skinner show us that historiography had fundamental relevance to the sedimentation of a collective identity in Ancient Greece.[14] But even with the Skinner's claiming for a new understanding of those fragmentary historians, and for a more cautious reading of those fragments, I believe that Brunt's observations are not at all obsolete. Even with the proposition of Skinner and with a new breath of the studies of the fragments, we have to accept the many insurmountable limitations of those studies. Not only for the apprehension of the author's style but also the political implications of the text.

In the specific case of Hellanicus, it is relevant to note that some questions are recurrent as, for example, if he did write a chronicle of Athens among his many different texts. Perrin presumed that, besides writing a chronicle, Hellanicus was

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12. Idem, 494.

13. Idem, 477, 480, 484-485.

14. Skinner, "Writing Culture: historiography, hybridity, and the shaping of collective memory," 2020, 189-192, 223-224.

joining other Greeks to build a 'national' conscience. For him, Hellanicus had composed one of many "national Hellenic chronicles."[15] More than a hundred years after the suppositions of Perrin and after the critics of a modern sense of nationality imposed on the Ancient Greeks, the propositions of Skinner bring that spirit back to memory. But instead of imagining a sense of crystalized nationality among the Greeks, now we know that the possibilities are more limited and that the precision in the understanding of the Antiquity requires a moderate perspective that includes the absence of generalizations and some precautions in the use of concepts and anachronisms.[16] Skinner limits his work hoping to find a subtle sense of belonging that passes through the ancient texts in a crescent sense of "difference yet connectedness."[17]

But Perrin's ideas are no longer sufficient either to the question of the literary gender. While Perrin considered Hellanicus' *Atthis* as a chronicle, Joyce presented solid arguments for a rupture in his interpretation. Criticizing broadly Jacoby's premisses, Joyce demonstrated that we have no sufficient reason to believe that Hellanicus' *Atthis* could be considered a chronicle, in terms of a text fully based on a chronological organization of matters. In his words, "by supposing Hellanikos to be a chronicler of any description, we create many more theoretical problems than we solve and make a nonsense of Thucydides' assessment of the *Attic History* and of his response to it."[18] Everything showed to be a distortion caused by the rigid categories and evolutive perception of Jacoby. So it is relevant to understand that Hellanicus was not necessarily writing a specific kind of historiographical text imagined by the moderns, which makes us more distant from its real frame. However, I believe that those two works, Perrin's and Joyce's, have one specific problem that is not to consider one of the author's central characteristics: Hellanicus, like many other historians, wrote about places he wasn't from. His *Atthis* is just one of his works, of course, but for my purpose here, I will give more attention to it. And it is a fact that no sufficient attention has been given to the peripheral or at least outsider condition of the author. Fomenting an idea of Hellenic identity or even nationality – and that is a completely rightful point to be explored –, scholars have forgotten to inquire about the political disputes and the distance between different Hellenic communities. As Skinner pointed out:

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15. Perrin, "The Iereiai of Hellanicus and the Burning of the Argive Heraeum," 1901, 43.

16. I chose to include the idea of anachronism based on the propositions of the recent book of Carol Atack, Tim Rood, and Tom Phillips, which claims for controlled use of the anachronism as a way of studying and understanding the Antiquity. See Rood, Atack & Phillips. *Anachronism and Antiquity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

17. Skinner, "Writing Culture: historiography, hybridity, and the shaping of collective memory," 2020, 209.

18. Joyce, "Was Hellanikos the first chronicler of Athens?" *Histos* 3, no. 1 (1999): 16.

> Whereas the nature and significance of local history has attracted considerable comment, the distinction between local history and ethnography has gone largely unquestioned in subsequent scholarship debating the origins of the local histories of Athens and horography more broadly.[19]

Therefore, many studies of those (so-called) local histories didn't consider the fact that even writing about a Hellenic community, the writer is commonly writing about a strange community. Furthermore, the distinction between ethnography and horography has been based on a supposed distinction between the local history focused on the odd, and the local history focused on the equal or maybe similar. But we do not necessarily have sufficient records to know if the ancients thought like that. Even with concepts like 'barbarian', the texts mention different kinds of Hellenic people, and this hue must be remarked. Hellanicus, by no means, would write about the Athenians like the Athenians themselves. And this is a good reason by itself for us to see Hellanicus differently from other athidographers.

Some works considered these perceptions on the distance between Hellanicus and his object of writing. Charles Fornara, for example, in a cautious and restrained paper, indicates that Hellanicus probably narrates one of his stories in disagreement with a current version among the Athenians. Even considering that it would be imprecise to talk about an official version of History imposed by the Athenian state, Fornara comments that the disagreement itself should be more interpreted once it could have political implications in Hellanicus' rhetoric.[20] However, Fornara didn't explore enough his own argumentation when he explains the political implications of a different version of the history of Alcmaeonid tyrannicides in Hellanicus' narrative.

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19. Skinner, "Writing Culture: historiography, hybridity, and the shaping of collective memory," 2020, 201. There are other propositions of Skinner that we can't ignore, for example, his notes on the mythological question: "Attempting to divide these fragments into prose genres considered either rational or 'scientific' (i.e., geography or ethnography) or 'mythological' (mythography) is unlikely to produce anything other than a false dichotomy since distinguishing between mythic and historical pasts appears to have been little more than a rhetorical strategy for early writers." Skinner, "Writing Culture: historiography, hybridity, and the shaping of collective memory," 2020, 217-218.

20. Fornara, "Hellanicus and an Alcmaeonid Tradition," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 17, no. 3 (1968): 382-383.

Recent Approaches

Most recently, Gabriella Vanotti has remembered that the debate on the political relations of Hellanicus with Athens became continuous since the 1970s.[21] Names such as János Harmatta, Antonio Aloni, and Anna M. Biraschi defended that Hellanicus constituted himself as an opponent of Athenian imperialism.[22] On the other hand, Dino Ambaglio and Roberto Sammartano argued that the political alignment of Hellanicus was with Athens and its external politics.[23] Ambaglio, it is important to say, even maintaining his defense of Hellanicus as an Athenian partisan, applied to his arguments the perception that Hellanicus probably needed to be fairly cautious in his writings, in a position kind of "acrobatic."[24] In other words, a man from Lesbos (in the time we suppose Hellanicus was writing his *Atthis*) should be careful with his own words when talking about Athens, speaking to the Lesbians and to the Athenians as well. That is a good point in any case, but the general question stays under debate.

The recent thesis of Théodossios Polychronis is a witness to that. In a monumental work of reinterpreting and retranslating the fragments of Hellanicus,[25] the question of the political alignment of the author didn't go

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21. Vanotti, "Egesta ed Esione da Ellanico di Lesbo a Dionisio di Alicarnasso," in *Tra panellenismo e tradizioni locali: Nuovi contribute* (Messina: Dipartimento di Scienze dell' Antichità, 2011), 341, n. 75.

22. Harmatta, "La tendance politique d'Hellanicos dans les Troikà," 1975; Aloni, *Tradizioni arcaiche della Troade e composizione dell'iliade* (Milan, 1986), 59-62; Biraschi, *Tradizioni epiche e storiografia: Studi su Erodoto e Tucidide* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1989), 41-42.

23. Ambaglio, "L'opera storiografica di Ellanico di Lesbo," *Ricerche de Storiografia Antica* 2 (1980): 52-53; Sammartano, *Origines Gentium Siciliae: Ellanico, Antioco, Tucidide* (Roma: Gustavo Bretschneider, 1998), 111-119.

24. Ambaglio, "Ellanico, un Lokalpatriotismus problematico," in *Eoli ed Eolide tra Madrepatria e Colonie* (Naples: Luciano Editore, 2005), 135-144.

25. Polychronis' thesis offered a solid study of Hellanicus' production and the main questions of the beginnings of historiography in Greece itself. Good examples can be found where he admonishes us to think about the choices made by the ancients, selecting what was good and bad in historiography with no verifiable criteria today (p. 8). The same happens when he points out that the scientificist criteria of the 19th century and Jacoby's teleological theory aren't useful to interpret those fragments, following authors like Marincola in the perception that the texts show us just individual perceptions of the past and present (p. 10-12). One of the most interesting things I would like to recall is that Polychronis is absolutely cautious when he ponders that the text has been deformed through the centuries in the many quotations and paraphrases, and from this perspective, the fragments are never neutral, bearing diverse meanings related to the author who quotes, and to his own points. In Polychronis' words: « *[...] la thématique de l'œuvre du citateur conduit nécessairement à privilégier un type de citation, et l'agencement même des fragments constitue en lui-même une mise en perspective, une interprétation de l'original, qui n'est*

unnoticed. Unfortunately, at this specific point, he wasn't so precise as in the rest of his work. He presumed that Hellanicus wouldn't take the risk of writing many critics about Athens while his foreigner condition could put him in an uncomfortable position.[26] His arguments are limited to imagining that Hellanicus was trying to crown his own literary production when he creates a rich account of Attic local traditions.[27] He dismisses the supposition that Hellanicus' *Atthis* could have been commissioned by Pericles (considering it an unnecessary hypothesis), and he is as much cautious when he doesn't defend that Hellanicus was working directly for Athens, because we don't have enough evidence of that, and because it seems to complicate the facts.[28] If on the one hand, he is careful, on the other hand, he is careless, when he suggests that Hellanicus' *Atthis* is just a literary project thought to be enjoyable and successful. He is even more careless when he suggests that the simple fact of composing an *Atthis* as the last work would indicate such a project. We have no sufficient information to presume that. And most of all, we have no sufficient information to understand the rhetoric within Hellanicus' discourse. By making this supposition, Polychronis, unfortunately,

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pas celle de l'auteur cité. Cela a, évidemment, des conséquences très importantes pour la compréhension d'un auteur fragmentaire; les fragments nous offrent non pas une image de l'auteur, mais, déjà, une première interprétation de ce dernier qui, par la force des choses, est multiple vu la pluralité de citateurs. [...] Fut-elle immédiatement rédigée et mise par écrit, puis copiée et publiée sous la forme de livres, bénéficiant ainsi d'une diffusion? S'agissait-il originellement d'une suite de λόγοι distincts, ayant donné lieu à des lectures publiques (ἀποδείξεις), formant d'emblée un ouvrage ou ayant été rassemblés en un tout cohérent et définitivement fixé par une rédaction écrite? Le grand nombre de titres serait-il dû à une division trouvant son origine dans la transmission matérielle de l'œuvre, qui l'aurait, très tôt, livrée à la postérité sous une forme, qui, dès l'origine, ne représentait plus la vision originelle d'Hellanicos? Ces questions, faute d'éléments pertinents et certains, doivent nécessairement rester sans réponse.»

"[...] the theme of the work of the one who does quotations necessarily leads to favoring a type of quotation, and the very arrangement of the fragments constitutes in itself a perspective, an interpretation of the original, which is not the one of the quoted author. This obviously has very important consequences for the understanding of a fragmentary author; the fragments do not offer us an image of the author, but yet a first interpretation of the latter which, by necessity, is multiple, given the plurality of citators. [...] Was it immediately put into writing, then copied and published in the form of books, thus benefiting from a diffusion? Was it originally a series of distinct λόγοι, having given space to public readings (ἀποδείξεις), immediately forming a work or having been assembled into a coherent whole and definitively set by a written essay? The large number of titles, would it be due to a division having its origin in the material transmission of the work, which would have, very early, delivered it into posterity in a form that, since its origins, no longer represented the original vision of Hellanicus? These questions, in the lack of relevant and certain elements, must necessarily remain unanswered" (p. 50-51).

26. Polychronis, *Hellanicos de Lesbos: Histoire des origines, origines de l'Histoire,* Doctoral Thesis (Paris: Université d'Aix-Marseille – Faculté des Lettres, 2018), 113.

27. Idem, 108-109.

28. Idem, ibidem.

did not consider the possibility that Hellanicus could write a book that included ironical, or subtle, and allusive critics using the past to speak of the present, as Herodotus has done. It is a possibility that we have to take into account. Polychronis didn't forget to say that *Atthis* would probably have a connection to the present, tracing parallels between the past and the present besides just narrating the old local traditions.[29] However, he did not consider the possibly distant and unsympathetic position of Hellanicus.

This position was taken into consideration by Laurence Baurain-Rebillard two years before. She noticed that Plutarch witnessed how Hellanicus was the first to write that Helen had been kidnapped by Theseus, building a disgusting image of the Athenian king, who might be fifty years old, against the seven-year-old girl.[30] Moreover, she pointed out a problematic question: if the text of *Atthis* was sympathetic to Athens, why would Hellanicus build an offensive image of Theseus? We have to remember that Theseus was an important hero to the Athenian identity and even to the imperial discourse of Athens and the democratic ideology.[31] Admitting the fragile basis of the argumentation of Hellanicus as favorable to Athens, Baurain-Rebillard finds an explanation by paying attention to the little information we have about the life of Hellanicus and contrasting that (and the fragments) with the events of Hellanicus' time.

> Concernant Thésée, Hellanicos pourrait avoir dépoillé des sources peu favorables à Athènes, à une époque où la tension montait entre elle et Sparte. On se rappellera aussi qu'Hellanicos était originaire de Mytilène, qui, après sa révolte de 428-7, a subi

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29. Idem, 28-30.

30. Baurain-Rebillard, "Thésée, le rapt d'Hélène et Hellanicos: les origines politiques d'une réprobation morale," in *Héros Grecs à Travers le Temps: Autour de Persée, Thésée, Cadmos, et Bellérophon* (Metz: Centre de Recherches Universitaires Lorrain d'Histoire, 2016), 224-225. I reinforce here that the fragments 168a and 168b come from Plut. *Thes.* 31 and from Tz. *ad. Lyc.* 1332. So the information that Helen was seven years old came to us solely from a byzantine author of the 12th century. Regardless, Plutarch had already a sense of moral reproach in the text of Hellanicus, which makes it acceptable to think that John Tzetzes is trustworthy.

31. Walker, *Theseus and Athens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 35, 52-53, 64-66; Claude Calame, *Thésée et l'imaginaire athénien: légende et culte en Grèce antique* (Lausanne: Editions Payot, 1996), 449; Souza, Ἀθηνέων κατήκοοι: *estudo sobre as Histórias de Heródoto e sua crítica ao Império Ateniense*, 2020, 70-72. It is useful to remember that "*o Teseu de Heródoto aparece nessa única ocorrência manchado pelo rapto de Helena, ao que Heródoto nomeia como* ὕβρις [...]. *O Teseu de Heródoto é insolente, um arrogante, um destemperado; é um* ὑβριστής" / "the Theseus of Herodotus appears in this sole occurrence spotted by the kidnap of Helen, to what Herodotus calls ὕβρις [...]. The Theseus of Herodotus is insolent, arrogant, and intemperate; he is a ὑβριστής" (Souza, Ἀθηνέων κατήκοοι: *estudo sobre as Histórias de Heródoto e sua crítica ao Império Ateniense,* 2020, 89-90). Therefore, Hellanicus could be the source of Herodotus and *vice versa*, but it is relevant to note that these two metics decided to use the same version; that one different from the Athenian.

une répression féroce de la part d'Athènes, n'échappant que de peu à la destruction totale. Avant même cette date, des critiques s'étaient forcément élevées, à Mytilène et, au-delà de l'île de Lesbos, dans bien d'autres Cités de la Ligue de Délos. Critiquer Thésée, rabaisser son prestige, cela pouvait être une façon d'exprimer son mécontentement à l'égard d'une Athènes qui outrepassait ses prérogatives de Cité hégémonique.[32]

She explored how the paintings on Athenian ceramic show a different image of Theseus, without the tremendous difference between him and Helen. The Athenian discourse, of course, was using the figure of Theseus in the same way as its cultural figures at Delphi, for example, to legitimize their position through the Pan-Hellenic discourse.[33] But Hellanicus' discourse was constituted in a different way, and this is as much relevant information as he running from the Athenian discourse about Harmodius and Aristogeiton, as Fornara pointed out.

Ce qui est clair en revanche, c'est que les peintres d'Athènes montrent l'enlèvement sans connotation nègative, bien plutôt comme une preuve supplémentaire de la vigueur du héros national, et en tout cas jamais avec la différence d'âge qui ferait de Thésée un pervers pédophile. En introduisant des considérations d'âge totalement étrangères à la pensée mythique – qui n'avait que faire du temps mesurable des hommes et de la rationalité – , Hellanicos, passionné de chronographie et animé d'une volonté d'organisation logique des légendes diverses des Cités grecques (et sans doute aussi d'une certaine rancune à l'égard d'Athènes), a terni l'image de Thésée. Le rapt d'Hélène a d'abord servi le dénigrement d'Athènes et/ou de la démocratie.[34]

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32. Baurain-Rebillard, "Thésée, le rapt d'Hélène et Hellanicos: les origines politiques d'une réprobation morale," 2016, 225. "Related to Theseus, Hellanicus could have looked for sources unfavorable to Athens, in a time when the tension between it and Sparta was growing. Let's also remember that Hellanicus was originally from Mytilene, which, after her 428/7 rebellion, fell under ferocious repression by Athens, barely escaping from total destruction. Even before that, the critics must have been numerous in Mytilene and, beyond the island of Lesbos, in many other cities of the Delian League. To criticize Theseus, to reduce his prestige, could be a way of expressing their dissatisfaction with an Athens that surpassed its prerogatives of a hegemonic city."

33. Krikona, "The Notion of Panhellenism through Athenian and Syracusan Dedications in Apollo's sanctuary at Delphi in the early 5th century BCE," in *Through the Eyes of a Stranger: Appropriating Foreign Material Culture and Transforming the Local Context*, edited by Ana Popović (Zagreb, 2018), 51.

34. Ibidem, 231. "What is clear, on the other hand, is that the painters of Athens show the kidnap without negative connotation, but as additional evidence of the national hero's strength and, in any case, never with the age difference that would make Theseus a wicked pedophile. Introducing considerations of age totally strange to the mythic thinking – that was related just to the measurable time of men and to rationality – Hellanicus, passionate to chronography and driven by a desire for logical organization of the various legends of the Greek Cities (and with no doubt with some bitterness toward Athens),

Maybe we could be more careful when we speak of democracy critics, but it is relevant to notice that 'democracy', or at least a popular government, means 'Athens' in a context where Athens sometimes imposes democracy over the rebels of the Delian League, like it was done with Samos. In any case, the propositions of Baurain-Rebillard touch a very important detail: the birthplace of Hellanicus. If we pay more attention to the situation of the Delian League, it's possible to recognize a strong domain that was controlled by Mytilene before the rebellion and its suppression by Athens. As Sean Jensen demonstrated, inside the Delian League and the Athenian Empire there were some sub-hegemonies across the Aegean Sea, and Mytilene was one of them.

Mytilene in Geopolitics and Hellanicus' Real Place in Athenian Empire

Retracing the known facts, Mytilene seems to have controlled the same places across the Troad since the Archaic Period, and although we have less evidence about the size of that sub-hegemony, we know that around 425 BC Mytilene received tribute from thirteen *poleis*.[35] We also know that Athens didn't intervene in this political situation of Troad, but when the Mytilenians tried to constitute a synoecism with its neighbors, and later with the interference of Athens, there was a revolt[36]. After the revolt, Athens executed the leaders, demolished the wall of Mytilene, confiscated the fleet, and distributed three thousands of land plots for Athenians as clerurchies.[37] Moreover, the Athenians took the sub-hegemony of Mytilene and didn't restore it for them even after the devolution of the autonomy of the Lesbian *polis*.[38] It maintained anti-Athens Mytilenians resisting to the Athenian politics and acting for revolt in those peripheries of the old Mytilenian sub-hegemony.[39] And there was even a revolt in 412 BC.

Few works used this sequence of events as a parameter to understand Hellanicus' text. As it has happened to Herodotus, who firstly was seen as a partisan of Athens. However, differently from Herodotus, the text of Hellanicus didn't reach us in an expressive volume of information. As a result, the many studies that examined the *Histories* and described the allusions to Herodotus' present time and the context of the Peloponnesian War and the Athenian Empire

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smears the image of Theseus. The kidnapping of Helen served, first of all, to denigrate Athens and/or the democracy."

35. Jensen, *Rethinking Athenian Empire: Sub-Hegemony in the Delian League,* Doctoral Thesis (New Burnswick: The State University of New Jersey, 2010), 194-196.

36. Idem, 197-199.

37. Idem, ibidem.

38. Idem, 202.

39. Idem, 203-204.

are completely impossible in Hellanicus' case. We can speculate, imagine, suggest, even find some evidence, but anything we could find wouldn't be enough to determine if Hellanicus was criticizing Athens or not. What we have as evidence are limited points. It is clear that Hellanicus was writing about some Attic traditions in a different way from how the Athenians narrate them. We have the example pointed out by Baurain-Rebillard and we have another one made by Fornara. Those two examples show us a similarity between Hellanicus and Herodotus: both disseminated different versions from what Athenians proclaimed. The case of Herodotus is about the origins of the Athenians. Indeed, Herodotus rejects the discourse of autochthony and considers the Athenians descendants from the Pelasgians[40]. Susan Lape argued that such a different version was a way to confront directly the discursive pretensions of the Athenians to legitimize its power and solidity[41]. I suggest that the same logic can be applied to Hellanicus, but we don't have more evidence to reinforce this point as we do in Herodotus. For in Herodotus' work there are innumerous other examples of a critical stance toward the Athenian Empire, expressed across the nine books of *Histories*, that we can read profusely.[42]

Hellanicus didn't seem to disagree with the tradition that talked about the autochthony[43]. He seems to speak of the success of the Athenians in the past,[44] but it doesn't mean that he has defended his contemporary Athens: Herodotus praises the Athenians of the past, without saving Themistocles from critics, and it just means in his *Histories* that the Athenians of the present fell in a tragic sequence of *hybris* that culminates in the destruction of its empire.[45] But one of the most significant fragments is the one in which Hellanicus claims an ironic ancestry for Andocides.[46] We have no sufficient information to trace the limits of Hellanicus' life, but it's still possible that he lived until 407 BC. Even if it was just until 411 BC, there is a possibility that his *Atthis* was published after the events of 415 BC. And if it is right, to write about a strong relation between Andocides and Hermes means that the text of Hellanicus dialogues more with its own time than to anything. For the simple fact that, in 415 BC, the mutilation of the Herms was a

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40. Hdt. 1.56; 7.95; 8.44.

41. Lape, *Race and Citizen Identity in the Classical Athenian Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 149-155.

42. As, for example, the work of Rosaria Munson (1988), that suggested that the acts of Artemisia in the *Histories* are an allusion to Athens and its politics; or the work of Blösel (2001; 2004) that suggests the same for Themistocles. Or even the work of Raaflaub (2002) that establishes relations between the Persians and the Athenians. These are just three examples of many other works in this way.

43. FGrH 4 F 47.

44. FGrH 4 F 47a-47b.

45. Souza, *Ἀθηνέων κατήκοοι: estudo sobre as Histórias de Heródoto e sua crítica ao Império Ateniense,* 2020, 149-150, 154-155, 195-196.

46. FGrH 4 F 170.

scandal in Athens, near the expedition to Sicily, and Andocides was one of the many accused of committing that crime, posteriorly accusing others and creating an alibi[47]. I would like to remark that this information opens different possibilities of interpretation and that nothing is conclusive. Nevertheless, we can infer that Hellanicus was trying to defend Andocides. Or we could think that Hellanicus was criticizing the spirit of terror established in Athens. We can also surmise that Hellanicus was suggesting that Athenians have no loyalty even with their nearest gods.

Unfortunately, without considerable material from the text of Hellanicus, all of it is just speculation. However, I suggest that every reading of the fragments of Hellanicus must consider first that he probably would have a more distant and critical view of Athens. Not just because of the cultural differences (and here I remember the discussion about differentiating or not what is ethnography and horography), but because of the political and economic events described above. It is not very likely that Hellanicus would write a text completely sympathetic to Athens. Even less neutral. What is more acceptable is that he wrote a text that permitted a critical view without the risks of a direct political alignment clearly engraved in his words, as Herodotus did as well. Maybe it was a common tendency in historiographical texts of that time and foreigner to Athens, such as Ion of Chios, Stesimbrotos of Thasos, Idomeneus of Lampsacus, although tradition considered these examples as naturally critical.[48] I defend that Hellanicus must be framed as one of them.

The last fragment I would like to discuss is the one Hellanicus probably wrote about the gold coinage of Athens under the archonship of Antigenes, between 407/6 BC.[49] It is interesting to contrast this possible writing with the information that Mytilene used to produce a gold-silver alloy coinage (electrum), since 520s/510s BC and had a probable interruption exactly in the period when Athens took its *peraia* and disarticulated the sub-hegemony (427-405), until the defeat of the Attic *polis*.[50] This coinage returned and stayed until the 330s/320s. Near 427 BC, soon to the revolt against Athens, the Mytilenians were already producing silver coins instead of electrum, and with less weight of the Athenian coins.[51] Maybe Hellanicus was just pointing out a fact about Athens. But maybe Hellanicus lived long enough to see the defeat of Athens and was trying to create a *hybristes* image of it: not much time after coining with gold, after taking it from Mytilene, Athenian hegemony fell. Well, it seems an exaggerated image, but considerations of this kind have been made all the time on authors such as

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47. Canfora, *O Mundo de Atenas* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2015), 234-261.

48. Idem, 134. Referred tradition is essentially Plutarch, as pointed out by Canfora.

49. FGrH 4 F 172.

50. Ellis-Evans, *The Kingdom of Priam: Lesbos and the Troad between Anatolia and the Aegean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 189-190.

51. Idem, 190-191.

Herodotus when we have more material to analyze. And the fact we don't know precisely the date when Mytilene interrupted its electrum coinage (and if it was a direct consequence of the repression of Athens) is less important. Hellanicus maybe didn't know the exact date. Or maybe didn't care, hoping that his audience/readers didn't care either. It could be a simple and intentionally imprecise allusion. Again, we have no sufficient material to check speculations like these.

Conclusion

In resume, we don't have enough amount of writings to infer political alignment and critical stance with precision. However, we are not able to imagine a neutral Hellanicus just trying to achieve fame and glory through his texts and completely apart from any political position. Surely, the revolt of Mytilene and its consequences, the disarticulation of the sub-hegemony of that *polis* must influence the composition of Hellanicus's *Atthis*, especially because it is reasonable to think that Hellanicus was preparing his work during the Peloponnesian War (having started before it) and that its publication came at the end of the war.[52] By the way, Hellanicus probably had more chances to be a critic of Athens than Herodotus himself, because the later wasn't from a mighty center of sub-hegemony that had been disarticulated by the revenge of Athens. And even so, Herodotus was a visceral but subtle critic of Athens. To believe that Hellanicus had only literary aspirations is naïve and, despite the little information and the impossibility of deeply exploring the political alignment of the author, I suggest that we should always maintain the political implications of the text highlighted. Even if we cannot be sure about the content of those texts, paying attention solely to literary questions may lead us to the risk of erasing part of the author's materiality and limit precise considerations about the author's *ethos* and the relations between the historiographical texts and politics, economy and culture.

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