

# Marcus Antonius and the *negotiatores* of Dyrrhachium

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## Abstract

Based on the hoard evidence of Lleshan, Gjongecaj has published the bronze coinage of Dyrrhachium defining its dating in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 1st century BC.<sup>2</sup> The iconographic study of this coinage unfolds the political stance of its citizens during the power struggle between the *imperatores* Marcus Antonius and Gaius Octavius until the naval battle of Actium (31 BC). By the illustrating types we attempt to demonstrate the implication of the commercial ‘classes’, *negotiatores* and *mercatores*, in politics of Dyrrhachium. Moreover, by the Greek inscriptions on this coinage it is evident that the city retained its Greek identity even after the assassination of Julius Caesar.

## Introduction

The expansion of Rome’s military campaigns in the east signified the development of commercial activities in the provinces by Roman entrepreneurs.<sup>3</sup> Their influence was not limited only to financial matters, but also to politics. The case of T. Pomponius Atticus is an illuminating example of an energetic negotiator who attempted to forestall the *deductio colonia* of Buthrotum defending his financial interests. The same process of Roman colonization was initiated by Julius Caesar for the neighbor cities of Dyrrhachium and Byllis after his victory in Pharsalus (48 BC), but his assassination in Rome (44 BC) postponed these plans on the Greek calends.

## Historical background

The ancient city of Dyrrhachium was founded by colonists from Corinth and Corcyra in a mountainy peninsula at the southern coastline of Illyria in the last quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>4</sup> Influenced by the strong political impact of Corinth, Dyrrhachium participated in the Peloponnesian War<sup>5</sup> and in Timoleon’s military campaign in the West (344–317 BC).<sup>6</sup> From the last quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC the city came successively under the dominance of the kings Cassander of Macedonia and Pyrrhus of Epirus.<sup>7</sup> Affiliated with Rome, Dyrrhachium was integrated in 229 BC to the Roman protectorate, albeit Apollonia and Corcyra.<sup>8</sup>

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, Dyrrhachium and Apollonia were developed into flourishing cities with bustling commercial ports visited by important Roman politicians, such as Sulla (83 BC)<sup>9</sup> and Cicero (58 BC).<sup>10</sup> Based on the oration of the latter, we are informed about the greedy administration of the proconsul of Macedonia, L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus (57–55 BC), at the expense of Dyrrhachium and Apollonia.<sup>11</sup>

During the Roman Civil Wars, Dyrrhachium and Apollonia were implicated in the military competition between the Roman *imperatores*. In the First Civil War, Dyrrhachium

became Gnaeus Pompeius' military base, whereas Apollonia came under Julius Caesar's sway.<sup>12</sup> After the battle of Pharsalus (48 BC), Julius Caesar decided to expand the Roman colonization in the wealthiest territories of Illyria and North Epirus.<sup>13</sup> His decision aroused opposition, as T. Pomponius Atticus attempted to protect his estate at Buthrotum from confiscation by Caesar's land commissioners. After the crushing defeat of the tyrannicides in Philippi (42 BC), Plutarch (Antonius 61, 5) narrates the division of the Roman Imperium by the victorious Marcus Antonius and Gaius Octavius. As a result of this division, Dyrrhachium and Apollonia came under Marcus Antonius' power. The political competition among the *imperatores* was escalated in the battle of Actium (31 BC) and the foundation of the Roman colony of Dyrrhachium was finally accomplished by Gaius Octavius in 30 BC.<sup>14</sup>

### Mint production

The mint of Dyrrhachium was active from the 5<sup>th</sup> till the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. The local staters of Corinthian type (pegasi) were substituted during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. by the Corcyrean ones (suckling cow), whose circulation lasted until the *deductio* of *colonia Dyrrhachiensis*, conventionally dated in 48 BC. Notwithstanding the cessation of the silver coinage, bronzes continued to be issued until the naval battle of Actium.

It is worth noting that the mint of Dyrrhachium was unusually prolific at this period<sup>15</sup> producing 13 different types, in comparison to 7 of Apollonia.<sup>16</sup> Their style is consistent to the contemporary Roman denarii, but the iconography alludes to influences from the Greek East. Our current presentation is confined to 7 types, associated with the cults of Heracles, Helios, Isis, and Hermes-Mercurius, highly esteemed by the commercial classes.

### Catalogue

#### Type A (fig. 1)

O. Head of Heracles with lionskin to left.

R. ΔYP, ΔAMOKΛΕΟΥ[Σ], club, bow, quiver.

SNG Cop. Thessaly-Illyria 519–520.



Fig. 1: Bronze of Dyrrhachium.

#### Type B (fig. 2)

O. Winged female bust bearing a helmet with an Egyptian crown to right.

R. ΔYP, ΝΙΚΑΝ/ΔΡΟΥ, caduceus-club.

SNG Cop. Thessaly-Illyria 521.

#### Type C (fig. 3)

O. Winged female bust with meniskos on the forehead to right.

R. ΔYP, ΜΟΞΧ[Ι]ΛΟ[Υ], corn and grain.

SNG Cop. Thessaly-Illyria 513.



Fig. 2: Bronze of Dyrrhachium.



Fig. 3: Bronze of Dyrrhachium.

Type D (fig. 4)

O. Radiate head of Helios to right.

R. ΔΥΡ, ΨΥΛ/ΛΟΥ, prow.

Auktionshaus H. D. Rauch GmbH, E-Auction  
12, 23.03.2013, lot 50.

Type E (fig. 5)

O. Veiled female bust to right.

R. ΔΥΡ, ΕΟΡΤΑΙΟΥ, standing female figure  
on a prow holding aplustre and cornucopia.  
Gjongecaj 2007 a, pl. 18.144.



Fig. 4: Bronze of Dyrrhachium.



Fig. 5: Bronze of Dyrrhachium.

Type F (fig. 6)

O. Head of Hermes-Mercurius with a winged  
diadema to right.

R. ΔΥΡ, ΠΟΛΛΙ/ΩΝΟΣ, winged caduceus.

Gjongecaj 2007 a, pl. 18.136.

Type G (fig. 7)

O. Laureate head of Apollo to right.

R. ΔΥΡ, ΦΙΛΩ/ΤΑ, caduceus-club and palm  
branch.

SNG Cop. Thessaly-Illyria 523.



Fig. 6: Bronze of Dyrrhachium.



Fig. 7: Bronze of Dyrrhachium.

## Iconography

### *Type A*

The iconographic diptych with the bust of Heracles in lion skin and his military equipment are displayed on the first type (fig. 1) following the tradition of the regal Macedonian coinage of Alexander III.<sup>17</sup> The ethnicon ΔΥΡ and the name of the moneyer ΔΑΜΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ are inscribed in Greek letters on the obverse. According to Appian (civ. 2, 39), Heracles was regarded as the founder of Dyrrhachium. Even though the club of the semi-god was depicted as a secondary symbol in the staters of Dyrrhachium from the second quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC and onwards,<sup>18</sup> the figure of the hero was illustrated on local coinage only once before, during the short dominion of Cassander or Pyrrhus in the district.<sup>19</sup> Reputed as a dynastic symbol linked to the Macedonian kingship, this type had a brief circulation and therefore it was abandoned.

In the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC the popularity of Heracles' types on denarii of Rome and bronzes of Dyrrhachium and Corcyra is distinguishable. The display of the semi-god on these issues coincides with Marcus Antonius' supreme political position in the East (42–31 BC). Plutarch reveals (Antonius 4, 1) the legendary bond between the *gens* of the Antonii and Hercules. This propagandistic 'genealogy' was promoted also on denarii minted by Marcus Antonius' associate C. Vibius Varis (42 BC) in Rome.<sup>20</sup>

The same bond was demonstrated by a series of bronzes from Corcyra depicting the jugate busts of a couple on the obverse and a prow on the reverse.<sup>21</sup> In the first version, the male figure is clad in lionskin and therefore the couple was conventionally identified with Heracles and the nymph Corcyra. In the second version, the male bust is rendered without the lionskin, but crowned with a laurel wreath on the head.<sup>22</sup> This last version draws a remarkable resemblance to the emissions renowned as the 'fleet coinage' portraying the jugate busts of Marcus Antonius and his wife Octavia.<sup>23</sup> These emissions were possibly struck commemorating the arrival of the couple on the island of Corcyra in 37 BC.<sup>24</sup>

At this point, we must underline the association of the Hercules' cult in Rome with the commercial classes as the legendary foundation of the temple of Hercules Invictus in the Forum Boarium was attributed to a merchant (*olearius*), Marcus Octavius Herennius.<sup>25</sup>

### *Type B*

A rare hybrid figure is portrayed on the following type B. Due to the attribution of the wings, she has been conventionally identified as Nike.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, Nike is not depicted fully armed in ancient Greek art.<sup>27</sup> The Dyrrhachian goddess bears a helmet with an Egyptian crown (fig. 2). Based on parallel of denarii minted in the name of M. Plaetorius Cestianus (67 BC), this figure can be identified to Isis Panthea.<sup>28</sup> As it is apparent from the Greek term Panthea, this deity combines attributes from others (the helmet of Athena, the wings of Nike and the crown of Isis).<sup>29</sup>

On the reverse, an iconographical blend of two symbols stands out, the upper part of the caduceus merged with the club of Heracles. The symbol is surrounded by ethnicon ΔΥΡ and the name of the moneyer ΝΙΚΑΝΑΠΟΥ inscribed both in Greek alphabet.

By the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (80 and 67 BC), the symbols and the figure of Isis were illustrated for the first time on denarii.<sup>30</sup> Due to its mystic character, the cult of Isis was persecuted by the senate during the period 64–48 BC and it was officially restored by the Second Triumvirate only under the initiative of Marcus Antonius in 43 BC.<sup>31</sup> After the renewal of the affair, though, between Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra, Gaius Octavius incited a severe propaganda against Egypt and its customs, according to Cassius Dio's testimony (50, 24–30).

Despite these political developments in Rome, the cult of Isis remained surprisingly popular in Dyrrhachium given that no similar trend is apparent in other mints of Illyria and Epirus, or even Macedonia.<sup>32</sup> This popularity may hint to the existence of a significant part of population, which belonged to the followers of Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra. These followers were not limited only to the citizens of Greek provenance,<sup>33</sup> but also to the Roman entrepreneurs and merchants with extensive financial activities to this city.<sup>34</sup> The preference of the *negotiatores* for Isis' cult is well attested by epigraphical testimonies from Delos and Thessaloniki.<sup>35</sup>

### *Type C*

A winged female bust is demonstrated also on type C, formerly identified as Nike.<sup>36</sup> This figure bears, though, meniskos at the head (fig. 3), an iconographic element more appropriate to lunar deities. Lunar and astral deities became popular in the iconography of denarii after the reform of the solar calendar introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 BC. In contrast to our type, the Latin goddess Luna is depicted without wings on the contemporary denarii minted in the name of L. Valerius Asisculus.<sup>37</sup> On other better preserved specimens the mellon-coiffure of the Dyrrhachian figure is distinguishable.<sup>38</sup> This attribute is frequently applied on bronzes with the portrait of Cleopatra.<sup>39</sup>

In regards to the identity of this figure, the written sources are conclusive. Plutarch (Antonius 54, 6) narrates that by the donation of Alexandria (34 BC), Cleopatra appeared in the disguise of *στολήν ἱερὰν Ἰσιδος* and she was praised as *Σελήνη*, or *νέα Ἴσις*. Dio (50, 5, 3) complements that after this ceremony the queen was depicted in paintings and sculpture at the same form as Isis or Selene.<sup>40</sup> Consequently, the type of winged Isis-Selene should be associated to the impact of Alexandria.<sup>41</sup> To the same context, the names of the children, Alexander-Helios and Cleopatra-Selene, should be understood.<sup>42</sup>

On the reverse grain and grape are surrounded by the ethnicon ΔΥΡ and the moneyer ΜΟΞΧ[Ι]ΛΟ[Υ] inscribed in Greek letters. The trade of the basic nutritional goods was extremely profitable during this period. The demand for food supply was at its peak in big cities, due to the staggering increase of population (Rome) and as an aftermath of the Civil Wars. For political reasons the grain distribution (*Cura Annonae*) in Rome was undertaken by demagogue Clodius Pulcher, Gnaeus Pompeius and Julius Caesar.<sup>43</sup> A prolong alimentation crisis broke out in Rome (43–36 BC) due to Sextus Pompeius' hostile policy by cutting off the grain supply from Sicily.<sup>44</sup> As a consequence, Egypt remained a significant grain supplier.

On the other hand, Alexandria was one of the most demanding markets for wine of the Dalmatian coast. The commercial 'route' of this product seems to have been under the control of *negotiatores* and their freedmen-agents of Delos, as Lindhagen has demonstrated.<sup>45</sup>

#### ***Type D – Radiate head of Helios***

In the next type the radiate head of Helios and a prow are depicted (fig. 4). The first subject was preceded in coins of Rhodos from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and was applied on clay stamps of Delos during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.<sup>46</sup> The Delian prototype was followed by a rare series of silver coins of Apollonia with the composition of Apollo-Helios' bust equipped with a bow and a quiver at his back. This unique composition may hint to the establishment of *negotiatores* from Delos in the coastline of Illyria.<sup>47</sup> Depictions of Helios became also frequent on emissions struck in the name of Marcus Antonius (Athens) and his associates (Rome, Entella).<sup>48</sup>

After the elimination of piracy (58 BC), the prow became a prominent symbol of military power.<sup>49</sup> It was depicted on coins of Corcyra, on emissions of Marcus Antonius and the renowned 'fleet coinage' minted by his comrades from the beginning of 40s.<sup>50</sup>

The progress of scientific achievements had contributed in the renovation of the cult of Helios and Selene. The innovation of the solar calendar was introduced in Alexandria (46 BC) based on astrology and mathematics, while similar applications were implemented in navigation and in measuring time.<sup>51</sup> The interest in scientific studies was expanded in the district of Illyria. According to Suetonius (Aug. 94, 12), Gaius Octavius and M. Vipsanius Agrippa were studying astrology and mathematics in Apollonia by Theogenes.<sup>52</sup>

#### ***Type E – Concordia***

The iconography of type E (fig. 5) alludes to denarii issued after the Second Triumvirate (43 BC), such as the ones of L. Mussidius Longus portraying the veiled bust of Concordia.<sup>53</sup> On the reverse a female figure, identified by Gjongecaj as Isis Pelagia Tyche, stands on a prow holding cornucopia and aplustre.<sup>54</sup> The same type was depicted on aurei struck in 40 BC by T. Sempronius Gracchus<sup>55</sup> and on bronzes by the mints of Syria during Marcus Antonius' dominance in the east.<sup>56</sup> The ethnicon ΔΥΡ and the name of the moneyer ΕΟΡΤΑΙΟΥ stands out in Greek letters on the reverse.

As Temelini has eloquently demonstrated, Cicero adopted in his correspondence a novel interpretation of Concordia related to the harmony among the senatorial and equestrian classes (*concordia ordinum*) and he urged his brother Quintus (Fr. 1, 1, 32) to protect the interests of the business community.<sup>57</sup> The figure of Concordia gained political prominence after the Treaty of Brundisium (40 BC) and was reproduced on contemporary bronzes of Thessaloniki and possibly of Corcyra.<sup>58</sup>

#### ***Type F***

The bust of Hermes-Mercurius and a winged caduceus are rendered on type F (fig. 6). The attribution of god's head with a pair of wings attached to a diadem is influenced by prototypes

of Ptolemaic art.<sup>59</sup> In the iconography of denarii Mercurius wears usually petasus with the exception of a sestertius minted in 48 BC.<sup>60</sup>

The winged caduceus is displayed often on denarii during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, as this symbol acquired political significance after the Reconciliation of Brundisium (40 BC).<sup>61</sup> The prominence of Hermes' cult illustrated on the emissions of Dyrrhachium may be related with the activity of Hermaistes in Delos.<sup>62</sup>

In this case the name of the moneyer ΠΟΛΛΙΩΝΟΣ is rather significant as it refers to a historical personality, G. Asinius Pollio,<sup>63</sup> proconsul of Macedonia and companion of Marcus Antonius, who undertook a campaign against the unrest tribes of Parthini in the territory of Dyrrhachium (40–39 BC).<sup>64</sup>

### *Type G*

The laureate head of Apollo is displayed on the obverse and the combined symbol of caduceus-club with a palm branch on the reverse (fig. 7). Both types imitate the diptych of denarii minted in 48 BC by Q. Sicinius.<sup>65</sup> The composition of the caduceus and the palm branch is a reminder of the elimination of piracy by Gnaeus Pompeius.<sup>66</sup> Its adoption is not coincidental, given that Dyrrhachium was the military base of the *imperator* and consequently his followers were still dwelling in the city.

The iconographic blend of the two symbols (caduceus-club) is reproduced on bronzes of Lakedaimonien (bearing the name of Lycourgos) dated in 43–31 BC.<sup>67</sup> Epigraphic evidence complements that the cities of Laconia had attracted important families of *negotiatores* (as the Cloatii of Cytheium), who few decades later honored C. Iulius Eurycles as their benefactor (late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC–early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD).<sup>68</sup>

Even though it is lacking in the iconography of denarii, the combined symbols may be related to the commercial gods Mercurius and Hercules. A similar example derives from a bronze denomination (as) of Rome (87 BC) demonstrating a double herm with the busts of Mercurius and Hercules bearing their attributes (fig. 8).

Nevertheless, the figures or the symbols of Hermes and Heracles were never merged together in ancient Greek art.<sup>69</sup> In case of Roman art multiple examples are distinguishable in seals and sculpture, particularly on double herms.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, the infiltration of Roman cults in the local society of Dyrrhachium is apparent. A romanized cult of Hermes-Mercurius is recognized by Lindhagen in Delos (from the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC) and Narona (from the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC), strongly associated with *negotiatores* and freedmen.<sup>71</sup>

By the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, the caduceus was elevated as a symbol of Concordia, prosperity and reconciliation, attached to important political statesmen, such as Julius Caesar,



Fig. 8: As of Rome (87 BC), double herm of Mercurius and Hercules.

M. Junius Brutus, Marcus Antonius and Gaius Octavius.<sup>72</sup> The pursue of reconciliation was desirable by the defeated allies cities. The citizens of Dyrrhachium supported the cause of the defeated Gnaeus Pompeius (and M. Junius Brutus). As a consequence, the victorious dictator, Julius Caesar, imposed the implementation of the roman colonization of Dyrrhachium. Although this decision was postponed after the dictator's assassination, as it is implied by the Greek inscriptions of the examined bronze coinage, the danger of its implementation was still lurking.

The imposition of reconciliation was a political message comforting the citizens of Dyrrhachium, but also the Roman entrepreneurs living in the city. For this reason the choice of a protector was inevitable. Marcus Antonius was the most appropriate suitor, in contrast to Gaius Octavius, who was promoted as the rightful successor of Julius Caesar furthering the project of land confiscation.<sup>73</sup> Conversely, Marcus Antonius was presented as a guarantor of property in an inscription from Rome dated in 34 BC.<sup>74</sup> This political message may have had an appeal to the wealthy citizens and the energetic commercial class of Dyrrhachium, who were hoping to maintain unchangeable the status quo of the city.

### The cessation of the mint

It has been suggested that the production of the silver coinage ceased approximately in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (60/55 BC or 48 BC),<sup>75</sup> while that of the bronzes continued until the battle of Actium (31 BC). A thorough study of the names of the 'moneyers' has concluded to a different perspective. The three common names, ΝΙΚΑΝΔΡΟΣ, ΦΙΛΩΤΑΣ and ΣΩΤΡΙΩΝ,<sup>76</sup> dictate to a parallel minting between silver and bronze coins. Additionally, iconographic affinities can be observed between the subsidiary symbols of drachms and the types of the bronze emissions, such as the heads of Helios and Isis with the crown, the standing figure of Isis, the winged caduceus, the veiled female head (Concordia?), the grain with the grape, the aplustre with the cornucopia.<sup>77</sup>

Furthermore, by the study of Meta concerning the inscribed names on the local emissions, we do not observe any affinity to the coinage of *coloniae*. In the first case, the names of the officials on the obverse are repeated in more than one series of coins (occasionally 6 to 7 series) and combined to different reverse names.<sup>78</sup> In the mints of the *coloniae* of Butrint and Corinth the *duoviri* are repeated together.<sup>79</sup> In my perspective, the maintenance of the names on the obverse dictates to the higher magistracy of the city, possible the annual *prytanis*, and the repetition of their names on more than one series corroborates with the intensification of the mint production.<sup>80</sup> The hoard evidence from Romania (Vasand, Deva) are indicative of the circulation of the silver coinage after the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.<sup>81</sup>

### Commentary

The earliest references about the Roman presence in Greece are dated from the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>82</sup> In the district of Illyria, despite the scarce epigraphical testimonies, the beneficial regime of Roman protectorate comprised of Apollonia and Dyrrhachium may



have encouraged the early establishment of *negotiatores*. Following, the turbulent period of the Mithridatic Wars induced to a mass re-establishment of *negotiatores* from Delos to different parts of Greece.<sup>83</sup>

The influence of these classes in politics of Rome is repeatedly revealed by M. Tullius Cicero (Fr. 2, 5, 149. 1, 5, 154; Sest. 96). Cicero admits that Rome declared war in many occasions in order to defend the interests of these classes and such was the case of piracy. The Greek cities and the Roman merchant communities supported financially the campaigns of Marcus Antonius Creticus and Gnaeus Pompeius against the pirates.<sup>84</sup> The successful campaign of Gnaeus Pompeius gave a boost in the transportation of commercial goods from different parts of the Mediterranean Sea, such as grain and luxurious products from Egypt supplying the demanding markets of Greece and Italy.

The term of *negotiatores* is signified as a group of wealthy Roman members of senatorial and equestrian rank involved in a wide range of commercial activities, such as landowning, breedstocking, banking, loanlending, shipowning and maritime trading. The loanlending was one of the most profitable engagement with a great impact on the political affairs.<sup>85</sup> A series of bankers and loanlenders (*faeneratores*) were active in the districts of Epirus and Illyria. By Cicero, we are informed about the efforts of T. Pomponius Atticus to forestall the *deductio colonia* of Buthrotum. The interest of the negotiator was more than personal, given that he had given a loan to the citizens of Buthrotum. Additionally, Cicero was called in 43 BC by Brutus to mediate for the resolution over a financial dispute between the citizens of Dyrrhachium and the Roman entrepreneur C. Flavius.<sup>86</sup> Similar are the cases of the *faeneratores* L. Luceius, friend of Gnaeus Pompeius, and Fufidius, who lent money to the citizens of Byllis (Ad fam. 13, 42) and Apollonia (Pis. 35; Att. 11, 13).

A notable series of names from Apulian or Italian provenance are provided by epigraphical testimonies, written in Greek alphabet, from Dyrrhachium, possibly related to commercial activities (Γάιος Καΐσιος Αγκωνίτης, Γάιος Σέργιος Θεόφιλος, Γάιος Νωναρηνός, Λεύκιος Μούφιος, Μάαρκος Αππώνεις, Μάαρκος Βενεβέρτις)<sup>87</sup> or to prominent political statesmen. The names of Εΐταλία Πατυλκίου, Κόιντος Γράνιος Σάλιοις, Λαΐδαν Όλομμινίου, Πολλία Μάαρκου, Τηρεϋς Τρεβελλίου (I. Epidamnus 108; 179; 272; 284; 359; 414), could be associated with Patulcius, a follower of Clodius (Cic. Att. 14, 18, 2), A. Granius, a supporter of Julius Caesar killed in the battle of Dyrrhachium (App. Civ. 3, 71, 1), and the associates of Marcus Antonius, Publius Volumnius (Cic. fam. 7; 32. 9.26; Nep. Att. 12, 4), Asinius Pollio (see below) and L. Trebellius (Cic. Phil. 6, 11).<sup>88</sup>

In the prosopography provided by epigraphical testimonies of Dyrrhachium there aren't any *nomina* directly referred to Marcus Antonius,<sup>89</sup> in contrast to Elis and Corinth,<sup>90</sup> or to Gnaeus Pompeius and Marcus Tullius Cicero, statesmen with a significant impact in politics of the city. Lack of reference concerns also the name of Julius, which is frequently applied in the inscriptions of Apollonia.<sup>91</sup>

The Greek inscriptions on coins of Dyrrhachium pinpoint to the character of the city. Among the numerous names, their Greek provenance is prevailing. Remarkable are the two cases with names of Latin origin written also in Greek letters (ΓΑΙΟΥ, ΠΟΛΛΙΩΝΟΣ).<sup>92</sup>

These names may indicate the involvement of *negotiatores* or their freedmen-agents in politics of Dyrrhachium.<sup>93</sup> The Greek inscriptions on bronzes dated after Julius Caesar's assassination, are conclusive that the foundation of *colonia Dyrrhachensis* was not fulfilled before Augustus' era, a thesis already supported by Meta.<sup>94</sup>

### Conclusion

By examining the bronze coinage of Dyrrachium, we can deduce to the political stance of its citizens supporting the cause of Marcus Antonius. The iconography of these types is conclusive, given that most of them are lacking from the contemporary mint production of Apollonia, Corcyra and the cities of Macedonia. The commercial symbol of caduceus became the equivalent of Concordia and reconciliation. The message of Concordia was appealing to the hopes of the citizens of Dyrrhachium, who were seeking for a 'patron' due to the insecure political status of their city after the battle of Pharsalus (48 BC). The choice for a protector is insinuated by the type of Heracles, hero founder of Dyrrhachium, prominent god of *negotiatores* and mythical ancestor of *imperator* Marcus Antonius.

The Egyptian goddess Isis is also displayed in three different forms as Panthea, Pelagia Tyche and Selene, in spite of her cult being persecuted in Rome. The last type of Isis Selene is exceptional possibly alluding to the theatrical appearance of Cleopatra in the Donations of Alexandria (34 BC). Hermes and Isis may represent the interests of the *negotiatores* and *mercatores*, connected to the profitable commerce of grain from Egypt. Moreover, the bust of Hermes-Mercurius and the combined symbols of caduceus and club could reflect the political stance of merchants and entrepreneurs, whose financial interests were interwoven to the fate of Dyrrhachium.<sup>95</sup>

The fate of Dyrrachium was sealed after the naval battle of Actium (31 BC). Augustus accomplished the unfinished plans of Julius Caesar by founding the *Colonia Julia Augusta Dyrrachensis*.<sup>96</sup>

### Notes

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<sup>2</sup> Gjongecaj 2007b, 55–70.

<sup>3</sup> A significant number of Roman entrepreneurs are revealed by the correspondence of M. Tullius Cicero, such as Marcus Bolanus (Narona), T. Pomponius Atticus (Buthrotum), C. Flavius (Dyrrhachium), Fufidius (Apollonia), L. Luceius (Byllis), C. Maenius Gemellus, Manius Curius (Patra) and Manius Mindius (Elis): Cic. fam. 13, 9, 2. 13, 17, 50. 13, 26–28; Pis. 86; Zoumbaki 2012, 80 f.

<sup>4</sup> Thuk. 1, 24, 1–2; Strab. 7, 5, 8. For the dating of its foundation, see Funke – Moustakis – Hochschulz 2004, 330.

<sup>5</sup> Thuk. 1, 26, 1–2. 1, 29, 5.

<sup>6</sup> For the association of Corinthian staters (pegasi) to Timoleon's military campaign see Kraay 1976, 87. 126 f.

<sup>7</sup> The dominance of Pyrrhus in the district is implied by various written sources (Plin. nat. 3, 101; Cass. Dio ref. 40, 3; Anna Komnene, Alexias 3, 12, 8).

<sup>8</sup> App. Civ. 7 f.

<sup>9</sup> Plut. Sulla 27, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Cic. fam. 14, 1, 7.

<sup>11</sup> Cic. Pis. 91. 94. 96; Cic. prov. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Caes. civ. 2, 40, 3, 12; App. civ. 2, 40, 2, 54 f.; Plut. Caesar 37, 4.

<sup>13</sup> For the foundation of the Roman colonies in these districts, see Wilkes 2011, 93–97.

<sup>14</sup> The foundation of the city by Octavius is asserted by the metal pipes of the aqueduct bearing the inscription *Julia Augusta*, Miraj – Mirto 1982, 151.

<sup>15</sup> Meta (2012, 24 f.) noted that the quantity of Dyrrhachium issues on hoards found in Bulgaria, Romania and Albania was four times bigger than those of Apollonia.

<sup>16</sup> The hoard of Lleshan contained 9 types, Gjongecaj 2007b, 123 f. The other four types are asserted by the names of the moneyers and their style. Generally, for the study of the mint production of Apollonia and Dyrrhachium, A. Betsiou, *Οι νομισματικές εκδόσεις των ελληνικών πόλεων του ΒΔ ελλαδικού χώρου. Ζητήματα εικονογραφίας και προβλήματα χρονολόγησης* (PhD under thesis).

<sup>17</sup> SNG Cop. Macedonia 1154–1158. 1214–1221. 1234 f. 1248–1251. 1261–1263.

<sup>18</sup> SNG Cop. 421–432.

<sup>19</sup> Meta 2015, 174.

<sup>20</sup> Crawford 1974, 494 no. 37 f.

<sup>21</sup> The rendering of the prow in the Corcyrean bronze reproduces prototypes of denarius minted in the name of Magnus Pompeius, Crawford 1974, 446 no. 1. Sear (1998, no. 7) assumes that this denarius was minted in Greece before the battle of Pharsalus (48 BC).

<sup>22</sup> SNG Cop. Epirus-Acarmania, 227–241.

<sup>23</sup> RPC I, 1453–1470; Sear 1998, nos. 274–277. 280–284. 286–290. 292–296.

<sup>24</sup> Cass. Dio 48, 54. More about the mint of Corcyra, Betsiou 2018, 342–367.

<sup>25</sup> Macr. Sat. 3, 6. For the sanctuary and its temple, Richardson 1992, 188.

<sup>26</sup> SNG Cop. 521 f.

<sup>27</sup> The iconographic element of the helmet is totally lacking from depictions of Nike or Victoria in Greek-Roman art: LIMC VI (1992) 850–904 s. v. Nike (A. Goulaki-Voutira – A. Moustaka – U. Grote); LIMC VIII (1997) 237–269 s. v. Victoria (R. Vollkommer). The (unarmed) flying figure of Nike holding a wreath is rendered as a secondary symbol on Dyrrhachian drachms, SNG Cop. Epirus 476; SNG München 394–396; Meta 2015, pl. 83 ser. 86.

<sup>28</sup> Crawford 1974, 409 no. 1. For the identification of Isis Panthea, Alföldi 1954, 30.

<sup>29</sup> LIMC V (1990) 795 s. v. Isis Panthea nos. 315c. 319 (T. Tam Tinh).

<sup>30</sup> Takács (1995, 49) relates the popularity of Isis' cult to the Mithridatic Wars as the *mercatores* of Delos were forced to abandon the island and return to Rome.

<sup>31</sup> Kelly Heyob 1975, 18; Tiradritti 1998, 20.

<sup>32</sup> SNG Cop. Thessaly; SNG Cop. Illyria; SNG Cop. Macedonia.

<sup>33</sup> In an inscription from the island Philai of Egypt dated in 139–120 BC we are informed about a dedication to the Egyptian gods consecrated by Philotas of Epidamnus, I. Épidamnus T 519.

<sup>34</sup> Hansen (2011, 91) suggests the existence of followers, among them *negotiatores*, of Marcus Antonius in Butrint.

<sup>35</sup> IG X 2, 1; Kelly Heyob 1975, 14; Rizakis 1986, 522.

<sup>36</sup> BMC Thessaly 14, 7; SNG Cop. Epirus 513; Gjongecaj 2007a, 62 no. 19.

<sup>37</sup> Crawford 1974, 474 no. 5 f.

<sup>38</sup> BMC Thessaly 14, 7.

<sup>39</sup> Svoronos 1904, pl. 68, b. 22 f. 26 f. 29; RPC 1245. 4530.

<sup>40</sup> The deification of Cleopatra as Isis is promoted in sculpture, on the heads of Cleopatra Nahman bearing the crown of Isis, Andreae et al. 2006, 126–129 (G. Weill-Goudchaux).

<sup>41</sup> In Egyptian art Isis is portrayed with wings, Svenson 1995, 85. For the evocation of Isis-Selene, Merkelbach 2001, 96. 168. Svenson (1995, 99 f.) states that the meniskos as a symbol of immortality and eternity was applied on depictions of Isis-Selene from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.

<sup>42</sup> Plut. Antonius 36, 3.

<sup>43</sup> Garnsey 1989, 212 f.

<sup>44</sup> Garnsey 1989, 202.

<sup>45</sup> Lindhagen 2013, 231–236. 241. 245 f. The commercial transactions between the Roman merchants of Delos and Alexandria are solidified from the reign of Ptolemy VIII (after 127 BC) based on inscriptions, I. Délos 1526 f. 1699.

<sup>46</sup> BMC Caria 1–73. 129–152. 229–362. 386–390; Boussac 1992, pl. 43, 69 f.

<sup>47</sup> SNG Cop. Thessaly-Illyricum 404. Indications of *negotiatores* in Apollonia are provided by the inscriptions referring to the *nomina* Clodius and Oppia, I. Apollonia 100 f. The same gentilicia are attested in Delos and Peloponnesus, Zoumbaki 1998/1999, 155–157. 160–162. 164.

<sup>48</sup> Crawford 1974, 494 no. 5. 533 no. 2; CNS I, 321 f. nos. 15–17.

<sup>49</sup> For naval symbols on denarii, Crawford 1974, 510 no. 1. 511 nos. 1–4c. 519 no. 2; Sear 1998, 136–140. 200–207.

<sup>50</sup> Crawford 1974, 521 no. 1; SNG Cop. 195; Sear 1998, nos. 274–277. 280–284. 286–290. 292–296; Betsiou 2018, 352–354. Depictions of a prow are rendered on bronzes of Amphipolis and Thessaloniki, SNG Cop. Macedonia 70. 364. 373.

<sup>51</sup> Zenob. Epitome λ. Οὐ νυκτιπλοεῖς. The significance of measuring time in daily basis is evident by the consecration of an obelisk from Alexandria (Solarium Augusti) near Ara Pacis in 10 BC by Augustus, Buchner 1988, 240–245.

<sup>52</sup> In an inscribed grave stele of the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC from Corcyra is revealed the profession of the deceased Mnasea, an astrologer and geometrist (SEG 1995, 540).

<sup>53</sup> Crawford 1974, 494 nos. 41–42c. Gjongecaj (2007b, 103 no. 13) attributes this female deity to Demeter.

<sup>54</sup> Gjongecaj 2007a, 103 no. 13. For depictions of Isis Tyche/Fortuna in art, LIMC V (1990) 794 s. v. Isis-Fortuna nos. 303–315 (T. Tam Tinh).

<sup>55</sup> Crawford 1974, 525 no. 1.

<sup>56</sup> RPC 4740. 4752 f.

- <sup>57</sup> Temelini 2002, 3–6 n. 7. 62. 125.
- <sup>58</sup> SNG Cop. Macedonia 378 f.; Betsiou 2018, 348.
- <sup>59</sup> An illustrating example is the head of the god Hermes-Thoth from the Museum of Louvre illustrating features from portraits of Ptolemy IV Philopator, Bonacasa 1959/1960, 376 fig. 17 f.
- <sup>60</sup> Crawford 1974, 449 no. 5.
- <sup>61</sup> Crawford 1974, 529 nos. 2c–3.
- <sup>62</sup> I. Délos 1757 f.
- <sup>63</sup> Sarikakis 1971, 9. 140–144; Nigdelis 1994, 221.
- <sup>64</sup> Cass. Dio 48, 41, 7. For Asinius Pollio, Ferriès 2007, 335–341.
- <sup>65</sup> Crawford 1974, 440 no. 1.
- <sup>66</sup> Grueber 1970, 503 n. 2.
- <sup>67</sup> Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, 148–155; SNG Cop. Phlissia-Laconia 562.
- <sup>68</sup> IG V 1, 1146; Rizakis et al. 2004, 280 no. 3.
- <sup>69</sup> Boardman 1985, fig. 16. 42; Trendall 1967, pl. 67, 5 f. 69, 1 f. 73, 3 f.; Trendall – Cambitoglou 1998, pl. 194. 284, 1.
- <sup>70</sup> LIMC VI (1992) 276–280 s. v. Mercurius no. 29 (E. Simon – G. Bauchhenss).
- <sup>71</sup> Lindhagen 2013, 238. 243. 246. The *collegium magistris Mercurialis* is attested in inscriptions from Narona, CIL III, 1769 f. 1775. 1798 f. 1801.
- <sup>72</sup> Crawford 1974, 480 no. 6; SNG Cop. Phlissia 489; LIMC VI (1992) 515 f. s. v. Mercurius nos. 182. 187 (E. Simon-G. Bauchhenss).
- <sup>73</sup> Appian (civ. 4, 3) reports that Octavius undertook the designation of eighteen wealthy cities in Italy for the distribution of land allocations to the veterans.
- <sup>74</sup> Johnson et al. 1961, 110 no. 127.
- <sup>75</sup> Meta 2015, 155. 232.
- <sup>76</sup> SNG Cop. 460. 469. 477. 506. 511. 517. Gjongecaj (2007b, 210 f.) and Meta (2012, 27. 34) recognize common names of magistrates between the silver and bronze coinage.
- <sup>77</sup> SNG Cop. 491 f.; SNG München 399. 430–436; Meta 2015, 223. pl. 51, D 19/R 21 – D 20/R 22. D 21/R 23 – D 29/R 35. pl. 53, D 23/R 28 – D 32/R 38. pl. 54, D 52/R 59 – R 61. pl. 57, D 28/R 33 – D 31/R 37. pl. 58, D 1/R 1 – D 2/R 3. pl. 60, D 1/R 1 – D 3/R 6. pl. 63. pl. 74, D 1/R 1 – D 5/R 5. pl. 79 f., D 79/R 62 – D 100/R 84.
- <sup>78</sup> Meta 2012, 28. 30.
- <sup>79</sup> Abdy 2012, 3; Amandry 1988, 12–14. 27–43.
- <sup>80</sup> Most of the aforementioned names are inscribed also on roof tiles, I. Épidamnos 536. 557. 563. 569.
- <sup>81</sup> CH V, 98; CH VII, 144 (drachms of Dyrrhachium were found with silver emissions of Marcus Antonius).
- <sup>82</sup> Zoumbaki 2013, 54. 59 f. 66; Zoumbaki 2011, 527.
- <sup>83</sup> Zoumbaki 2011, 531; Zoumbaki 1998/1999, 154 f.; Rizakis 1986, 518.
- <sup>84</sup> Rizakis 2001a, 78. For *pompéiastes* formed in Delos, Croiz 2002, 213.
- <sup>85</sup> The adventurous ascension to the throne of Ptolemy XII Auletes is rather indicative: Cic. Rab. Post. 21, 30.
- <sup>86</sup> For the mediation of M. Tullius Cicero as a patron of Dyrrhachium and for the identity of the eques C. Flavius, Deniaux 1993, 267 f. In the biography of Atticus (8, 3), Cornelius Nepos unveils the participation of C. Flavius in the conspiracy against Julius Caesar.

<sup>87</sup> De Simone 1993, 38 f.; I. Épidamnus 20. 145. 148. 292. 301 f. The names L. Nutrii and L. Novellii are attested on inscriptions of Dyrrhachium and Philippi during the Early Imperial Period, Salomies 1996, 115. 122 f. A Novellius is referred in an inscription of Hermaistai from Delos, SEG 23, 514.

<sup>88</sup> Ferriès 2007, 478 no. 135. The *nomen* Granius is noted by Spawforth (1996, 172) among the *negotiatores* of Corinth. A *negotiator* Publius Granius is mentioned by Cicero in his speech against Veres (2, 5, 154). Granii are attested in inscriptions from Sparta, Delos and Butrint, Zoumbaki 1998/1999, 164; Hansen 2011, 90.

<sup>89</sup> Lack of references are recognized in the case of Butrint, even though many names of his supporters are distinguishable, Hansen 2011, 91.

<sup>90</sup> Zoumbaki 2001, 82–103; Rizakis 2001b, 183 fig. 1. The names Marcus or Antonius are mentioned separately, I. Épidamnus 111. 301. In the neighbor city, Byllis, though, the praenomen Insteius, related to the follower of Marcus Antonius (M. Insteius) is attested as well in Corinth, Stybbera and Veroia, Amandry 1988, 36; Nigdelis 1994, 219.

<sup>91</sup> I. Apollonia 101. 173. 208 f. 227. 244. 372.

<sup>92</sup> Sarikakis 1971, 142–144, associates the two names (ΓΑΙΟΥ, ΠΟΛΛΙΩΝΟΣ) to the same person (C. Asinius Pollio). But these names are inscribed separately on coins and on roof tiles, BMC Thessaly, 76 no. 165. 78 no. 184; I. Épidamnus 534. 574. Latin names, Μάρκος, Φονδάνιος, are written also separately in Greek letters on contemporary coins of Apollonia, SNG Cop. 385; BMC Thessaly 72. The familiar *nomen* Fundanius is common in Macedonia, Asia and Cyzicus, Salomies 1996, 125 f.

<sup>93</sup> In the newly founded *colonia* of Corinth, the major administrative and military center of Marcus Antonius and his associates in Greece, a significant part of its governing class (48%) belonged to the *negotiatores* and to the freedmen, according to the study of Spawforth 1996, 169–173. During this period, freedmen in Corinth, Dyme, Butrint, Naronia and Lissus succeeded in becoming magistrates, Millis 2014, 46–53; Lindhagen 2013, 239; Rizakis 2001c, 46–49; Hansen 2001, 90; Coles 2017, 191 (181–185). 195, she associates their political elevation to their ties with the *imperatores* Julius Caesar and Marcus Antonius).

<sup>94</sup> Meta 2015, 247.

<sup>95</sup> Landholding was one of the main investments of *negotiatores*, attested also in epigraphical testimonies from Elis and Beroia, Rizakis 2007, 8; Zoumbaki 2014, 82. The foundation of a *colonia* in Dyrrhachium would result in the transfiscation of land property and its transformation to *ager publicus*, which would be redistributed to the veterans.

<sup>96</sup> Cass. Dio 51, 4, 6; Digestum 15, 8, 8. The name of Augustus' Roman colony is asserted by inscribed metal pipes linked to the aqueduct of the city, Miraj – Mirto 1982, 151.

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Fig. 1: Solidus Numismatik, E-auction 12, 17.02.2017, lot 93. – Fig. 2: SNG Cop. Thessaly-Illyria 521. – Fig. 3: SNG Cop. Thessaly-Illyria 513. – Fig. 4: Auktionshaus H. D. Rauch GmbH, E-Auction 12, 23.03.2013, lot 50. – Fig. 5: Gjongecaj 2007 a, pl. 18.144. – Fig. 6: Gjongecaj 2007 a, pl. 18.136. – Fig. 7: Künker GmbH & Co. KG, E-Auction 40, 18.05.2016, lot 7144. – Fig. 8: permission by <<http://davy.potdevin.free.fr/Site/crawford5-2.html>> [02.05.2019]. – The author would like to thank Dr. S. Gjongecaj and H. Horsnæs for granting her the permission to publish the required photos.

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