

THE HISTRIAN DECREE FOR ABA (2nd century of our era)

Six years have elapsed since I made known in SCIV¹ the discovery of a fragment of the decree for Aba, daughter of Hekataios and priestess of Cybele, dated 2nd century of our era. Parallel with the publication of the first fragment, I pointed out that the new archaeological excavations made at Histria in the summer of 1954 revealed another five fragments of the same document, containing important data on the life of the honoured personage. The fragments were discovered when the large building in the south-eastern part of the city was unearthed. It is sited in the immediate vicinity (southwards) of the edifice (Domus I) in which the first fragment, published in the above-mentioned journal, was found in 1952. The five fragments were found among the stone and brick fragments fallen off the walls of a room and, just like the first fragment, had served as building material for the afore-mentioned edifice. It is very likely that, when the walls were erected, the document should have been intact and that it broke when the edifice I mentioned was built. In 1955 another three fragments were found, with the aid of which we can make up almost completely the entire contents of the decree.

Our subsequent investigations, aimed at finding the few fragments still missing, have been unsuccessful. Some fragments, at the end of the decree would have furnished some highly valuable information, because the context of the inscription is of great interest for the history of the town of Histria.

The eight fragments which have been discovered add new data concerning the career of the afore-mentioned personage. At the same time they provide information on the internal organization of Histria and on religious cults.

In the present study we shall examine the contents of the entire document, that is to say, we shall include the text of the fragment which has already been published. We shall, however, insist less on the cult of Cybele in Histria, as this has been done in the previous investigation².

At the time when the first fragment was discovered there was no news, either written or archaeological, of the presence and spread of this cult in our

¹ SCIV, V, 3–4, 1954, p. 449–466.

and sculptural documents known up to that date are collected.

² *Ibidem*, p. 458–464, where the epigraphical

Pontic colony and I therefore thought it necessary to insist on this side of the document. Now the epigraphic and sculptural data have increased and call for separate examination. What seems most important to us in the contents of our decree is the information on the organization and internal life of the city of Histria in the 2nd century of our era.

In its present state, the decree for Aba totals 9 fragments (size: height — 0.97 m; breadth — 0.45 m; depth some 0.05 m; height of letters — about 1 cm). As was mentioned before, the first fragment bears on its upper part a pediment in the centre of which is Cybele on a throne, with a tympanon in her left hand and a patera in the right hand. On the sides are two lions on their hind legs, with their front legs each over a bull's head. They are therefore figured in the posture of tauroctons³ (fig. 1).

Under the pediment, on the frame above the inscription is the dedicatory formula written in big letters, spaced out ΑΓΑΘΗ ΤΥΧΗ. The left edge of the inscription, although preserved, has some missing elements in the first fragment, where part of the text is broken off together with the frame in relief. Unlike the other eight fragments, which were discovered subsequently, the first fragment has the written face more worn off and with traces of burning. It may be supposed that this fragment served for some time as paving-stone; nevertheless the text can be read quite easily. What is more difficult is the reconstitution of the text in the rest of the decree, where the big gaps, especially towards the end, impede a certain, satisfactory reading.

Αγαθῇ Τύχῃ

- Ἔδοξε τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ· Οὐλπίος Δημήτριος εἶπεν· ἐπιψηφίζομένου Διογένους Θεοδώρου· ἐπειδὴ Ἄβα Ἑκαταίου τοῦ Εὐξενίδου
5. θυγάτηρ, γυνὴ δὲ Ἡράκωντος Ἀριστομάχου, γυνέων τε ἐπισήμων καὶ προγόνων ἐπιφανεστάτων οὔσα καὶ οὐδεμίαν φιλοτιμίαν ἢ λειτουργίαν εὐσχήμονα παρητημένων, ἀλλὰ καὶ στεφανηφορίας καὶ ἱερωσύνας καὶ ἀρχὰς καὶ ἐπιμελείας
 10. καὶ πάσας δημοτελεῖς χορηγίας ἢ καὶ ἐνδόξους ὑπηρεσίας ἀνυπερβλήτως ἐκτετελεκό[των] καὶ πάσης ἐξαίρετου τιμῆς τετυχηκό[των, μ]ικρὸν ἡγησαμένη τὴν ἀπὸ μόνου τοῦ [γένους με]γαλαυχίαν, εἰ μὴ καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδίας
 15. [πρὸς τὸν δῆμον] εὐποιίας προσκτήσαιο δόξαν, [καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἱερ[ωσύ]νην Μητρὸς Θεῶν αὐτεπαγγέλ[τως ἀν]αλαβοῦσα, εὐ μό[ν]ον ὅσα σεμνῶν γυναικῶν καὶ [ἱερεῶν] καὶ τοῦ παλαιο[ῦ αἰῶν]ος ἦν ἰδίαν μεγαλοφρόνως καὶ εὐγενῶς καὶ ε[ὐ]σ[εβῶ]ς ἐτέλεσεν,
 20. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅσαι μεγάλαι τῶν ἀνδρῶν φιλοτ[είμων ἀρ]-

³ This representation appears more often in documents beginning with the 2nd century of our era, when the taurobolium is introduced on a wide scale in the Roman empire; cf. H. Graillot, *Le Culte*

de Cybèle, Mère des Dieux, dans l'Empire romain, Paris, 1912, p. 150 sqq.; Fr. Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, Paris, 1929, p. 62–63.



Fig. I. — Histrian Decree for Aba, 2nd century of our era.

- χειρωσύναι ἢ καὶ τινες ἄλλαι χορηγίαι καὶ τα[ύ]τας ν[ε]-
 μήσασθαι σπουδάσασα· πρῶτον μὲν εὐθύς τὰς πρώτας
 προσόδους καὶ θυσιάς καὶ εὐχὰς τοῖς θεοῖς ποιου-
 μένη τὴν τοῦ ἔτους ἀρχὴν μετ' εὐφροσύνης καὶ εὐ-
 25. ωχίας μεγαλοπρεποῦς ἐποίησατο· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ
 βουλευταῖς πᾶσιν καὶ γερουσιασταῖς καὶ ταυ-
 ριασταῖς καὶ ἱατροῖς καὶ παιδευταῖς καὶ τοῖς ἰδία
 καὶ ἐξ ὀνόματος καλουμένοις ἐκ δύο κατ' ἄνδρα
 30. δηναρ[ί]ων διανο[μ]ήν, ἣν οὐπω τις ἄλλη πρότερον,
 ἔδωκεν· τοῖς δὲ ἐ[ν] ταῖς φυλαῖς κατὰ πεντηκονταρ-
 χίαν διανεμεμῆ[ε]νοις, ἔτι μὴν καὶ ὑμνωδοῖς καὶ τέ-
 κτωσιν καὶ ἱεροπ[λα]τεῖταις καὶ ἡρακλειασταῖς οἰ-
 νοπό[σ]ιν, ἔσον οἱ ἐ[πὶ τ]οῖς μεγάλοις ὀνόμασιν φιλοτει-
 μούμ[εν]οι, μετὰ [δὲ τοῦ]το πάση νεομηνία καὶ πά-
 35. σαις τα[ῖς ἐ]ν ἐκάσ[τω μηνί] θυσίαις καὶ ἑορταῖς καὶ πα-
 τρίοις εὐ[χαῖς] δ[ικαιότ]ατα καὶ ἱεροπρεπέστατα
 ἐξυπηρέ[τησεν]· ὅ·α γὰρ τῆς ἐθίμου ἱεροποιίας ἀνα-
 λώματα, ἀ[ντίκα ἐδέ]ξατο, καὶ ὅσα ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας ἐ-
 πενθεί πάν[τα φιλ]οτείμως ἐποίησεν, τῶν μὲν ἀ-
 40. ναλωμάτων [ν κατ]αφρονήσασα, τῆς δὲ εὐδοξίας οὐ-
 κ ὀλιγωρήσα[σα τ]έλει καὶ παρεπιδημοῦντων τι-
 νῶν τῶν τε π[ερὶ τὸν] δῆμον δυναμένων καὶ τοῦ
 πλῆθους ὡς ἔ[τι ἄλλην δωρ]εάν? αὐτῶν αἰτουμένων
 καὶ τῶν μᾶλλ[ον φορτικῶν τιν]ῶν? ἀναδυομένων, οὐ-
 45. δὲν τούτων [ἀπηγόρευσε καὶ εἰς τὴν] ἡμέραν ἣν ἠθέλησεν
 ἢ πόλις τῶ[ν Ἰστρινῶν?] πᾶσιν ἔδωκεν καὶ κα-
 θόλου δι' ὅλ[ου χρόνου σive] ἔτους ἐπ' ἀνδράσι[ν] καὶ γυναιξὶν φιλο-
 τειμοτάτῃ κ[αὶ ἀξιοτάτῃ γέ]γονεν· δεδόχθαι ἐπη-
 νῆσθαι μὲ[ν ἐπὶ τούτοις]· ἀναγ[ορεύεσθαι δὲ καὶ
 50. στεφανοῦσθαι Ἀβαν Ἐκαταίου ἐν πᾶσιν ἐ[ορταῖς, με[τέ]-
 χειν δὲ αὐ[τὴν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων] τεμῶν εὔ... [καὶ]
 εἰκονων γ[ραπτῶν]
 ... ΕΙΣΓ...
 ... ΛΛ...

Remarks: Line 13: I in MIKPON is certain, one notices also part of the vertical bar of M. Line 16: IA at the beginning of the line are certain. Line 18: in the lacuna some 5 or 6 letters are missing, the last visible one is certainly an N, and the first begins with a vertical bar; further on, after ΠΑΛΑΙΟΥ are approximately 4 letters, of which the second and the fourth could be O, Θ or Ω, as their upper part is round. Line 20: at the last word ΦΙΛΟΤ[EIMΩN]T is certain, the lower part of the vertical hasta being visible. Line 32: after IEPOI two letters are missing; the reading of the end of the word TEITAIΣ is certain. Line 33: at the beginning, after NOI there follows a circular line which indicates an O; after O there is place for one single letter, then follow the letters IONOΣ. Line 36 after TPIOIΣEY there is place for three letters, then one can see the letters ΣΔ. Line 38: the first letter is Δ, but this is a mistake made by the lapicide, who wrote it instead of Λ; after ΔΩΜΑΤΑ, A is certain. Line 39:

after ΠΕΝΟΕΙ follows ΠΑΝ. Line 42: after ΤΩΝΤΕ the vertical hasta of an Π is visible. Line 43: after ΠΛΗΘΟΥΣ ΩΣ follows Ε; then, ΕΑΝ, before ΑΥΤΩΝ. Line 44: after ΜΑΛΛ comes the upper part of an Ο. Line 45: ΔΕΝ is certain; the stone was broken after it was discovered and in this place one could read before ΟΥΔΕΝ. Line 47: after ΔΙΟ, a slanting bar, very probably belonging to Λ. Line 48: ΓΟΝΕΝ comes before ΔΕΔΟΧΘΑΙ. Line 52: after ΕΙΚΟΝΩΝ comes a vertical hasta, quite probably belonging to a Γ.

The paleographic characters of our document are very similar to those of the big inscription found by V. Pârvan in 1914, dating back in the times of Emperor Hadrian (138 February 25 — July 10) and which contains the names of 157 gerousiasts⁴. Very striking from this point of view is the shape of **Σ** and of other letters. The most common ligatures in both documents are those between Η in combination with Τ and Μ or Ν. This helps us to date our document and to place it, on the basis of other elements as well, as we shall further see within the same period as the inscription of the gerousiasts and other inscriptions carved in the Antoninian period. A proof in support of this date is offered also by the names present in the decree for Aba and, concurrently, in other documents with a more precise date. In this respect we can mention Ulpios Demetrios, who proposed the honouring of Aba and whose nomen, Ulpios, which one meets after Trajan, is in itself highly eloquent; but he is mentioned in an unpublished album from Histria⁵, together with other persons, who are in their turn members of the gerousia of Hadrian's time⁶. It is not unlikely that he himself should be identified as one of the Ulpios in the gerousiasts' album, may be with Μ. Οὔλπιος Δημήτριος Ἀρτεμιδώρου or with Μ. Οὔλπιος Δημήτριος υἱὸς Ἀρτεμᾶ⁷. The difficulty in identifying him with one of these lies in the fact that his patronymic is not mentioned in our document. He may, however, be one and the same person with that Ulpios Demetrios of the unpublished inscription cited above, where his name appears written in the same way; the paleographic resemblance between the two documents is so great, that they cannot but be contemporary. A peremptory proof of this date is also offered by the fact that Aba's husband, Ἡράκων Ἀριστομάχου, is mentioned in the document, and we can identify him with Heracon, son of Aristomachos, whose name is found in the inscription with the list of the priests of Dionysos Carpophoros, which D. M. Pippidi has dated as belonging to the third quarter of the 2nd century of our era⁸.

As for the other names in our decree, we did not notice anything particular about them, being the typical Greek names found both in the gerousiasts' album of Histria and in other documents.

It is more seldom that we find the name of Aba in inscriptions. This name is more often present in the regions of Asia Minor, such as Cilicia, Lycia, Caria or

⁴ V. Pârvan, *Histria IV, Inscriptiile găsite în 1914 și 1915*, in ARMSI, XXXIII, Bucharest, 1916, p. 596, no. 20 (especially the plate).

⁵ Mus. Histria Inv. no. 259, line 7.

⁶ The identity of persons found in both documents was noted also by D. M. Pippidi in SCIV,

IX, 2, 1958, p. 364–369.

⁷ V. Pârvan, *op. cit.*, p. 599, col. I, line 38 and p. 560, col. I, line 73 (= SEG 330).

⁸ *Histria I, Monografie arheologică*, Bucharest, 1954, p. 546, no. 22.

Syria⁹, and is also found in documents in the regions of Thracia or those in its proximity (Fochida), as a personal name or as a toponymic one. It is also found in other parts of the Greek world, namely on the northern coastline of the Black Sea, at Olbia¹⁰. Scholars do not agree as to its origin; some, such as Toepfer¹¹ and Bechtel¹², consider it as being related to a Thracian or Ionian ethnicon. In his work on proper names in the Greek towns on the northern shore of the Black Sea¹³, Ladislav Zgusta sees in it rather a spontaneous formation of children's language, which is often encountered with various peoples. Zgusta finds its correspondent in *Ababa*, at Alani¹⁴ and excludes its Syrian origin, backed up by Boeckh¹⁵. But wherever the truth may lie in this respect, it is certain that the name of *Aba* is a very ancient one and that up till now it has been found in documents especially in Asia Minor; Caria and Milet as well as some Milesian colonies, such as Histria and Olbia, are not excluded from the area of its spread¹⁶.

So far, the decree we publish is the only one belonging to the Roman era, found at Histria, which maintains a complete preamble (prescript). That is why we think it fit to analyse a little this part of the inscription, because, as it is asserted¹⁷, it reflects, by the constitutional bodies mentioned in it, the stage of evolution of Greek society in a given place. What we wish to underline, above all, is the fact that the form it has is different to that known in Histrian decrees so far. The President of the Assembly is designated by another word, namely by an expression, in absolute genitive, from the verb ἐπιψηφίζειν i. e. in the gen. ἐπιψηφισμένου τοῦ δεῖνα¹⁸. Up to this decree, all Histrian documents whose preamble has been preserved and which date back to the Hellenistic era, have defined the President of the Assembly by the word ἐπιμηνιεύων, in the genitive — ἐπιμηνιεύοντος τοῦ δεῖνα¹⁹.

⁹ Joh. Sundwall, *Die einheimischen Namen der Lykier nebst einem Verzeichnisse kleinasiatischer Namenstämme*, in «Klio», Beiheft XI, 1913, p. 44.

¹⁰ IOSPE, I², 78, 181, 182 where it appears in the form of Ἀβαβος (= IGRR I, 853, 859).

¹¹ RE, I, col. 4 and Supplbd. I s. v. col. I.

¹² Fr. Bechtel, *Die historischen Personennamen des Griechischen bis zur Kaiserzeit*, Halle, 1917, p. 559–560, 571.

¹³ Ladislav Zgusta, *Die Personennamen griechischer Städte der nördlichen Schwarzmeerküste*, Prague, 1955, p. 293–294, § 591.

¹⁴ Iordanes, *Getica*, 15, 83: *Ababa, femina Alanica*, mother of emperor Maximinus.

¹⁵ CIG, II, 111 b, cf. III, 115 a.

¹⁶ The name is also recorded by W. Pape-G. Benseler's dictionary *Wörterbuch d. griech. Eigennamen*, Braunschweig, 1911, s. v. In documents it also appears as Ἀβαβος, Ἀβεύς, Ἀβαι. Apart from the above-mentioned works which indicate attestations of the name, see also IG, XII, 5, no. 1090, IGRR, III, 1125 and M. Rostovtseff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, III, Oxford, 1941, p. 1580, note 120.

¹⁷ G. Busolt, *Griechische Staatskunde*, Munich, 1920, p. 450; cf. A. H. M. Jones, *The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian*, Oxford, 1940, p. 336, note 18.

¹⁸ We meet at Anaphe an expression identical to ours: Ἐδοξε τῇ βουλῇ τῶν Ἀναπαίων καὶ τῶν δῆμων (γ)νόμαν ἀγορεύσαντος Πινδάρου τοῦ Τελεσιγένους θέσει δὲ Συβούλου ἐπιψηφισμένου Ἀρχωνίδα τοῦ Κρατεσίππου. Ἐπελ... Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, Brussels, 1900, no. 413; cf. IG, XII 9. 4 (Alabanda): [Ἐπι]ψηφ[ι]σμένου δὲ Μενίσκου [τοῦ...] line 3.

¹⁹ There are to date at least three epigraphic documents which preserve the preamble complete and in which the president is thus designated. In chronological order, they are as follows: D. M. Pippidi, *Histria I*, p. 488, lines 1–4 (=idem, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*, Bucharest, 1958, p. 34): Ἐδοξε τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῶ δ[ῆμῳ] ἐπιμηνιεύοντος Δ[ιο]νυσίου τοῦ Ἰέρωνος οἱ ἔρχοντες[εἰπαν]· ἐπειδὴ κ.τ.λ. (end of the 3rd century or first half of the second century before our era); SCIV, VII, 3–4, 1956, p. 347, lines 1–5 (= D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*, p. 59, note 3; J. and

The use of the new expression may be accounted for by the social-economic and political transformations which had occurred in the life of Greek towns in general and of Histria in particular, during the Roman era²⁰. As a result of these realities, many of the colleges of magistrates which no longer corresponded to real requirements, modified their character. It is probable that the college of ἐπιμήνιοι, who like the prytans of Athens were appointed to look after public affairs for one month — naturally, elected as representatives of the tribes — should have ceased their activity, and been replaced by the college of magistrates (ἄρχοντες) which, if its position was similar to that in Asia Minor, formed, together with the secretary of the people (γραμματεὺς τοῦ δήμου) a συναρχία, representing the « management » of the city²¹. The role of epistates (ἐπιστάτης) in Athens, ἐπιμηνιεύων in Histria²², was replaced by that of a magistrate, in the leading council, appointed *ad hoc*, whose only function was to put motions to the vote (ἐπιψηφίζειν) and to lead the debates of the Assembly. As soon as the session ended, his function, being ephemeral, ended too. He could no longer be called ἐπιμηνιεύων, as his attribute of president no longer arose out of the fact that he was the representative of a college with a monthly activity (ἐπιμήνιοι)²³.

In this formal aspect of the decree we therefore detect changes in the Histrian Constitution, as a result of the changes which had occurred in the structure of the Greek society, which we shall encounter (see further on) also when we shall analyse other institutions mentioned in our document.

The minor role of the President of the Assembly at that time, can also be seen from the fact that he is mentioned after the person who proposed the decree, namely Ulpios Demetrios, a fact which, although not rigorously observed in other parts of the Greek world, is significant for Histria.

As is customary in all inscriptions of this kind, the motivation of the decree begins by adding to the merits of the honoured person, those of its parents and

L. Robert, in BullÉp, 1956, 186): [Ἐπ'] ἱέρειω Ἑστιάει τοῦ Μικκαλίωνος μηνός Ταυρεῶνος, ἔδοξε τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῶν δήμῳ ἐπιμηνιεύοντος Εὐπολέμου τοῦ Κλεομέδοντος οἱ ἄρχοντες εἶπαν... 2nd century before our era; Syll.³ 1708, 1—3; Ἱερομένου Ἀρισταγόρου τοῦ Ἀπατουρίου τὸ τέταρτον, μηνός Ἀρτεμισίωνος δεκάτῃ ἱσταμένου, ἐπιμηνιεύοντος τῆς ἐκκλησίας Ἀθηνάδου τοῦ Ἀπολλοδώρου, Ξενοχάρης Εὐκαταίου εἶπεν... (1st century before our era). With some gaps, the prescript in Histrian inscriptions can also be found: V. Pârvan, *Histria VII. Inscriptiile găsite în 1916, 1921, 1922*, in ARMSI, III, II, no. 1, p. 6, no. 4 (= SEG 446) and p. 17, no. 11 (= SEG, 447); « Dacia » II (1925), p. 204, no. 8; III—IV (1927—1932), p. 401, no. 3 and *Histria I*, p. 476, no. 1; p. 508, no. 8. For the dating of inscriptions by ἐπιμήνιοι in Histria, see D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții...*, p. 55—59.

²⁰ Although the verb ἐπιψηφίζειν (ἐπιψηφίζεσθαι) is met with in the classical and Hellenistic epigraphy, designating the function of the president of the Assem-

bly, it is more often used in the epigraphy of Roman epoch. For Athens see more particularly Syll.³, 796 B, IG² II—III, 1072. Cf. W. Larfeld, *Griechische Epigraphik*, third edition, Munich, 1914, p. 333—334, 340—341; A. H. M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 178—179 and 340, notes 44 and 45. Compared with ἐπιμηνιεύων which means the action of the magistrate of putting a question to the vote « mettre aux voix » as president of the Assembly, the expression ἐπιψηφίζειν has the general meaning of « putting to the vote », without it always being compulsory for the mover to represent a magistrate of the state, especially over a determined period. Cf. S. Lambrino, *Istros I*, 1934, p. 125 and note 4.

²¹ Is. Lévy, REG, XII, 1899, *Études sur la vie municipale de l'Asie Mineure*, p. 266—272; see also note 33 in the present study.

²² W. Larfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 340, § 212.

²³ See also Szanto's article in RE, VI, s. v. ἐπιμήνιοι col. 178—179 and Dittenberger's explanations in Syll.³, 708, note 3.

ancestors. What is of interest to us is not this detail, which is well-known from other decrees of Histria and elsewhere²⁴, but the fact that on this occasion, the document mentions a series of magistratures and public services (liturgies), generally civic and religious functions, held by the illustrious gens of Aba, which on the one hand provides with a complete picture of the *cursus honorum* to which a γένος ἐπίσημον καὶ ἐπιφανέστατον aspired (see line 6 of the decree), and on the other hand supplies information concerning the Histrian Constitution in the 2nd century of our era.

The enumeration begins with a general mention of the contributions (good deeds, liberalities) and liturgies (φιλοτιμίαν ἢ λειτουργίαν) terms which are almost identical and which mean nothing else but gifts and services to the people²⁵. It is difficult to guess exactly what lies behind these general terms, that is to find out exactly what the ancestors of the honoured person had done for the Histrian people. All that can be said is that according to custom and considering her high position (Heracon, her husband, was also a priest) the gifts were considerable, as the word εὐσχήμων (φιλοτιμίαν ἢ λειτουργίαν εὐσχήμονα line 6—7) seems to indicate.

Significant of the evolution of Histrian institutions in the Roman imperial epoch is also the way in which the magistrates and the civil servants were elected. A word which we find in the decree for Aba, namely παρητημένων the past participle of παραιτέομαι, can clear up some matters in this respect. As an allusion is made to the fact that Aba's parents and ancestors had never refused or evaded any important benevolence or liturgy οὐδὴμίαν φιλοτιμίαν ἢ λειτουργίαν εὐσχήμονα παρητημένων line 6—7²⁶ points to the fact that not only did they it with good will, αὐτεπαγγέλτως line 16 in our decree, as was the custom in general, but also, on the other hand, that there were some who did the contrary. Reality, as encountered in our decree, is very typical of the Roman era. It is known that the social-economic and political changes suffered by the Greek polis during the Greek and Roman era, also modified the system of designation of public dignitaries. Whereas during the Hellenistic times the oligarchic class of the evergets had more interest in occupying the magistratures in order to maintain their power in the state, during the Roman imperial epoch, this interest wanes. There are many reasons for this, but we must not forget that one of them is the fact that with the coming of the Romans, the Greek aristocracy found in them a strong mainstay and thus no longer needed to spend large sums in order to ensure their power. At the same time, the big problems of foreign policy, such as warfare for instance, the rivalry between towns as well as internal rivalry and the struggle against tyranny disappeared through the levelling caused by the

²⁴ There are a great many examples; we refer only to a few of them: Syll³ 708: 'Αόρισταγόρας Ἀπατουρίου πατρός γεγονώς ἀγαθοῦ καὶ προγόνων εὐεργετῶν καὶ ἱερημένων θεῶν πάντων καὶ αὐτὸς . . . κ.τ.λ. . . cf. Histria VII, p. 17, no. 11 (SEG, II, 447, lines 2—6).

²⁵ RE, XII, col. 1871—1879 s. v. *Leiturgie*, and L. Robert, *Les gladiateurs dans l'Orient grec*, Paris, 1940, p. 276—280.

²⁶ In Egypt we meet the expression τὴν ἀρχὴν παρητήσαντο at Oxyrhynchus, cf. Grenfell and Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 1252 B, 28 (III) apud Fr. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch d. griech. Papyrusurkunden mit Einschluss d. griech. Inschriften . . . aus Ägypten*, hersg. von E. Kiessling, vol. II, s. v. In another document of Egypt, the verb παραιτέομαι is met with the same meaning; cf. *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*, hersg. v. Fr. Preisigke, 3. Heft, vol. III, no. 3924, line 37.

Roman rule. Highly eloquent in this respect are Plutarch's bitter words: «Now, therefore, when politics no longer comprises problems of hegemony in war, nor the struggle against tyranny, or diplomatic questions, what could attract anyone towards a distinguished and brilliant political career?»²⁷. Repeated appeals to the money-bags of the wealthy, could, under those circumstances, only irritate and in most cases bring about a negative reply. The tradition of local patriotism and the old Greek feeling of vying with one another in expenditure and in receiving honours, made, however, many families keep to the «good customs» of the past and contribute with their money towards maintaining the glory of the town. We imagine therefore that at the proposal of the Council, which had decisive power in those times, the members of Aba's genos, by a simple χειροτονία in the People's Assembly, were elected for the various dignities which are mentioned²⁸. Among these are, first and foremost, the religious ones στεφανηφορίαί καὶ ἱερωσύναι (line 9–10).

The two terms indicate activity in the religious spheres, with slightly differing shades. Whereas ἱερωσύναι designate the common sacerdocies, στεφανηφορίαί²⁹, let us infer more important sacerdotal functions, perhaps even eponymic ones, or those distinguished by special decrees of the Council and of the People, with the right to wear a crown during holidays, competitions and so on. This is the case at Sinope, for instance, at Pergamon³⁰ and even at Histria³¹.

The list of civil (lay) dignities held by Aba's family begins with the mention, of the high magistratures, of a political nature ἀρχαί³², which means either that they had been members of the Council or of the most important colleges (ἄρχοντες, στρατηγοί)³³. Of the same category of functions, would also be that of ποντάρχης which, as is known, was considered one of the most important functions in the Left Pontus.

Ἐπιμελείαι, which follow after ἀρχαί, are functions with an administrative and technical character. We find at Histria in the 2nd century of our era a function of the same category, namely ἐπιμελητῆς τοῦ λιμένος, a dignity held

²⁷ Plutarch, *Praecep. ger. reip.* X, 9: Νῦν οὖν ὅτε τὰ πράγματα τῶν πόλεων οὐκ ἔχει πολέμων ἡγεμονίας, οὐδὲ τυραννίδων καταλύσεις, οὐδὲ συμμαχικὰς πράξεις, τίνα ἂν τις ἀρχὴν ἐπιφανοῦς λάβοι καὶ λαμπρᾶς πολιτείας;

²⁸ W. Liebenam, *Städteverwaltung im römischen Kaiserreiche*, Leipzig, 1900, p. 279 sqq.; cf. A. H. M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 171, 182–191.

²⁹ For *stephanephoria*, see V. Chapot's article in *DA*, IV, 2, p. 1508–1509; W. Liebenam, *op. cit.*, p. 347 sqq., 556–558; Stier, in *RE*, III, A col. 2343–2347; G. Busolt, *op. cit.*, p. 499; A. H. M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

³⁰ See data collected and interpreted by L. Robert in *BCH*, 1935, p. 434–436.

³¹ D. M. Pippidi, *Histria I*, p. 477.

³² For ἀρχαί *RE* II, col. 433–435 s. v.; idem, III s. v. col. 1020 sqq.; W. Liebenam, *op. cit.*, p. 279 sqq.; A. H. M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 175. About

the situation in Asia Minor in the Antoninian epoch see Is. Lévy's study in *REG*, XII, 1899, p. 266 sqq. We note that although at that time all magistratures had a liturgic character and that it is difficult to distinguish between ἀρχαί and λειτουργίαι, yet in our inscription ἀρχαί appears from a formal point of view as distinct from other functions and at the same time as the most important ones.

³³ For ἄρχοντες at Histria, cf. D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții...*, p. 46–47. In an inscription from the Antonins' epoch (*AEM*, XVII, 1894, p. 87, no. 11 = *CIL*, III, 12 489) allusion is made of the college of ἄρχοντες «L. Pompeius Valle(n)s... munera fecit Histro in oppido arc(h)ontium et sacerdotium...». A college of ἄρχοντες is mentioned in a document of the 3rd century of our era at Callatis, which has been recently discovered, see in this number of *Dacia*, p. 511–514.

by a person who was high priest (ἀρχιερεύς) and pontarch (ποντάρχης)³⁴. The decree for Aristagoras speaks about ἐπιμέλεια τῶν ἔργων³⁵.

In a descending order, this scale of dignities numbers πάσας δημοτελεῖς χορηγίας καὶ ἐνδόξους ὑπηρεσίας. It is more difficult to distinguish between these than between the others, because both mean services for the benefit of the people. Χορηγία in the context in which we find it no longer refers to the well-known institution of the classical epoch, which favoured the cultural and artistic progress of the Greek polis, but shows the public gifts (δημοτελεῖς) made by Aba's ancestors³⁶. This meaning is given by Hesychius, who states that it corresponds to δόσις³⁷, as well as by numerous inscriptions beginning as early as the Hellenistic epoch.

At first sight, the services designated by ὑπηρεσίαι would appear to be minor functions³⁸. They were held by small clerks or even slaves, serving either in the navy, in the administration of the city, or in the medical service³⁹. Naturally, we cannot think of such functions when we speak of Aba's family, which had such an important social position in the Histrian State. The adjective ἐνδόξος which accompanies ὑπηρεσίαι (ἐνδόξους ὑπηρεσίας) makes us seek another explanation and consider these functions as some of the most outstanding ones. Examples from the classical epoch, in which we see how ὑπηρεσία qualified by an adjective changes its meaning, support our supposition. For instance ὑπηρεσία ἡ κρατίστη shows the function of the trierarch, who distinguished himself by paying a large sum for the equipment of the ships⁴⁰.

In the Roman epoch, we find in documents those κυριακαὶ ὑπηρεσίαι which do not mean services to the benefit of the State, but services to the profit of the empire, coming from a magistrate in a certain city, maybe a λειτουργός in connection with the functionaries called δεκαπρώτοι⁴¹. It is not impossible that our document should allude to similar things.

After listing the functions held by Aba's family in the Histrian State, thanks to which she enjoyed the greatest esteem (καὶ πάσης ἐξαιρέτου τιμῆς τετυχηκότων line 12), the man who drew up the decree starts by recording the personal merits of the honoured personage, mentioning first of all that in order to enhance the ancestral glory, she had of her own free will (αὐτεπαγγέλ[τως] ἀναλαβοῦσα) assumed the sacerdocy of the Mother of Gods. The word αὐτεπαγγέλτως lays stress on the same situation mentioned above in connection with

³⁴ V. Pârvan, *Histria IV*, p. 623, no. 27 and 625, no. 28.

³⁵ Syll³, 708, line 10.

³⁶ DA, I₂, p. 1117–1119 s. v. choregia; RE, III, s. v. χορηγία col. 2409–2422, cf. J. et L. Robert, *BullÉp*, 1956, p. 41, no. 189. For δημοτελής cf. R. Stengel, *Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer*, Munich, 1920, p. 106–108. At Histria «public sacrifices», cf. D. M. Pippidi, in *Histria I*, p. 477, line 19; cf. L. Robert, *Hellenica VI*, Paris, 1943, p. 73, lines 12–14 and p. 75, lines 9–12.

³⁷ Hesychius, *Lexicon recensuit Mauricius Schmidt*, Jena, 1858–1888.

³⁸ In Egypt δημοτικά ὑπηρεσία appear in contradistinction to βουλευτικά λειτουργία, cf. F. Prei-

sigke-F. Bilabel, *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*, no. 7261, apud A.H.M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 342, note 47.

³⁹ For ὑπηρεσίαι, *Hyperétès* in DA, especially p. 344–345; RE, IX, col. 286–287. For ὑπηρετής in the medical service see J. and L. Robert, in *BullÉp*, 1955, p. 291.

⁴⁰ Demosth., LI, 6: ἔτι τοίνυν ὑπηρεσίαν τὴν κρατίστην ἔλαβον, πολλῶ πλείστον ἀργύριον δοῦς (359), cf. G. Busolt, *op. cit.*, p. 574, note 1 and 2.

⁴¹ M. Rostovtseff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 2nd Edition, revised by P. M. Fraeser, Oxford, 1957, p. 390.

the expression *παρητημένων*, namely the difficulty of finding citizens willing to hold functions in the state.

As priestess of the Phrygian goddess, Aba was not content with carrying out in the usual manner the obligations inherent to this function οὐ μόνον ὅσα σεμνῶν γυναικῶν καὶ [ἱερείῳ]ν καὶ τοῦ παλαιο[ῦ] αἰῶν]ος ἦν ἰδίαν μεγαλοφρόνως καὶ εὐγενῶς καὶ ε[ῦ]σ[εβῶ]ς ἐτέλεσεν line 17—19⁴², but vied in her deeds with the remarkable men of the town, who had been high priests and had held other high functions, connected with considerable gifts (liberalities) to the people ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅσαι μεγάλα τῶν ἀνδρῶν φιλο[τείμων] ἀρ[χ]ιερωσύνην ἢ καὶ τινες ἄλλαι χορηγίαι καὶ τα[ύ]τας ν[ε]μήσασθαι σπουδάσασα line 20—22⁴³.

Her outstanding deeds for the benefit of the people entitled her to the honours conferred upon her by our decree. These deeds seem to have been done during a year, in which time she was priestess of the Mother of Gods, and they are recorded somewhat chronologically in the document. The first actions are connected with an event described rather vaguely by the document, namely «the beginning of the year» πρῶτον μὲν εὐθὺς τὰς πρώτας προσόδους καὶ θυσίας καὶ εὐχὰς τοῖς θεοῖς ποιούμενη τὴν τοῦ ἔτους ἀρχὴν μετ' εὐφροσύνης καὶ εὐωχίας μεγαλοπρεποῦς ἐποίησατο line 22—25. On that occasion she brought sacrifices to the Gods, carried out the first processions and prayers, celebrating the «new year» with great joy and merrymaking.

So far, no other mention of this event has been found in Histrian inscriptions. We do not know when, in what month and what season the Histrian year began. All we know about the calendar in this Pontic town is the mention of several months, Ταυρεῶν, Ἀρτεμισιῶν, Ἀνθεστεριῶν⁴⁴, but we do not know when these months were placed and which of them was the first month of the year. Fr. Bilabel supposed that the Milesian calendar was being used in Histria⁴⁵. Based on a judicious analysis of the decree for Aristagoras, he asserted that the month Artemision, mentioned in the decree by which he was honoured, was the last of the year. Therefore, according to custom, the month of Taureon should be the first, and that it should be placed in spring, at the equinox. This is confirmed by an indication from the decree for Aba. As the first processions τὰς πρώτας προσόδους are mentioned in connection with the beginning of the year, they cannot but be those which took place on the big holidays in honour of the Mother of Gods, between March 15 and March 27, as Cybele, the chthonic divinity, connected above all with agriculture, was celebrated in spring. The ceremonies coincided with the coming of spring, as Attis, her acolyte, whose sacred drama they symbolized, represented the vegetation which dies and revives. For the agricultural population, spring was the sacred season of the year and that is why the religious year, identified with the solar year, began with it⁴⁶.

⁴² Completion... παλαιο[ῦ] αἰῶν]ος ἦν line 18 was suggested to us by Prof. Werner Peek (Halle) to whom we take this opportunity to express our thanks; see note 101.

⁴³ Ἄνδρες φιλότιμοι in the sense established by L. Robert, *Les gladiateurs...*, p. 276—280.

⁴⁴ The data concerning the Histrian months were collected by D.M. Pippidi, in *Contribuții...*, p. 120.

We must add that the month Anthesterion is documented with certainty in the decree of the tribes for Meniscos, published by L. Lambrino, in *Istros, I*, 1934, p. 132, line 16.

⁴⁵ Fr. Bilabel, *Die Ionische Kolonisation*, in «*Philologus*», Supplbd. XIV, Leipzig, 1920, p. 67—70.

⁴⁶ H. Graillot, *op. cit.*, p. 161 sqq.

We must not, however, assume that the beginning of the year, mentioned in our inscription, was placed on the first day of Taureon and that the festivities which, as we learn, took place in Histria were occasioned by the first day of the year. The most plausible explanation, which I think we must adopt, is that the celebrations in honour of Cybele were the first in the year which came nearest to the first day and that they preceded others, which we know were held during the same month or during the following ones. This conclusion is even more obvious, as we know that with the Greeks the first day of the new year was not celebrated by special ceremonies or manifestations, as it happened with the Romans, for whom the Kalendae of January were an occasion of great joy and celebration by the entire people⁴⁷. Moreover, the defective system of the lunar year, which allows for the addition and elimination of days in order to make the lunar year concord with the solar one, contributed towards lessening the importance of the first day of the year.

The processions mentioned by the decree, τὰς πρώτας προσόδους, the first in chronological order, must be linked up with the principal moments in the period March 15 to March 27, in which Cybele and her acolyte Attis were honoured publicly. Beginning with March 15, when the cannophors' confraternity opened the festival, by their festive procession to the temple, which continued during the following days with the carrying of the sacred tree by the dendrophors (on the 22nd) and up to the 27th, when «Lavatio» concluded the festive days, these religious events gave rise to processions and prayers, mentioned in inscriptions and in literary texts. On the way to the temple, the choir, made up of young boys or girls, often accompanied by flutes and dances⁴⁸, sang songs (προσόδια).

Apart from processions, prayers and sacrifices to the gods (προσόδους καὶ θυσίας καὶ εὐχὰς τοῖς θεοῖς), religious ceremonies also included a large meal for the entire people. The brilliancy of the celebration depended on the generosity of the everget and the latter tried to please the people by the most bountiful gifts. This is what Aba did, and consequently the «new year» was celebrated μετ' εὐφροσύνης καὶ εὐωχίας μεγαλοπρεποῦς.

The terms εὐφροσύνη and εὐωχία are typical, showing the joy at the banquets offered by the magistrates or evergets for the people; one meets these terms very often in texts and inscriptions. Songs and dances accompanied the merriment⁴⁹.

On the occasion of these celebrations Aba offered, apart from the usual banquet, two denarii to every man, giving this sum to the members of the Council, of the gerosia, of the college of taureasts, to doctors and professors and to others whom she called in particular, by name: τοῖς μὲν γὰρ βουλευταῖς πᾶσιν καὶ γερουσιασταῖς καὶ ταυριασταῖς καὶ ἰατροῖς καὶ παιδευταῖς καὶ τοῖς ἰδία καὶ ἐξ

⁴⁷ RE, X, s.v. *Kalendae* and *Kalendae Ianuariae*, col. 1560–1564; *ibidem*, XVII s.v. *Neujahr*, col. 148–152.

⁴⁸ H. Graillot, *op. cit.*, p. 116–142; Fr. Cumont, *op. cit.*, p. 52–54. About πρόσοδος and προσόδιον see article in RE, XXIII₁, col. 856 sqq. The volume was published in 1957.

⁴⁹ All the bibliography concerning εὐωχία and εὐφροσύνη was collected by L. Robert, *Hellenica* X, Paris, 1955, p. 199, note 7 and p. 298. Apart from the documents cited by Robert, see at Callatis the expression [κρεα]νομία εὐωχῆσι τὸν δῆμον in a decree published by I. I. Russu in «Dacia», N.S., I, 1957, p. 182, line 1–2.

ὀνόματος καλουμένοις ἐκ δύο κατ' ἄνδρα δηναρ[ί]ων διανομήν, ἣν οὕτω τις ἄλλη πρότερον, ἔδωκεν line 25—30.

What the money was for is explained by other inscriptions in other parts of the Greek world. The distribution of money was a custom the evergets resorted to, in order to enable those who took part in the festivities to enjoy themselves more. Sometimes wine was distributed freely all through the festivities, free oil was given for the gymnasium exercises and there were also free performances. But the simplest method was to offer the participants money with which they could do what they pleased ⁵⁰. And this, we think, is what ABA did.

In an inscription from Selga⁵¹, an everget, who was famous for his generosity, is honoured because, as priest of the imperial house and agonothet, he had distributed money and had moreover offered the people free performances and animal fights: ...ἀρχιερασάμενον τοῦ οἴκου τῶν Σεβαστῶν ἐπιφανῶς ἐπὶ διανομαῖς καὶ θεωρίαις καὶ μονομαχίαις καὶ κυνηγεσίαις καὶ ἀγωνοθέτην διὰ βίου κ.τ.λ. (line 1—5). At Sardis, one denarius was given to every citizen ὑπὲρ θεωριῶν⁵². Some documents state that the sums of money were paid in one lot, to the benefit of the entire people; other documents are more precise, indicating also the social categories of those who benefited by the gifts. Thus, at Iotapa, during the reign of M. Aurelius, Kendeos, son of Apaturios, and his wife gave the substantial sum of 5000 denarii as a gift: ... εἰς τε διανομὰς τῶν βουλευ[υ]τῶν καὶ οἰνοδοσίας καὶ γυμνασιαρχίας τῶν πολειτῶν⁵³. At Philadelphia, Aurelius Hermippus, distributes money to the council, the gerousia and the tribes: καὶ τῇ κρατίστῃ βουλῇ δηναρίων μυριάδας πέντε καὶ τῷ σεμνωτάτῳ συνέδριῳ τῆς γερουσίας δηνάρια μύρια, φυλαῖς ἑπτὰ ταῖς ἐστακύαις τοὺς ἀνδριάντας πρὸς δηνάρια χεῖλια⁵⁴. At Syllium, Menodora, daughter of Megakles, to cite the example of a woman this time, gave, together with her son and daughter, money to all social categories in the town: ἐπιδοῦσαν ἐκάστῳ βουλευ[τῇ] ἀνὰ δηνάρια πη' καὶ σείτου μό[διον] α', γεραίῳ δὲ ἐκάστῳ δηνάρια πα' καὶ [σ]είτου μό[διον] α', ἐκκλησιαστῇ δὲ [ἐ]κάστῳ δηνάρια οη' καὶ σείτου μό[διον] α', γυναιξὶ δὲ τούτων ἐκάστη δηνάρια γ' [οὐ]νδικταρίοις δὲ καὶ ἀπελευτέροις [ἐκ]άστῳ δηνάρια δ' κ.τ.λ. ⁵⁵.

The sum of two denarii is worth quite a lot, if we take into account the fact that at that time the annual pay of a Roman legionary was 300 denarii, that of a simple fighter in the auxiliary troops 75 denarii⁵⁶. The denarius therefore had a high value in those times. The wax tablets of Dacia give us useful information in this respect. From the expenditure list of a college, on the occasion of a banquet which took place around the middle of the 2nd century of our era, we learn that among the foodstuffs consumed were 5 lambs which cost 18 denarii, a piglet

⁵⁰ A.H.M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 218, 234, 248, 358 with the indicated bibliography; M. Rostovtseff, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

⁵¹ IGRR, III, 382.

⁵² Sardis, *Publications of the American Society for the Excavations of Sardis*, vol. VII, *Greek and Latin Inscriptions* (W. H. Buckler and D.M. Robinson), no. 56, apud A.H.M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 358, note 66.

⁵³ IGRR, III, 833.

⁵⁴ IGRR, IV, 1632.

⁵⁵ IGRR, III, 802, cf. 800, 801. See also inscription no. 492 of Oenoanda (2nd century of our era) where two denarii are given to each member of the Council.

⁵⁶ For the payment of the Roman army during the imperial period, the classical work is A. von Domaszewski's *Der Truppensold der Kaiserzeit*, in *Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, X1, 1900, p. 218—241; cf. article *Stipendium* in RE, III A, col. 2536—2538; G. R. Watson, *The Pay of the Roman Army*, in «*Historia*», VIII, 3, 1959, p. 372—378.

which costs 5 denarii, white bread for 2 denarii, onions, vinegar, etc.⁵⁷. If a lamb cost only 3.60 denarii, and a day's work at the Alburnus Maior mines was paid at that time (164 our era) 0.40 denarii, as is shown by the contract concluded by Memmius, son of Asclepius with a «conductor»⁵⁸, we can assess even better the value of denarii during the period of our decree. Moreover, the decree, we are studying, tells us that no one before had given as much as Αβα διανομήν ἤν οὕτω τις ἄλλη πρότερον ἔδωκεν line 29; this is probably true, even if the affected style of the documents of this kind somewhat exaggerated facts. We can also see this if we compare the sum given by Αβα with that offered by Artemidoros, son of Herodoros (1000 denarii) for the celebration of «Rosalia» at Histria, or with another inscription from the rural territory of Histria where the sum was 75 denarii⁵⁹.

In the enumeration made in the text of the inscription reproduced above and in the text which follows, as we shall see later on, mention is made for the first time of some social categories. Thus, βουλευταί, under this form, of a college, ταυριασταί, ιατροί, is not found in other inscriptions.

Although there are two other Histria inscriptions which mention two βουλευταί, *Aelius, buleuta Histriae*⁶⁰, or Αἰσχρίων Ἀρισταγώρου⁶¹, yet *buleutai* as a whole appear in no other document. Here it is shown that Αβα made her gift to «all the members of the Council» (βουλευταῖς πᾶσιν) that is, to the entire college. Although no strict order is maintained in the enumeration of the various social categories, in keeping with the importance of each, *buleutai* are nevertheless mentioned first. This points to the leading role of the Council in the Greek polis of the Roman epoch. Together with the college of magistrates (ἄρχοντες) the Council becomes the only body with supreme power in the state. Its members, mostly wealthy people, are no longer elected, κατὰ φυλές, as during the previous periods, the only condition for their being appointed as members being their material status. In the inscriptions of that time βουλευταί appear organized in colleges, which, like the other ones, receive gifts from the evergets⁶².

Γερουσιασταί, mentioned after the *buleutai*, can only be the members of the *gerousia*, founded for the second time (γερουσία ἡ μετὰ τὴν δευτέραν κτίσιν) during the reign of emperor Hadrian. The leading position they occupy in the decree fully agrees with the part played by the *gerousia* in the Greek polis at that time. Although its character is not yet well defined, as there is a diversity of opinion in this respect, yet its aristocratic nature cannot be contested⁶³. This

⁵⁷ CIL, III, tab. cer. XV, p. 953.

⁵⁸ CIL, III, tab. cer. C, p. 948.

⁵⁹ V. Pârvan, *Histria IV*, p. 599, col. II, line 9–10 (= SEG, 330); CIL, III, 7526: *Eadem condition(e) do vico Ce(τ)eris (denarios) LXXV ut faciant pri(die) Kal(endas) Iunias hoc loco... etc...* In general, for the value of the denarius at that time see Thomas Pekary, *Studien zur römischen Währungs- und Finanzgeschichte von 161 bis 235 N. Chr.*, in «Historia», VIII, 4, 1959, p. 443 sqq.

⁶⁰ V. Pârvan, *Cetatea Ulmetum*, in ARMSI, s. II, XXXIV, p. 530, no. 2.

⁶¹ «Dacia», II, 1925, p. 232, no. 30.

⁶² About the part played by βουλή in the Roman period and especially in the second century of our era, see Is. Lévy's study in REG, VIII, 1895, p. 219–231.

⁶³ For *gerousia* see Is. Lévy, REG, VIII, 1895, p. 231–250; W. Liebenam, *op. cit.*, p. 565–566; Fr. Poland, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens*, Leipzig, 1909, p. 102; A. H. M. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 225–226 and 353, note 31; J. H. Oliver, «Historia», VII, 1958, p. 472–496: *Gerusiae and Augustales*; cf. J. and L. Robert, in BullÉp, LXXII, 1959, p. 169, 65.

is even more clearly evidenced when we analyse the situation at Histria. In this instance the album of 138 our era is no longer an empty list for us, a mere enumeration of unknown names. The epigraphic discoveries of the last few years has made it possible to identify many gerousiasts with dignitaries of public life, men who held various civic and religious functions. This has made their social and economic position quite clear. It could thus be established that many of the members of the gerousia appear in this association in families (γένη), some of them quite numerous. One of these families is that of Dionysios, whose sons, grandsons and great grandsons, eight in all, appear both in the gerousia and in another unpublished document ⁶⁴. Many such examples can be given and a summary investigation of the album of the gerousia has led to the identification of at least seven families of this kind. In the light of the new data, the gerousia of Histria appears not as a simple private college with a religious and educational character, nor as a «club», «casino» and so on, but as a mighty organization, private of course, and according to age, but with a great political and economic power in the state. Its members were the most outstanding people (φιλότειμοι), who had been or still were members of the Council, magistrates, priests and so on.

The third, in the order followed by our decree, is the college of taureasts (ταυρεασταί). This is the second mention available, attesting to the presence of this thiasos in Histria. In an epigraphic document, recently discovered and published by D. M. Pippidi, they appear to be the *forum* which issued a decree for the honouring of Aristonikos, son of Anthesterios, a benefactor of the college ⁶⁵. The document we have just mentioned tells us that the taureasts had a holiday called ταύρια during which, as in other Ionian towns, they crowned the evergets and honoured Poseidon. The bad state of preservation of this document has made it impossible to establish the date when this holiday was held and how long it lasted. It is probable, however, that the situation was similar to that of Sinope, where Poseidon was honoured during two months of the year, namely Taureon and Poseidon ⁶⁶. Now that mention has been made of the month of Taureon at Histria ⁶⁷, this supposition has even more chances of being true. Like the other Milesian towns, Histria could not fail to pay homage to Poseidon Helikonios, one of the oldest and best loved Pan-Ionian gods ⁶⁸. During the 3rd century, the servants of this god in the town on the banks of Lake Sinope were high placed persons, such as Τίτος Αἴλιος Μιν[ουκιανός] ἱερεὺς τοῦ Θεοῦ διὰ βίου, who was at the same time also pontarch of the pentapolis ⁶⁹. The fact that the taureasts are cited among the first in the enumeration makes us infer that Poseidon played a big part in the public cult.

Up to the discovery of our decree, there was no lack of information concerning the educational activity and the care of public health in Histria. During the Hellenistic period, mentions in this respect were found more often

⁶⁴ In this respect see the recent study by D.M. Pippidi, *În jurul unei inscripții din Muzeul Național de Antichități al Institut. de Arheologie*, in SCIV, X, 2, 1958, especially, p. 365–369.

⁶⁵ *Histria I*, p. 553, no. 30.

⁶⁶ BCH, XIII, 1898, p. 300–301.

⁶⁷ SCIV, VII, 3–4, 1956, p. 347.

⁶⁸ The documents were collected and interpreted by Fr. Bilabel, *op. cit.*, p. 90–93; cf. D. M. Pippidi, in *Histria I*, p. 553.

⁶⁹ Cf. C. Moisil, in BCMI, IV, 1911, p. 106; J. Weiss, in JÖAI, XIV, 1911, Beibl. col. 151–152.

and were more complete⁷⁰. As for the Roman epoch, our information on the education of young people was very scarce. Apart from an inscription from the 3rd century of our era, in which mention is made of the rebuilding of the gymnasium (γυμνάσιον ἀνανεωσάμενον), there is nothing else to cite. That is why the mention of the professors and doctors (line 27: καὶ τοῖς ἱατροῖς καὶ παιδευταῖς) in the decree for Aba is very welcome. During the Roman epoch, inscriptions mention παιδευταί side by side with the doctors (ἱατροί), as in our inscription or in that of Dionysopolis⁷¹, where they are cited in a similar position with that of the Histrian decree. Their presence side by side with the ἱατροί and on the same level as they were, is quite explicable, as both colleges had a common regime at that time, established by the emperors of that period. During the epoch we are referring to, the emperors gave precise dispositions concerning their juridical status and both colleges are always mentioned together. Thus, Vespasian is the first to extend the immunity of *munera*, which Augustus had granted to physicians only⁷², to professors too. At first it was only an exemption from the obligation to offer « hospitality », that is lodgings to the Roman army in the provinces⁷³. Emperor Hadrian⁷⁴ also confirms this privilege, while Antoninus Pius⁷⁵ and then Commodus⁷⁶ extend the exemptions, adding new ones, including the gymnasiarchia, agoranomia, priesthoods (ἱερωσύναι), tutelage, ἐλαιοῦν, etc.

This shows, on the one hand, how heavy municipal duties had become for the population in the Roman epoch and on the other hand the deadlock reached by the Greek polis, whose administrative system and budget depended on the bounty of « benefactors ». At the same time, one can see the appreciation enjoyed by the professorial and medical corps in the imperial epoch, an appreciation which has its antecedents in the Hellenistic period. Even in those times, the states used to pay greater attention to education and public health⁷⁷.

Unfortunately public schools did not include children of primary school age, either in the Hellenistic period or later on in the Roman period. The primary school education was left to the care of private persons (παιδονόμοι) who had a precarious economic condition. They were not exempt from the *munera*, mentioned above, for the texts, very clear in this respect, do not mention them together with the teachers of secondary schools (γραμματικοί) nor with those of high schools (σοφισταί, ῥήτορες)⁷⁸.

⁷⁰ The news on the education of young people in Histria was collected and commented by Em. Popescu in SCIV, VII, 3–4, 1956, p. 343–365.

⁷¹ IGB, I, no. 30... τῇ βουλῇ καὶ ἀγορανόμοις καὶ [ταῖς] ἐπὶ τὰ φυλαῖς καὶ τοῖς ὑμνοῦσι τοὺς Σεβαστοὺς καὶ ἀγοραῖοις, ἱατροῖς, παιδευταῖς καὶ τοῖς παρε<[πα]-ρε>π[ιδ]ημήσαν.

⁷² Dio Cassius, LIII, 60 (= Zonaras X, 30).

⁷³ Digesta L, 4, 18, 30; Sitzungsberichte d. preuss. Akad. d. Wissenschaften, Berlin, 1935, 968, 7.

⁷⁴ Digesta, *ibidem*.

⁷⁵ Idem, XXVII, 1, 6, 1.

⁷⁶ Idem, 8.

⁷⁷ C. Barbagallo, *Lo Stato e l'istruzione pubblica nell'impero romano*, Catania, 1911; L. Hahn, *Über das Verhältnis von Staat und Schule in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, in « Philologus » 76, 1926, p. 176 sqq.; H. Irénée Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'Antiquité*, IV-ème éd., Paris, 1958. For public physicians: the article *Medicus* DA, III, p. 1671, 1685, 1693; R. Pohl, *De graecorum medicis publicis*, Berlin, 1905; L. Cohn-Haft, *The Public Physicians of Ancient Greece* (Smith College Studies in History, 42), Northampton, Mass. 1956; cf. REG, 1958, p. 200.

⁷⁸ Digesta L, 4, § 11, 4, etc.; cf. Digesta XXVII, 1, 6, 1.

As for the number of teachers and physicians, Histria was probably no exception from the general situation prevalent at that time. Fortunately, we have very precise indications of the time of Antoninus Pius, from which period our decree dates. By a disposition addressed to the towns in Asia Minor (Κοινὸν τῆς Ἀσίας) and then extended to the whole empire, this emperor fixed the number of teachers and doctors for each town in relation to its size. According to the interpretation given by the jurisconsult Modestinus, these towns were divided into three categories: 1) capitals of provinces, 2) towns with courts of law (*forum causarum*) and 3) common towns. The maximum number for each was 10, 7, and 5 physicians and respectively, 5, 4, or 3 grammatici and as many retors (sophists)⁷⁹.

We do not know to which of these categories Histria belonged; one thing is certain that in the Roman epoch it was not the capital of a province, for as is known, the capital of the province was Tomis. So only the two other categories could be taken into consideration and even in this case, if we were to choose one or the other, we still could not specify the exact number, for the imperial decree left it to the towns to decrease this number as they liked⁸⁰. The leaders of the empire were not pleased to have too large a number of privileged people, exempt from the *munera*, nor could the municipal leaders like this, since inside the town the duties were the same and there were ever fewer citizens to take them on. The order given by Antoninus Pius was determined precisely by the fact that many citizens, wishing to be in the privileged situation of teachers, sought to assume the honorific title of professor and thus get rid of their civic obligations. One may therefore infer that the number of teachers and physicians in Histria was not too big. However, those who are mentioned in the decree for ABA were in the service of the state, which paid them for their services. This situation is so common, that this town on the Western coast of Pontus Euxinus could not be an exception⁸¹.

In lines 26 to 27, we find in our decree among those who benefited by ABA's gifts a category of people designated by the following words: καὶ τοῖς ἰδίᾳ καὶ ἐξ ὀνόματος καλουμένοις... ἔδωκεν, that is, the honoured personage gave two denarii to each of those who had been called particularly and according to their name (nominally). As far as we know, the expression as such has appeared in no other epigraphic text, and it is therefore difficult for us to establish who were those who received the two denarii and how many of them there were. We believe we are not wrong in supposing that allusion is made to a certain category of people, who came to the celebrations about the New Year as private persons. They were not members of any association of the kind mentioned before (βουλευταί, γερουσιασταί, ταυριασταί, ἱατροί, etc.), to whom the gift

⁷⁹ Digesta XXVII, 1, 6, 2: "Ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς ῥητόρων ἐν ἑκάστη πόλει τῶν τὴν ἀλειτουρησίαν ἔχόντων, καὶ αἰρέσεις τινὲς προσκειμέναι τῷ νόμῳ, ὕπερ δηλοῦνται ἐξ ἐπιστολῆς Ἀντονίνου τοῦ Εὐσεβοῦς γραφείσης μὲν τῷ κοινῷ τῆς Ἀσίας, παντὶ δὲ κόσμῳ διαφερούσης, ἧς ἐστὶν τὸ κεφάλαιον τοῦτο ὑποτεταγμένον. Αἱ μὲν ἐλάχιστοι πόλεις δύνανται πέντε ἱατροὺς ἀτελεῖς ἔχειν καὶ τρεῖς σοφιστὰς καὶ γραμματικούς τοὺς ἴσους· αἱ δὲ μέζουσι πόλεις ἑπτὰ τοὺς θεραπεύοντας, τέσσαρας τοὺς παιδεύοντας ἑκατέραν παιδεῖαν· αἱ δὲ μεγίσται

πόλεις δέκα ἱατροὺς καὶ ῥήτορας πέντε καὶ γραμματικούς τοὺς ἴσους· ὕπερ δὲ τοῦτον τὸν ἀριθμὸν οὐδὲ ἡ μεγίστη πόλις τὴν ἀτέλειαν παρέχει· εἰκὸς δὲ τῷ μὲν μεγίστῳ ἀριθμῷ χρήσασθαι τὰς μητροπόλεις τῶν ἔθνων, τῷ δὲ δευτέρῳ τὰς ἐχούσας ἀγορὰς δικῶν, τῷ δὲ τρίτῳ τὰς λοιπὰς.

⁸⁰ Ibidem, XXVII, 1, 6, 3. About all these, see H. I Marrou, *op. cit.*, p. 401–402.

⁸¹ Digesta L, 9, 4, 2; Plinius, *Ep.* IV, 13, 6: multis in locis... in quibus praeceptores publice conducuntur.

is made as a group, but rather a category of friends and acquaintances of Aba's, whom she wanted to share her bounty. It is not impossible that some of them should have been members of other groups, such as those mentioned in the following lines, for instance: ἡρακλειασταί, τέκτονες, ὕμνωδοί, or of other groups, which do not appear in the decree and who did not receive the two denarii gift, reserved for other, more important associations.

Like other evergets of the Hellenistic period or of the Roman one, Aba wants to be φιλότιμος, not only towards the cult of the gods and the quasi-statal associations, but also towards private persons. There are numerous examples in this respect, and often allusions are made to charities on two planes: ἰδία καὶ δημοσία⁸², ἰδία καὶ κοινεῖ(ῃ)⁸³, ἰδία ἐκάστω καὶ κοινῇ πᾶσιν φιλανθρωπεῖν⁸⁴, τοῖς ἰδία παραγινόμενοις⁸⁵, or τοῖς ἰδία ἀφικνουμένοις⁸⁶, κατὰ κοινὸν ἢ κατ' ἰδίαν χρήαν πᾶσιν συνέργοις φιλοτιμίως⁸⁷.

A similar situation to that finding in Histria is also offered by the Nyssa decree⁸⁸ in honour of Titus Aelius Alcibiades, who is honoured for: ...καὶ δωρεὰς ἰδιά τε ἐκάστο[ις κ]αὶ δημοσία κατὰ φυλὰς καὶ συ[νεδρία] καὶ συμμορίας διανέμων ὥς πάσαν μὲν ἐκκλησίαν, πᾶ[σ]αν δὲ βουλὴν, πάντα δὲ συναθ[ροισμὸν] ἔχειν τι φιλοτιμία μέγα καὶ δῶρον Ἀλκιβιάδου, etc. line 23—29.

With line 30 of the decree the list of those who received from Aba two denarii, which as we are told is a big sum, « not given by anyone before », comes to an end. Then comes the enumeration of those who did not receive this gift; these participated only in the banquet, οἰνοπόσιον⁸⁹. The first to be mentioned are in reality subdivisions of the tribes: τοῖς δὲ ἐν ταῖς φυλαῖς κατὰ πεντηκονταρχίαν διανενημένοις line 30—31. The group mentioned πεντηκονταρχία is not found in other documents which speak of tribes, discovered so far either at Histria or in the rest of the Greek world. We have tried to establish its meaning in a previous study, published by the review *Dacia*⁹⁰. In this special case of our decree, πεντηκονταρχία appears as a unit within the framework of which the people take part in the banquet given on the occasion of the religious celebrations in honour of the *Mother of Gods*. The presence of the tribes on such occasions is often met with in inscriptions and is also mentioned in Histria by the decree for Aristagoras, son of Apaturios⁹¹. The division of the people into smaller groups was useful during the holidays as order had to be kept and because it also facilitated the distribution of the gifts. A decree from Piraeus in honour of a citizen from another demos shows that there τριακὰς represented the group of people who took the meal in common. After granting Kallidamas the right to take part in the sacrifices and the banquet, he is assigned a place in τριακὰς⁹²: καὶ συνεστιᾶσθαι Καλλιδάμαντα μετὰ Πειραιεῦσιν νόμιμόν ἐστιν εἰς τριακὰς ἣν ἂν αὐτὸς βούληται.

⁸² Syll³, 85, line 10.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, 320, line 10.

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, 56, line 30.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*, 438, line 10.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, 454, line 5.

⁸⁷ IGB I, 43, line 10.

⁸⁸ BCH, 1885, p. 127.

⁸⁹ Concerning οἰνοπόσιον see ÖJh., VI, 1903,

p. 122; RE, 17, s.v. οἰνοποσιάρχης. A college of συνποσιασταί at Philipopolis: AEM, XVIII, p. 117, no. 30.

⁹⁰ See « *Dacia* », N. S., III, 1959, p. 256—257.

⁹¹ Syll³ 708, line 23—24.

⁹² IG² 1212 (Michel, *Recueil*... 145, Syll³, 912), line 14 sq.; cf. L. Robert, *Hellenica*, V, p. 10.

The citizens who, we are told, were included in the pentekontarchies, probably represented the mass of the people, πολῖται with full rights in the state, in contradistinction to the common people τὸ πλῆθος (line 43—44) and foreigners: παρεπιδημοῦντες, mentioned lower down. Of the same gift, οἰνοπόσιον, which was boastfully named by the inscription ὅσον οἱ ἐπὶ τοῖς μεγάλοις ὀνόμασιν φιλοτειμούμενοι offered by those who claimed to acquire high names⁹³ also profited the colleges of ὕμνωδοί, τέκτονες, ἱεροπ[λα]τεῖται, and ἡρακλειασταί.

This is the second time that a college of singers, ὕμνωδοί, is attested in Histria. An inscription discovered in 1953 and studied by D. M. Pippidi, mentioned the « elder singers who honoured the great god Dionysos »: ὕμνωδοί πρεσβύτεροι οἱ περὶ τὸν μέγαν θεὸν Διόνυσον. As the editor of the inscription established, they formed « the artistic group of the association σπεῖρα Διονυσιαστῶν or an independent group affiliated to the speira for the purpose of joint performances ». Dating from the first half of the 3rd century of our era (222—225), the inscription furnishes information on the organization of the college of hymnodoi⁹⁴.

In our decree the hymnodoi are not qualified by an epithet which could tell us more precisely which is referred to. To identify them is rendered even more difficult, by the fact that in the Roman imperial period the Greek towns had many groups of singers. The inscriptions mention the hymnodoi in connection with associations, for instance with the gerosia, the Council or, as we saw at Histria, as members of the mystical association in honour of Dionysos. The most frequent type of singers' associations were those aimed at glorifying the emperors⁹⁵. It is possible that those mentioned at Histria should have belonged to a college of this type, such as those in the towns of Moesia Inferior⁹⁶, or they may have been a larger group of all the colleges of singers who had gathered on the occasion of the celebrations in order to receive the gifts.

Among the associations mentioned for the first time at Histria is also that of τέκτονες (line 32—33). This term was used as far back as the Homeric epoch to designate woodworkers, house-builders and shipwrights, etc.⁹⁷. Although the word has also other meanings, it indicates in general the work of people who use wooden material, in contrast to stone workers λιθολόγοι or metal workers χαλκεῖς. The decree gives no details as to the organization of the colleges of tektones in Histria. Documents referring to this association are rare. Some data are offered by Egypt, where they existed in the 1st century (the year 46 of our era) οἱ ἀπὸ [τῆς?] Πτο[λε]μαίδος τέ[κτο]νες πρεσβύτεροι (there were therefore at least

⁹³ Only the zealous ones who spent money for the benefit of the community became φιλοτειμούμενοι, or acquired high names μεγάλα ὀνόματα. In the decree of the Herakleasts of Delos in honour of Patron, son of Dorotheus (Ch. Michel, *op. cit.* 998, lines 30—35), or in the regulations of the iobachoi of Athens, the benefactors of the associations are called φιλοτειμούμενοι: (Syll³, 1109, lines 41—46); in an inscription from Bithynia (OGIS, 528), Tiberius Claudius Piso, after having held the highest function which existed in the Roman epoch, acquires the title of τὸ μέγα ὄνομα τοῦ γένους.

⁹⁴ D. M. Pippidi, *Contributii...*, p. 197—212.

⁹⁵ Concerning the college of hymnodoi see:

Th. Reinach, s. v. *Hymnodus*, in DA, III, p. 336—337; Fr. Poland, *op. cit.*, p. 46 sqq.; E. Ziebarth, in RE, col. 2520—2522; H. I. Marrou, *op. cit.*, p. 192; D. M. Pippidi, *Contributii...*, p. 197—212.

⁹⁶ At Dionysopolis there appear οἱ ὕμνωδοί νεώτεροι and οἱ ὕμνουντες τοὺς Σεβαστοὺς (IGB, I, 37, 30) and at Nikopolis ad Istrum three inscriptions speak of ὕμνωδοί πρεσβύτεροι, ὕμνωδοί φιλοσέβαστοι, ὕμνωδοί ἱερωνεῖσαι καὶ φιλοσέβαστοι, *ibidem*, 656, 667, 668.

⁹⁷ Il. V, 59—63, VI, 315; Od. IX, 126, XVII, 384, etc. see the article *Architectus* in DA, I, p. 374—382; G. Busolt, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

two associations in that place) and who had also a priest⁹⁸. We find a κοινὸν τῶν τεκτόνων mentioned at Oxyrhynchos⁹⁹ in the 4th century (316 our era). Recently, J. and L. Robert reported an unknown inscription¹⁰⁰ found at Avdan in Eastern Caria, dating from the imperial period; it comprises a list of 14 names with the following dedication: οἱ κατασκεύασαν οἶκον συνωμότε Διί. Between these names, mention is made of a τέκτων and a κεραμεύς headed by a priest.

In reconstituting and understanding the text, we met with a great difficulty namely ΙΕΡΟΠ . . ΤΕΙΤΑΙΣ in line 32 of the decree. Although there are but 2 letters missing, no correspondent could be found, in none of the documents at our disposal. Prof. Werner Peek (Halle) had the kindness to suggest in a letter¹⁰¹ the completion of the lacuna with ΛΑ. Thus we should have the word ἱεροπ[λα]τείτης akin to ἱεροπλατήη, to be found in a Milet inscription¹⁰². We consider such a fitting in, very suitable and we should understand by ἱεροπλατεῖται an association whose members carried on their activity in a Ἱερὰ Πλατεῖα near some sacred edifice¹⁰³. Thus, there is proof of another college at Histria and we receive new toponimic indications on this Greek city.

The association of Herakleiai is the last enumerated in the list of those having received οἰνοπόσιον. Its mention in our decree is the only of this kind at Histria. It is a proof of Hērakles' honouring in our Pontic city.

The enumeration of Aba's deeds connected with the New Year feasts closes with line 34. Then, μετὰ [δὲ τοῦ]το, her generosity is connected with other events during the year. The first of them is mentioned νομηνία.

This day, the first after the appearance of the new moon in the sky, was of particular importance in the life of primitive peoples, as well of the ancient ones¹⁰⁴. With the Greeks it was an occasion for religious manifestations, sometimes public, and also particularly private. Dedicated to Apollo, also called Νομήνιος, this day was also celebrated in some regions of the Greek world (and in Macedonia too) as the birthday of this god. The Spartan kings brought sacrifices to Apollo every νομηνία and on the 7th of the month¹⁰⁵. In Athens, the citizens climbed the Acropolis and prayed to the gods for themselves and for the welfare of the State¹⁰⁶. At Priene¹⁰⁷, the stephanephoros brought

⁹⁸ Alex. Mus. no. 47, line 213₃; Catalogue 1893, p. 145 (2489); apud Poland, *op. cit.*, p. 118–119, 343.

⁹⁹ Grenfell-Hunt, *The Oxyrh. Pap.* I 53, cf. Poland, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

¹⁰⁰ J. and L. Robert, in *BullÉp.*, 1958, p. 195, 75.

¹⁰¹ This article was already in the press when we received the letter in which the following interpretations were suggested, beside the one mentioned in note 42 and the above-mentioned: lines 32–33: οἰνοπόσιον; line 34 μετὰ [δὲ τοῦ]το; line 37 ἐξυπηρέ[τησεν ὅσα]; line 38 αὐτίκα ἐδέξατο instead of ἄ[παντα ἀνεδέ]ξατο as we had proposed; line. 41: τῆλει; line 43 ἔ[τι ἄλλην ὥρ]εαν; line 44: [φορ-τικῶν τιν]ῶν? Our warmest thanks go to prof. Peek for his precious help.

¹⁰² Milet. Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen, IIa, 134, 403.

¹⁰³ For a better understanding of the word see: ΌJh., 29, 44: ζυστοπλατεῖτης; IGRR, IV, 790: οἱ ἐν τῇ Σκυτικῇ πλατεῖα τεχνεῖται; *ibidem*, 791: οἱ ἐν τῇ Θερμαῖα πλατεῖα ἐργασταί; *ibidem* 425: οἱ κατοικοῦντες τὴν Πασπαρείτων πλατεῖα; IGRR, III, 711: Σεβαστὴ πλατεῖα; SEG, IV, 539–541: Πλατεῖα Βρανχιανή.

¹⁰⁴ M. Nilsson, *Primitive Time-reckoning*, London, 1920, p. 147 sqq. and 362 sqq.

¹⁰⁵ For νομηνία see the article by M. Nilsson and Ludwig Ziehen, in *RE*, XVII, col. 1292–1295; cf. Ludwig Deubner, *Attische Feste*, Berlin, 1956, p. 202

¹⁰⁶ [Demosth] 25, 99: πῶς δὲ ταῖς νομηνίαις. εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν ἀναβαίνοντες τάγαθὰ τῇ πόλει δίδοναι καὶ ἕκαστος ἑαυτῷ τοῖς θεοῖς εὐξεται.

¹⁰⁷ *Inscriften von Priene*, hersg. von Fr. Hiller von Gaertringen, Berlin, 1906, 108, line 260 sqq.; 113, line 54; 123, line 4.

sacrifices to the gods of the town and in Erethria¹⁰⁸ the statues of the tyrannicides were crowned. Νομηνία was a holiday during which the families or colleges crowned or cleaned the statues of the ancestors, and went to the temples to bring sacrifices to the gods and heroes¹⁰⁹.

Then are mentioned θυσίαι which mean the sacrifices at the monthly assemblies σύνοδοι, συναγωγαί in honour of the gods and benefactors. As was pointed out by Poland¹¹⁰ σύνοδος and συναγωγή, terms which mean assemblies of a religious nature, are inseparable from θυσίαι. There are documents pointing to monthly θυσίαι. Thus in the decree of Sestos, in honour of Menas, it is stated that the sacrifices in honour of the protecting gods of the gymnasium were made every month¹¹¹. An inscription of Hierapytna¹¹² indicates that θυσία took place κατὰ μῆν[α], while in other localities similar mentions are made¹¹³.

With a meaning approaching that of σύνοδος and συναγωγή, but with a somewhat larger nuance, is the word ἑορτή.

Πατρία εὐχαί, mentioned in our inscription lines 35—36 refers to the perpetuation of a cult, brought long before from the metropolis to the Dobru-djan citadel and which the colonists were striving to preserve unchanged. This treasury of customs formed [τὰ εἰ]θισμένα, as an inscription of Magnesia¹¹⁴ tells us, for the fulfilment of which the evergets had to pay sums of money, whence the sense of generosity, liturgy¹¹⁵. That is why in our inscription, mention is made in lines 37—38 of the ἡ ἔθιμος ἱεροποιῖα which ABA carried out to the benefit of the people, spending considerable sums of money. Lines 37—41 can be understood only in this way: γὰρ τῆς ἐθίμου ἱεροποιῖας ἀναλώματα αὐτίκα ἐδέ]ξατο καὶ ὅσα ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας ἐπενόει πάν[τα φιλ]οτείμως ἐποίησεν, τῶν μὲν ἀναλωμάτων[ν κατ]αφρονήσασα τῆς δὲ ὑδοξίας οὐκ ὀλιγορήσασ[α...] κ.τ.λ.

The strangers who were in the town also benefited by ABA's bounty to the people. Like other evergets, like Aristagoras and Carpos, son of Artemidoros, who did not forget strangers¹¹⁶, she also remembers them and gives them presents. About what strangers our decree speaks is difficult to say. The only specification we have is that she favoured the strangers «who enjoyed influence with the people»: τῇλει καὶ παρεπιδημούντων τινῶν τε π[ερὶ τὸν] δῆμον δυναμένων. Taking into account the indications of the text, we believe that we must think first and foremost of the Romans who, as representatives of the central power,

¹⁰⁸ Syll³, 284.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. article in RE, s. v. νομηνία, see above note 105. Unlike Nilsson, L. Ziehen draws attention to the private nature of the celebrations within the framework of νομηνία, pointing out that in general the events took place *privatim*.

¹¹⁰ Poland, *op. cit.*, p. 247, 248 and RE, IV, col. 1284—1296 and col. 1415—1434.

¹¹¹ OGIS, 339, lines 67—68.

¹¹² CIG, II, 2562.

¹¹³ JÖAI, V, 1902, p. 128, line 15; Ch. Michel, *op. cit.*, 1011, IG, IV 358, line 12; Lebas-Waddington, *Voyage archéologique en Grèce et en Asie Mineure*, vol. III, no. 1143, line 18 sq.

¹¹⁴ Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Meander,

hersch. von Otto Kern, Berlin, 1900, no. 117, p. 106, line 5.

¹¹⁵ Syll³, 1109, line 111: ὁ ἱερεὺς δὲ ἐπιτελείτω τὰς ἐθίμους λειτουργίας; L. Robert, *Hellenica* VI, p. 77, 78: εἰθισμένα... πάντα ἔθιμα.

¹¹⁶ Syll³, 708, line 16: πλείστα τε συναλλάγματα πολίτας ἅμα καὶ ξένους ποιησάμενος πρὸς πάντας ἀφι[λ]αργύρως ὑπεστήσατο; for the second century of our era, see inscription published by Tocilescu, AEM, XI, 1887, p. 66, no. 140, but correctly understood by L. Robert and commented by D. M. Pippidi, in SCIV, IX, 2, 1958, p. 366: Κάρπος Ἀρτεμιδώρου τοῦ ἀ[ρχι]ερω[το]ῦ καὶ ποντάρχου καὶ υἱοῦ τῆς πόλεως) εὐθηνιάρχου καὶ πολλὰκις ἐν [ταῖς] ἀφορμαῖς τοὺς πολίτας καὶ τοὺς ἐνοικοῦντας ξένους θρέψαντο[ις]... κ.τ.λ.

must have settled in Histria in order to carry out special missions. There are sufficient mentions of their presence in our Pontic town. Pârvan believed he could identify some of them even among the members of the *gerousia*¹¹⁷. In any case, there was a *statio* of the Roman military post in the important Greek centre of Histria, as is proved with certainty by the gravestone of Aelius Victor, *beneficiarius consularis*¹¹⁸, and maybe the name of M. Julius Moschus, member of the *gerousia* (col. I, line 103) and at the same time *beneficiarius*. Naturally, we do not exclude the possibility that among *παρεπιδημοῦντες οἱ περὶ τὸν δῆμον δυνάμενοι* there should also have been others, maybe foreigners invited by the people for the satisfaction of requirements which the Histrians could not cope with alone. It is probable that this happened also at the time of our decree, as it did in the Hellenistic epoch, when architects¹¹⁹ and physicians¹²⁰ were invited, winning the praise of the people. We must also bear in mind the merchants, who settled there for commercial exchanges. Even though at the time of our decree commerce no longer represented the main source of income for Histria, as it had been before, yet it could not have declined completely. Moreover, in a letter of governor Sabinus to the Histrians it is said that the former had learnt (the information is certainly exaggerated) that «almost the only income of the town is that resulting from the sale of salted fish»¹²¹: [σχεδὸν] ἐκείνην μόνην εἶναι τῆς πόλεως πόρσο[δον τὴν ἐκ τοῦ] ταιρεγυομένου ἰχθύος. Coming from the Orient or southern Greece, these merchants must have come to Histria, even if their number was not so big as in Tomis, the great economic and political centre of the Roman imperial epoch¹²².

The last social category mentioned in the decree for Aba is the rag tag and bobtail, the plebeians, the commoners τὸ πλῆθος. It is regrettable that just at this place our inscription is so mutilated and we cannot find out more things about this social stratum, mentioned for the first time at Histria. It is probable that this category included, besides commoners, also the poor and all those who were of uncertain origin, as well as the freed men, ἀπελεύθεροι, about whom some mentions are made at Histria¹²³. All of them formed a composite group, which in other parts of the Greek world bore the name of συναθροισμός and took part in the assemblies of people in order to increase the number of those who had to acclaim (ἐπιβοᾶσθαι) the everget¹²⁴. Ἐκκλησία in the Roman epoch confined themselves to voting the honorific decrees and that is why the «purity» of the participants was no longer required.

Because of the big fragments missing in the stone, we cannot interpret the words αὐτῶν αἰτουμένων and probably [τιν]ῶν ἀναδυομένων line 43—44

¹¹⁷ V. Pârvan, *Histria IV*, p. 604—605.

¹¹⁸ Idem, p. 668, no. 45.

¹¹⁹ D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții...*, p. 112—122, claims that the decree in honour of Epikrates, son of Nicobulos, today preserved at the Dragomirna monastery, comes from Histria; for the other architect who came to Histria, see SCIV, V, 1954, 1—2, p. 95, no. 10; *ibidem* 3—4, p. 549—557; cf. L. Robert in *BullÉp*, 1955, p. 244, 163a.

¹²⁰ SCIV, VII, 3—4, 1956, p. 347; cf. J. and L. Robert, *op. cit.*, 1957, p. 112, 336.

¹²¹ V. Pârvan, *Histria IV*, p. 563, line 20—23. Cf. D. M. Pippidi, *op. cit.*, p. 171—196.

¹²² Orientals in Histria: CIL, III, 12, 489 and V. Pârvan, *op. cit.*, p. 595, no. 19. For the situation in Tomis, idem, *Die Nationalität der Kaufleute im röm. Kaiserreiche*, Breslau, 1909, p. 73, 86, 100. Special mention must be made of οἶκος τῶν ἐν Τόμει Ἀλεξανδρέων.

¹²³ V. Pârvan, *Histria VII*, p. 38, no. 37.

¹²⁴ For Asia Minor see the documents collected by Is. Lévy, in *REG*, VIII, 1895, p. 205—218.

(see note 101 of this article). It is possible that mention is here made also of the πλῆθος or other social groups which Aبا took care of, doing this, either because they asked, claimed? (αἰτουμένων) or because they withdrew, did not crowd, lived apart from actual problems (ἀναδυομένων). Not one of these, οὐδὲν τούτων, or of the categories mentioned above were refused by Aبا [ἀπηγόρευσε]; on the contrary, every day desired by the polis [καὶ εἰς τὴν] ἡμέραν ἦν ἠθέλησεν ἢ πόλις τῶ[ν Ἰστριηνῶν] line 45—46, she gave them all, πᾶσιν ἔδωκεν, whether they were men or women ¹²⁵ [ἀνδράσι]ν καὶ γυναιξίν. This last indication is meant to show the largest sphere encompassed by Aبا's generosity.

The honours granted her, and which mark also the end of our inscription, are typical of all evergets: glorification, crowning at all festivities, all the other honours due to the great benefactors and having her portrait painted ¹²⁶ in a public building, or schola belonging to the servants of the Mother of Gods [ἀναγο-]ρεύ[εσ]θαι δὲ καὶ στεφανοῦ[σθαι] Ἄβαν Ἐκαταίου . . . ἐν πᾶσιν ἐ]ορταῖς· με[τέ]γειν δὲ αὐτῇν . . . κτλ. . . καὶ εἰκόνων γ[ραπτῶν] . . . line 49 and the following ones.

Our document is of particular interest also as regards the Histrian language spoken in the 2nd century of our era. From a linguistic point of view characteristic is the way in which ἰῶτα ἀνεκφώνετον and the diphthongs ει for ι (τειμή, φιλότειμος) or εο for ου are written. We do not mean to dwell on this question as we have done it also on the occasion of the publication of the first fragment ¹²⁷. Moreover, this linguistic phenomenon formed the object of detailed researches by Professor D. M. Pippidi ¹²⁸, who proceeded from other documents, some of them older and some newer than ours. It seems more suitable for us to note the style of the decree, which excels in affected and even bombastic expressions, using many superlatives and choice words in order to exaggerate the merits of the honoured person. For example: γονέων τε ἐπισήμων καὶ προγόνων ἐπιφανεστάτων, . . . ἐνδόξους ὑπηρεσίς ἀνυπερβλήτως ἐκτετελεχό[των], . . . πάσης ἐξαιρέτου τειμῆς τετυχηκό[των] . . . μεγαλαυχία, . . . μεγαλωφρόνως, ἱεροπρεπέστατα or repetitions: ἀναλώματα ἐδέ]ξατο καὶ ὅσα ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας ἐπενόει πάν[τα] φιλ]οτείμως ἐποίησεν and immediately τῶν μὲν ἀναλωμάτων[ν κατ]αφονήσασα τῆς δὲ εὐδοξίας . . . κ.τ.λ. This is a characteristic feature of the style of inscriptions during the imperial period. We could compare this, from this point of view, with an epigraphic document of Thyatire, recently re-published by L. Robert ¹²⁹, where one finds most of the expressions of our inscription.

Naturally, apart from the expressions and the exaggerated tone of the document we have studied, we can find in it a great deal of information on the internal situation of the city Histria in the 2nd century of our era. This is precisely what we have tried to do and now the decree for Aبا appears to us as a picture in which we see the whole Histrian people, on which Aبا first bestowed her gifts and then prostrating themselves before of her at the People's Assembly in order to satisfy the feeling of glory which not even the ancestors' μεγαλαυχία

¹²⁵ Cf. SEG, IV, 301 to the end.

¹²⁶ We considered this to be « painted images » as we had the impression that after εἰκόνων there follows a γ.

¹²⁷ SCIV, V, 3—4, 1954, p. 452.

¹²⁸ D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții . . .*, p. 72 and 129 sqq.; cf. G. Mihailov, *La Langue des Inscriptions Grecques en Bulgarie*, Sofia, 1943, no. 31, 36, 55, 57.

¹²⁹ L. Robert, *Hellenica* VI, p. 75, no. 25.

could fulfil. An important thing is the fact that from the mentions in the decree we realize the composition of Histrian society. The socio-economic changes which took place at that time, resulted in the outlining of classes with a different economic basis. In the foreground are βουλευταί and γερουσιασταί, who form the stratum of the wealthy, the evergets, present in public affairs. At the opposite pole of the plutocracy is the mass of commoners, τὸ πλῆθος, who play a small part in public life (mentioned last in the decree). The middle stratum of society is formed by the citizens with full rights, who have a place in the tribes, in πεντηκο ταρχίαι and who are maybe members of some professional colleges: ἰατροί, παιδευταί, ὕμνωδοί τέκτονες, etc.

As for the source of incomes of the wealthy, it must be considered to result first of all from the exploitation of Histria's rural territory, where they had large estates and *villae*. The gravestones of Aelius . . . *buleuta Histriae*¹³⁰ and L. Pompeius Valens¹³¹, *obiti ad villam suam*, as well as the vast territories of Messia Pudentilla¹³², are strong evidence in this respect. Moreover, the ever more difficult natural conditions in Histria, due to the continuous blocking of the harbour because of the sand, and the general upsurge of agriculture in the Danubian regions during those times, must have made those Histrian εὐεργέται, and φιλότειμοι at the same time also *agricolae boni*¹³³. Aba is a representative of this class¹³⁴.

EM. POPESCU

¹³⁰ V. Pârvan, *Cetatea Ulmetum*, in ARMSI, s. II, XXXIV, p. 530, no. 2.

¹³¹ AEM, XVII, 1894, p. 87, no. 11 (= CIL, III, 12489).

¹³² I. I. Russu, in SCIV, VI, 1–2, 1955, p. 75–86.

¹³³ M. Rostovtseff, *op. cit.*, p. 345; Em. Condurachi, *Histria I*, p. 54.

¹³⁴ We are very indebted to professor Iorgu Stoian who was so kind as to place at our disposal for this study the first fragment of the inscription, as well as most of the others found by him.