

CONTI, Stefano; SCARDIGLI, Barbara y TORCHIO, Maria Cristina. *Geografia e viaggi nell'antichità. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi* (Certosa di Pontignano, 9-10 ottobre 2005). Siena, 2007.

«Geografia e viaggi nell'antichità» is a collection of articles by Italian, Spanish, Russian and German authors, devoted to different aspects of ancient history and geography. The basic material for the articles were the reports delivered on the conference held at the University of Siena's out-of-town palace Pontignano amidst the marvelous Chianti hills, in autumn 2005. The collection was issued a year later thanks to the close collaboration of the professors, lecturers and former PhD students from the Sieneese and Florentine research programmes. The collection consists of the 14 reports with a bibliography, photos and illustrations. The book is supplemented by the index of ancient names, places and ancient sources, and it is prefaced by a brief description of the articles by Serena Bianchetti. The core of the collection comprises several articles devoted to archeological survey of Asia Minor, initiated and supervised by the German Institute of Archeology in Istanbul. The contribution by Adolf Hoffman, a director of the Institute, concerns the Hellenistic period of the Karasis fortress on the Karasis Dağı mountain in the Eastern Asia Minor (pp. 67-81). He describes the results of the archeological survey of the fortress carried out from 2001 to 2005, assisted by support from the architectural, geodesic, geological, botanic, and hydro engineering disciplines. Karasis was a strategically and logistically important point, a symbol of Seleucid power, and is now a source of exclusive interest for the Hellenistic fortification system. A collective work by scholars from the University of Trento, Mariette de Vos, Martina Andreoli, Redna Attoui and Silvia Polla «Cilicia campestris orientalis: l'economia rurale e la trasformazione del paesaggio intorno al Karasis» deals with the economic development on the territory around the Karasis (pp. 13-39). Archeological material from 25 sites, from fragments of ceramics right up to elements from churches, written sources (mainly Xenophon, Columella, Plinius) and,

to a certain degree, ethnographical material (comparison between some agricultural techniques in different parts of the Mediterranean East, and between the ancient and modern types of household) were used to reconstruct the dynamics of economic life in the region from III B. C. to the XIII A.D. The analysis shows the great role of olive growing and viticulture, of the cattle-breeding and the use of the trading routes that passed through the region in forming the ancient landscape.

Relative to the two previous contributions, the article of Anna Margeherita Jasink and Luca Bombardieri (pp. 83-112) is a backward step in the history of Asia Minor. The authors touch on the Assyrian, Babylonian and Achaemenid periods of the Cilician past. Assyrian epigraphic documents are used together with archeological records, including one of local origin from Karatepe. This geographically confined region appears to be a complicated zone mixing components from the Luwian, Cyprian, Assyrian, Phoenician, and later the Babylonian, Achaemenid and Greek cultures. By correlating the places and routes mentioned in the written sources with the archeological rests, the authors study the internal political development of the Eastern Cilicia during a long period from Salmanassar III (mid -X century B. C.) until the period of active penetration of the Greeks (VI B. C.). Finally, Giulia Torri studies the Hittite period of Anatolian history (pp. 231-239). Geopolitical interests, that is, the necessity to defend the lands from the Hurite tribes from the South and to support important routes to Syria prompted the Hittite kings to seek control of Eastern Anatolia, at that time the site of the kingdom of Išuwa. The author studies documents from the Hattuša archive to explain the complicated political and military situation in Eastern Anatolia in the xv-xiv centuries B. C. The important project to republish the complete set of Greek geographers is discussed in the article of Francisco J. González Ponce (pp. 41-65). He proves the need to revise the *Geographi Graeci Minores* of Müller and to publish a new corpus. The author describes the existing edition of the periplus, clarifies some terminological questions, establishes selection principles, explains the structure of the corpus of the Greek periplus, which

is expected to be issued in 3 volumes, according to the archaic epoch, the Hellenistic and the imperial periods.

A few articles are devoted to topographical research. The subject of Fabio Caruso's «Considerazioni sulla viabilità nella Regio II» (pp. 1-11) is a road post, dated between 293 and 305, whose precise original location is obscure. After considering some possible routes that this post could have marked, the author is inclined to attribute it to the road connecting Venosa (Basilicata) and Canosa (Pulia).

Adalberto Magnelli (pp. 113-121) searches for mythical place of the birth and youth of Zeus, a place where he was worshipped in historical times, described by Diodorus 5, 70, 6 as a Dikte mountain. By adding a passage from Strabo 10, 4, 12 and an inscription found near Hágghios Nikðlaos, the author identifies the remains on the certain Cretan mountain as the grotto dedicated to Zeus.

Andrea Pellizzari (pp. 185-195) studies the Roman roads and the ad Fines station in the modern-day Piedmont, a land considered by the ancient Italics as harsh and populated by aggressive peoples. During the imperial period the system of existing roads and controlling stations was added to constantly by less important routes, which connected the principal settlements with the rural locations. These secondary roads were still important for official communication. Thus when Ammianus Marcellinus described the difficulties of the routes in the Cotian Alps on his way from Italy to Gaul in the second half of the IV century (15, 10, 2), he meant certain secondary roads from before Roman times, which existed and were used still in imperial time.

The article of Fabio Martini, Giovanna Pizziolo, and Lucia Sarti (pp. 123-147) presents a project started 20 years ago by collaborators from several academic and administrative institutes in Italy, whose aim was to complete a global survey of a zone near Florence (around Sesto Fiorentino). With the help of some additional sciences (such as palaeobotany and palaeozoology) the archaeological objects are examined in the context of modern landscape. The aim of the program is to reconstruct the relations between the prehistoric population and its natural environment. Immigration to Rome is studied in the article of Cecilia Ricci (pp. 197-207). The author

classifies and explains the presence of foreigners in Rome according to certain principles (duration of stay, juridical status, origin, physical appearance etc.) Starting in the II century B. C. Rome became a place of immigration from all over the ancient world. The communities of Greeks, Syrians, Egyptians, Germans and other peoples formed the ethnographical face of Rome. Sociologically speaking, Rome seems to be the best place in the whole ancient world for studying the notion of indigenous people about migrants, and the dependence of such opinions on the distorted perception of the customs and habits, and the physical appearance of the foreigners. In the past the German specialist Eckart Olshausen studied the geographical background of Aristophanes' comedies and geographical knowledge of his auditorium. Now the author applies himself to the same subject, but in the context of the poetry of Martial and Juvenal (pp. 177-183). He studies the characteristics of the places mentioned by the Roman poets, and in his article he touches Rome, Egypt, China, India, and Spain. Then he proposes a new branch of research: to study the geographical knowledge of the most important poets in Ancient and Early Medieval culture –Homer, Virgil, Nonnus, Dante and others– to reveal a *Geographica*, a model, a manual used by authors to describe certain places in the world.

An essential part of the book is formed by studies of the Late Antiquity. A collaborator of Saint-Petersburg's Hermitage Ekaterina Nechaeva (pp. 149-161) studies geographical knowledge in Late Antiquity through the geographical-ethnographical passages in a report by the Roman embassy of Priscus of Panium to Attila, and of a description of the embassy of Zemarchus and Valentinus, conserved in Menander Protector's composition. E. Nechaeva argues that the ambassadors to the distant place must have had special itineraries and probably maps. As any embassy had the unique possibility to collect geographical information during their travels, the author proposes, that they fulfilled not only diplomatic functions, but also made practical geographical observations and collected strategic data and intelligence, which was stored in the special archives for military purposes of the Byzantine State.

Another representative of the Late Antiquity, the highly educated Basil of Caesarea, used a rich ancient classical tradition to explain the structure of space according to biblical canons. Valeria Novembri (pp. 163-175) reconstructs the connection of Basileus' cosmological system and pagan astronomical knowledge, mainly with Poseidonius' Commentary to Timeus. She shows that while the system of dividing the Earth into several zones represented in Basileus' writing is basically the idea of Poseidonius, the Cappadocian could have derived them indirectly from other secondary sources. The Adrianople battle is studied in the article of the Russian scholars Mark Shchukin and Petr Shuvalov. To the description of the battle by Ammianus Marcellinus the authors have added a topographical survey of the place of the battle and an archeological analysis of the Chernjakhov-Sintana-de-Mure culture. The authors show that number of Goths penetrated in the Thrace could not have been relatively small, as some modern historians consider. The density of population on the Chernjakhov area was so big, that it could have not been less than 2 millions, and a great part of it transferred in the Roman soil. Some historical and ethnographical parallels allow the authors to calculate the number of warriors at about 400 000 man. In reconstructing the course of the battle the authors agree with the common idea that the crucial event in the battle was an attack of Gothic cavalry. On the ground of topography of the place they propose that the units of Saphrax and Alatheus clashed with the right wing of the Romans, galloped along the Roman front to the left flank and than came back to the Gothic camp to launch a new attack. The surprising success of the Goths is probably explained by the Romans' lack of preparation: it seems they did not even manage even to install the artillery in time, which would have surely damaged the enemy cavalry.

The articles published in collection are a good example of the successful intersection of different humanities disciplines in a single scientific purpose. This collection could be useful and interesting to anyone interested in ancient history, geography, topography and archeology.

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