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DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF HISTORY

**THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF ROME
IN PAGAN LATIN HISTORIOGRAPHY
OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE FOURTH CENTURY**

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ABBREVIATIONS

Research instruments

Lewis & Short - A new Latin Dictionary, founded on the translation of Freund's *Latin-German Lexicon*, edited by E. A. Andrews, revised, enlarged, and in great part rewritten by Charlston Lewis and Charles Short, Oxford, 1891.

OLD - Oxford Latin Dictionary, edited by P. G. W. Glare, Oxford, 1968.

PLRE - The prosopography of the later Roman Empire, I, A.D. 260-395, by A. H. M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J. Morris, Cambridge, 1971.

Journals

ACD - Acta classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis, Debrecen, Debreceni Egyetem.
ACIHAM - Actas y Comunicaciones Instituto de Historia Antigua y Medieval, Buenos Aires, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Instituto de Historia Antigua y Medieval.

AHB - The Ancient history bulletin, University of Calgary, Department of Greek and Roman Studies.

AHR - The American Historical Review, Washington, American Historical Association.

AJPh - American Journal of Philology. Baltimore (Maryland), Johns Hopkins University.

AncNarr - Ancient narrative, Eelde, University of Groningen Press, Roelf Barkhuis.

AOFL - Annali online di Ferrara. Lettere, Ferrara, Università degli studi di Ferrara.

ASNP - Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, Pisa, Scuola Normale Superiore.

AȘUI-Istorie - Analele Științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, Iași, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași.

Athenaeum - Athenaeum. Studi di Letteratura e Storia dell'Antichità pubblicati sotto gli auspici dell'Università di Pavia, Como, New Press Editioni.

BAGB - Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé, Paris, Les Belles Lettres.

BICS - Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, London, University of London, Institute of Classical Studies.

BStudLat - Bollettino di studi latini: periodico semestrale d'informazione bibliografica, Napoli, Loffredo Editore.

C&C - Classica et christiana, Iași, Revista Centrului de Studii Clasice și Creștine, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași.

Cassiodorus - Cassiodorus. Rivista di studi sulla tarda antichità, Istituto di studi su Cassiodoro e sul Medioevo in Calabria, Soveria Mannelli.

CB - The Classical bulletin: a journal of international scholarship and special topics, Wauconda (Illinois), Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers.

CCG - Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, Edition de Boccard.

CFC(L) - Cuadernos de filología clásica. Estudios latinos, Madrid, Universidad Complutense, Servicio de Publicaciones.

CICSA - Buletin al Centrului de Istorie Comparată a Societăților Antice, București, Centrul de Istorie Comparată a Societăților Antice.

CJ - *The Classical journal*, Ashland (Virginia), Randolph-Macon College, Department of Classics, Classical Association of the Middle West and South.

Convivium - *Convivium: rivista di lettere filosofia e storia*, Torino, Societa editrice internazionale.

CPh - *Classical philology: a journal devoted to research in classical antiquity*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

CQ - *Classical quarterly*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

CR - *Classical review*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

CRAI - *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, Paris, Edition de Boccard.

CW - *The Classical World*, Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania), Duquesne University, Department of Classics, Classical Association of the Atlantic States.

Eirene - *Eirene: studia Graeca et Latina*, Praga, Institute for Classical Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

Florilegium - *Florilegium*, London (Ontario), University of Western Ontario, Canadian Society of Medievalists, University of Toronto Press.

G&R - *Greece and Rome*, Oxford, Clarendon Pr.

Gerión - *Gerión. Revista de Historia Antigua*, Madrid, Universidad Complutense, Servicio de Publicaciones.

Gymnasium - *Gymnasium: Zeitschrift für Kultur der Antike und humanistische Bildung*, Heidelberg, Winter Verlag.

Hermes - *Hermes. Zeitschrift für klassische Philologie*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag.

Historia - *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag.

Historika - *Historika: Studi di Storia Greca e Romana*, Università degli Studi di Torino, Open access.

Histos - *Histos: The new electronic journal of ancient historiography*, Durham, University of Durham, Department of classics.

HSPH - *Harvard studies in classical philology*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

ICS - *Illinois classical studies*. Champaign (Illinois), Stipes Publishing L.L.C.

InvLuc - *Invigilata lucernis*, Bari, Dipartimento di Studi Classici e Cristiani Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro, Edipuglia SRL.

JRS - *The Journal of Roman Studies*, London, Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.

JWI - *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, London, University of London, Warburg Institute.

Klio - *Klio. Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag.

Ktema - *Ktema: civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antiques*, Strasbourg, Université Marc Bloch, Centre de Recherches sur le Proche-Orient et la Grèce antique.

Latomus - *Latomus: revue d'études latines*, Bruxelles, Société d'études latines de Bruxelles.

LEC - *Les études classiques*, Namur, Société des études classiques.

MEFRA - *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité*, Rome, École française de Rome.

MH - *Museum Helveticum: schweizerische Zeitschrift für klassische Altertumswissenschaft*, Basel, Schwabe.

Mnemosyne - *Mnemosyne: bibliotheca classica Batava*, Leiden, Brill Publishers.

NAC - *Numismatica e antichità classiche: quaderni ticinesi*, Lugano, Amici dei Quaderni Ticinesi di Numismatica e Antichità Classiche.

Orma - *Orma. Revistă de studii etnologice și istorico-religioase*, Asociația Antropologică Orma, Facultatea de Litere, Universitatea "Babeș-Bolyai", Asociația Română de Studii Religioase.

Paideia - *Paideia: rivista letteraria di informazione bibliografica*, Brescia, Casa editrice Paideia.

Philologus - *Philologus: Zeitschrift für antike Literatur und ihre Rezeption*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag.

Phoenix - *Phoenix. Journal of the Classical Association of Canada*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press.

Pontica - *Pontica*, Constanța, Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie.

QUCC - *Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica*, Pisa-Roma, Fabrizio Serra editore.

RAAN - *Rendiconti della Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti*, Napoli, Società Nazionale di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti.

REL - *Revue des études latines*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres.

RFIC - *Rivista di filologia e di istruzione classica*, Torino, Loescher Editore.

RhM - *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, Frankfurt am Main, Sauerländer Verlag.

RIDA - *Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité*, Bruxelles, Service des publications des Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis.

RSA - *Rivista storica dell'Antichità*, Bologna, Patron Editore SRL.

SCO - *Studi classici e orientali*, Pisa: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali.

SIFC - *Studi italiani di Filologia classica*, Firenze, Le Monnier.

StudRom - *Studi romani: rivista trimestrale dell'Istituto Nazionale di Studi Romani*, Roma, Istituto Nazionale di Studi Romani.

SUBB Philologia - *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Philologia*, Cluj-Napoca, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Facultatea de Litere.

TheCR - *The Classical Review*, Cambridge, The Classical Association.

Volumes

ANRW - *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*, II, *Prinzipat*, Berlin-New York.

BHAC - *Bonner Historia - Augusta - Colloquium*, Bonn, 1974.

CAH - *The Cambridge Ancient History*, VII, 2, Cambridge, 1980.

CHA - *Colloquium Historiae Augustae - Genevense* (1994); *Colloquium Historiae Augustae - Maceratense* (1995); *Colloquium Historiae Augustae - Barcinonense* (1996); *Colloquium Historiae Augustae - Argentoratense* (1998); *Colloquium Historiae Augustae - Perusinum* (2000).

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF ROME IN PAGAN LATIN HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

Summary

INTRODUCTION

This work analyzes the chronological schemes identified in the historiographical writings of pagan authors in the area of Latin speaking culture from the second half of the fourth century: Sextus Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus*, Flavius Eutropius, *Breuiarium ab Vrbe condita*, Rufius Festus, *Breuiarium rerum gestarum populi Romani*, Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum gestarum libri*, imperial biographies of *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* and the writings attributed to an unknown author, conventionally called Pseudo-Aurelius Victor: *Epitome de Caesaribus*, *Origo gentis Romanae* and *De uiris illustribus Urbis Romae*.

The choice of the research topic was determined by the fact that in the sphere of universal historiography there is no systematic analysis close to our approach, the subject being insufficiently treated in certain critical editions of various sources or in comments, studies and articles, as we demonstrated in the chapters dedicated to each author.

Another motivation for choosing this theme is the need for a unitary approach, which provides a comprehensive image of the chronology of the Roman history, from its mythical origins to the fourth century, despite the heterogeneous, fragmentary and subjective character of the historiographical sources.

The main objective of the thesis is to carry out a comparative, unitary and comprehensive analysis of the chronological schemes identified in the historiographical writings of the second half of the fourth century. To this end, we investigated the literary and cultural tradition associated with each chronological scheme, we established the criteria and separation factors on the basis of which the temporal cutouts were drawn, and we analyzed the philosophical, political, military, religious and moral springs underlying the evolution of the Roman history. Through this comparative analysis and rigorous examination of the relevant aspects in the construction of chronological schemes, we aimed to provide a more detailed and complete perspective on the evolution of the Roman history during this period.

An aspect related to the originality of the thesis consists precisely in overcoming the limits inherent in sectoral research through an analysis that includes all the historiographical writings in the area of pagan Latin culture in the second half of the fourth century and that extends the investigation to all the factors that influenced the historical evolution of Rome and that can provide explicit or implicit chronological clues. In this regard, in addition to the explicit temporal indications, we took into account a variety of political, ideological, social, military, cultural, moral, religious or philosophical implications that can provide implicit chronological clues, through the appellations associated with the old capital and the Senate of Rome, through the manner of relating to other famous cities of the Empire, through examples and analogies that capitalize on royal traditions, republican or imperial, through allusions or metaphors that concern the evolution of the state, the government system or the dynamics of the Roman rule, through the language in the sphere of sovereign power, the commentaries on the state of morality or the manner in which certain philosophical concepts were harnessed.

Another aspect of originality is the unitary character of the comparative analysis. In order to avoid confusion or contradictions, we chose to ignore the subjective testimonies of Christian authors and to approach with caution the pagan writings of the Greek language, since, although they recognize the priority status of Rome, these authors show a certain hostility towards the old capital and argue against the use of Latin as the language of culture. We also had in mind that the pagan authors in the area of Greek culture prove limited perceptions, both chronologically, since they do not deal with the republican period, and the ideational period, since they focus their discourse on the relationship between βασιλεία and φιλοσοφία.

The research methodology is a classical one, based on the rigorous study of the sources and on the analysis of the text. In order to establish the peculiarities of vocabulary, we used **the comparative method** with caution, as we worked with various sources, belonging to classic or late authors, who use an original or conventional language and betray the different intentionality of the texts. **The diachronic method** allowed us to establish the origin and evolution of different chronological schemes, and **the etymology** proved particularly useful to explain the semantism of some key concepts in the Roman world. In order to interpret the information in the specific historical context, we consulted the most relevant contributions of the specialists in the field of Late Antiquity. At the same time, we followed the methodological suggestions of the new direction of literary or narratological predilection analysis, capitalizing on **the concept of intertextuality**.

CHAPTER I

The chronology of the imperial monarchy in Liber de Caesaribus

In the first chapter of the work I consulted the critical editions and comments of exegetes to present the personality of the author and the distinctive features of his work. We have thus established that **Sextus Aurelius Victor (c. 327-390)** was a North African *homo nouus* who transcended his humble origins through intellectual activities, and his work is an abbreviated, concise and coherent history, distinguished by its traditionalist conception as well as by its moralistic and Romanocentric perspective.

Through comparative text analysis, we were able to outline **the cyclical view of the evolution of the historical phenomena** and to prove that, although he wrote an imperial history, the author constantly related to previous eras in order to affirm the continuity of Roman history. Through a careful examination of the writing, we identified the factors and criteria on the basis of which the evolutionary stages of the imperial monarchy were drawn, and interpreted the content of each stage.

In *Liber de Caesaribus* we encounter a very complex chronological scheme, which is based on **the conception of the cyclicity of the historical phenomena**, which states that historical events are repeated continuously and that the evolution of the state is influenced by this characteristic. The theory of cyclicity finds its origins in the work of Cicero and Sallustius, who conceived the state as a perennial entity that endures through the ages, through various stages of development and decline. The doctrine was developed by Tacitus, who imposed the idea that any decline is followed by a new, much more vigorous beginning. For his part, Aurelius Victor enriched this perspective through the fundamental role assigned to the immanent factor represented by fate (*fortuna*), destiny (*fatum*), the creative force of nature (*nature uis*), the power of fate (*fortunae uis*), the law of the nature (*naturae lex*), the divine rites (*diuinae ritus*) and the importance given to morality, education and culture. Thus, in *Liber de Caesaribus* the course of history is determined by the immanent factor, and its whims can be provoked or tempered by the vices or virtues of the sovereigns and the civic body.

In our view, **Aurelius Victor delineated seven cycles of the imperial monarchy from Augustus to Constantius II: the first began with the rise of Octavianus and ended with the death of Nero (1-5), characterized by the accentuation of autocracy and the decline of morality; the second was confused with the infighting that exhausted the Roman Empire in the year of the four emperors (6-8); the third was marked by the work of the moral reform imposed**

by **Vespasianus**, being compromised by the monarchical ambitions of **Domitianus (9-11)**; **the fourth was opened by Nerva and continued until Didius Iulianus (12-19)**, distinguished by the ascension of the *externi* – sovereigns with exceptional qualities, such as Nerva, Traianus, Hadrianus, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, who ensured the development of the Roman state on all levels; **the fifth began with Septimius Severus and ended with Severus Alexander (20-24)**, marking the climax of the Roman Empire; **the sixth debuted with Maximinus Thrax and ended with Numerianus (25-38)**, dominated by the general degrading during the crisis of the third century; **the seventh was inaugurated by Diocletianus and continues until Constantius II (39-42)**, distinguished by the restoration of the state and the consolidation of the autocracy.

The analysis of the factors and delimitation criteria proved that although the moral perspective is predominant, Aurelius Victor took into account other subjective criteria for the separation of the evolutionary stages of the imperial autocracy in Rome. For instance, the political criterion was suggested by specifying the title and external attire of the emperor, the military one was highlighted by the references about the competence of the sovereign in this field or about the territorial dynamics of the Roman state, and the importance of the religious criterion was emphasized by the plea in favor of ancestral spirituality. Lacking any aulic compulsion, by delimiting the seven cycles of the imperial monarchy, Aurelius Victor recognized the decline of his time, and by constantly referring to an idealized past he argued the necessity of revitalizing the Roman power by restoring the traditional moral values.

CHAPTER II

The chronology of the history of Rome in Breviarium ab Vrbe condita

In the second chapter we presented the origin and career of **Flavius Eutropius (c. 320-390)**, as well as the essential characteristics of the work, emphasizing the official nature and pedagogical value.

In 369, at the request of emperor Valens, Eutropius, a historian of Greek origins, wrote an abbreviated history, from the founding of Rome to the death of Iovianus. The author has had an outstanding political career. He held high office at the imperial court and had close ties with high officials and the emperors of the time.

Our research showed that *Breviarium ab Vrbe condita* presents a linear view of the events between the founding act of Romulus and the accession to the throne of Valens, since the purpose of the roundup was to emphasize the age and continuity of the forms of political

organization and the exercise of sovereign power. This approach allowed the presentation of events in a clear evolutionary sequence, which emphasizes the idea of progress, highlighting the importance of the individual actions of the sovereigns at the expense of those undertaken by the civic body.

In our view, **the chronological scheme of *Breuiarium ab Vrbe condita* follows the succession of government forms and political organization**. Thus, *Regnum Romanum* lasted 243 years, comprising the seven canonical kings; *Res Publica Romana* began with the banishment of Tarquinius Superbus and ended with the ascension of Octavianus Augustus, when the *Imperium Romanum* began.

At the same time, we demonstrated that the timeline elaborated by Eutropius has the role of affirming the continuity of forms of government. Thus, royal dignity (*regia potestas*) continues in republican times through the two consuls (*consules*), so that the consular magistracy represents the link between *Regnum Romanum* and *Res Publica Romana*, and the *dictatura antiqua* is perpetuated by the republican title used by the first emperors, ensuring the organic transition from the republican regime to the imperial power (*imperium potestas*). I also noted that the breviator emphasized the persistence of royal behaviors in subsequent eras through a series of *exempla* and analogies, and I came to the conclusion that this concern has the role of affirming the continuity of the forms of the exercise of sovereign power and of suggesting to Valens an ideal model of *rex - princeps ciuilis*, which would be able to ensure territorial expansion through military actions, but without disputing the political preponderance of the Senate and adopting a conduct consistent with the laws and morality, in order to avoid the temptations of *insolentia* inherent in a prolonged reign.

CHAPTER III

The chronology of the history of Rome in the breviary of Rufius Festus

In chapter III we reconstituted the author's personality starting from the theories that identified him with the **Festus of the Tridentum (c. 318-379)** – an imperial official who served as head of the office *a memoria* between 365 and 372. After emphasizing the official character and the predominantly pedagogical role of writing, we analyzed the linear vision of historical evolution, insisting on the specific characteristics of the chronological scheme elaborated by the author.

Our research showed that **Rufius Festus combined linear chronology with the moral and geographical perspective, in order to present the political and territorial evolution of**

Rome in the context of the preparations involved in the impending Persian campaign of Valens. Elaborated in the *enumeratio* style, **the periodization of the 1.117 years of Roman history begins with the founding of Rome and ends with the death of Iovianus.** Thus, *sub regibus*, for 243 years, Rome was ruled by seven kings; *sub consulibus*, for 467 years, it was under the authority of 917 consuls, and *sub imperatoribus*, in the 407 years from Augustus to Iovianus, it was governed by 43 sovereigns.

In our opinion, **the timeline identified in the *Breuiarium rerum gestarum populi Romani* reiterates the evolution of the forms of government in parallel with the dynamics of Rome's territorial evolution,** drawing a clear distinction between the violent but progressive character of the Roman expansion in the Western part; the peaceful transition of power in favor of the Romans in the Hellenistic East; respectively the difficulty and instability of the Roman advance in the territories disputed with Babylonia. In this respect, we demonstrated that the advance of the Romans in the Western provinces was based on the defensive reasons imposed by the hostile acts of the Western peoples considered *rebelles*, but the advance of the Roman Empire in the Eastern provinces had two distinct facets: on the one hand, with few exceptions (Syria, Cilicia, Isauria, Cyprus), the integration of the Hellenistic East took the form of a peaceful transition under roman power, being the direct consequence of traditional relations of *societas* and *amicitia*; on the other hand, the expansion into the disputed territories with the Parthians and the Persians (Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria and Arabia) was distinguished by the violence of the confrontations and by the fluctuating character of roman rule.

We also noted that Festus chronologically presented the Oriental campaigns, stating the conquered or abandoned territories, saying that this concern, to which many other conclusive *exempla* are added, have the role of recommending to Valens a weighted policy, which takes into account the complexity of the relations with the Oriental peoples, the old political, moral and religious traditions, but especially the geographical limits consecrated over time.

CHAPTER IV

The chronology of the imperial monarchy in Epitome de Caesaribus

In chapter IV we reconstituted the identity of the author and specified the essential characteristics of the work, coming to the conclusion that the text was written at the end of the fourth century or in the first decade of the fifth century by a supporter of Roman traditions, who used several sources and thus managed to include additional relevant information.

In my view, **the *Epitome de Caesaribus* is based on a linear chronological scheme, which follows the political evolution of the imperial monarchy** in terms of accession to the throne, the form of exercise of power and the status of the sovereign. The evolutionary path is suggested by terms in the sphere of political language and by analogies or *exempla* that capitalize on royal, republican or imperial traditions: **the first stage begins with the principate of Augustus (I-V)**, which is seen as a superior restoration of the ancestral monarchy, but its successors adopted behaviors contrary to political and moral traditions, which led to the degeneration of the Augustan regime; **the second encompasses the year of the four emperors**, marked by the dramatic consequences of civil wars (VI-VIII); **the third is marked by the action of restoring the state in the time of Vespasianus**, by Titus' attempt to secure the transmission of imperial power, and by the political crisis generated by Domitianus' claim to be honored as *dominus et deus* (IX-XI); **the fourth marks the end of the reign of the *principes* born in Rome or Italy in favor of some *imperatores aduenae***, but the era of development and stability due to the emblematic qualities of the Antonins was compromised by Commodus, the crisis of the imperial monarchy extending during the time of Pertinax and Didius Iulianus (XII-XIX); **the fifth highlights the effort of Septimius Severus to ensure dynastic continuity through his sons**, Bassianus and Geta, as well as the restoration of the dynastic succession through the ascension of Heliogabalus, who made *Caesar* his cousin Severus Alexander (XX-XXIV); **the sixth begins with the rise of Maximinus Thrax and ends with that of Carus (XXV-XXXVIII)**, highlighting the internal anarchy that accompanied the crisis of the third century; **the seventh begins with Diocletianus and ends with Theodosius I (XXXIX-XLVIII)**, evoking the multiple sovereignties that foreshadowed the reinstatement and full acceptance of the dynastic principle.

Our research also showed that Theodosius I is a unique example of positive governance, not being corrupted by the vices inherent in royal power or by the temptation to display the insignia of the monarchy. The highlighting of the facts and virtues of this sovereign betrays the loyalty of the author, and the detailed record of the transformations that affected the sovereign power and the condemnation of the acts of usurpation has the role of affirming the legitimacy of the new dynasty and encouraging the holders of sovereign power to consolidate the imperial monarchy following the example of Theodosius I.

CHAPTER V

The chronology of Rome in the work of Ammianus Marcellinus

In the fifth chapter we presented the author's personality and the characteristics of the work, we specified the vision of history, we identified and analyzed the separation criteria on the basis of which the "ages of Rome" were traced.

Ammianus Marcellinus (c. 330-400) spent his childhood and adolescence in Antiochia of Syria, until 364 he pursued a military career, and then settled in Rome, where he completed his work. The 18 books that were preserved present the events unfolded between 353-378, distinguished by the moral and patriotic character, particularly visible in the first Roman digression (**XIV, 6, 3-6**), in which **the author developed the biological vision of history**.

The biological vision of history is based on the observation that between the stages of evolution of a people or state (foundation, development, apogee, decay) and those specific to human beings (childhood - *infantia*, *pueritia*; adolescence - *adulescentia*; youth - *iuuentus*; old age - *senectus*) certain parallels can be drawn. The analogy gradually developed in Greek literature (Hesiod, Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Polybius, Dionysus of Halikarnassus), but the propagation of these ideas represented the starting point of a paradigm specific to Roman culture, which was the basis for the elaboration of an original historiographical model, adapted and applied systematically, completely and exclusively to Roman history.

The biological analogy of the Roman people or state appeared at Cato, in *Origines*, and at Cicero, in *De Re Publica*, being developed by Velleius Paterculus, in the *Historia Romana*, but the systematic and complete application is found only in four authors: in Seneca the Elder, in a lost writing preserved fragmentarily in Lactantius' *Divinae Institutiones*, in Florus, in *Epitome de Tito Livio*, at Ammianus Marcellinus, in *Res gestae*, and in *Historia Augusta*.

Our research proved that **Ammianus Marcellinus developed the metaphorical analogy of the ages of Rome**, relating the entire historical evolution of Rome to all phases of human life. Analyzing the structure of the metaphorical analogy, the drawing of the chronological cutouts and the numerous similarities of expression, we came to the conclusion that the approach of Ammianus follows the model of Florus, being correlated with the political and military consolidation of the Roman people and with the territorial expansion of Rome. Thus, *pueritia* encompasses the royal period; *aetas adulta* is extended until the end of the Second War with Carthagina; *iuuentus* continues until the imposition of the Augustan monarchy; and *senium* debuts with Octavianus and continues until the author's time, providing the ideal context for its own evaluations.

We also demonstrated that the age of *senectus* provides the key to the metaphorical analogy, since it provides the author with the ideal context to make his own assessments of the situation of Rome at the end of the fourth century. Ammianus presented Rome at the old age as a venerable city that "shall live forever (*uictura cum saeculis*). To ensure the permanent revival of *Vrbs uenerabilis*, which would continue to exist "as long as there are people on earth (*uictura dum erunt homines*)," he developed the original vision of sovereigns as heirs of Rome. Therefore, in Ammianic work, the biological chronology is a useful tool for achieving a predilection goal – the affirmation of Rome's eternity and the permanent revival of Roman power in the specific context represented by the political, religious and moral crisis of the fourth century.

CHAPTER VI

The chronology of the history of Rome in Scriptores Historiae Augustae

In chapter VI we specified the most important theories regarding the author, structure and purpose of the work, after which we analyzed the two chronological schemes identified in *Vita Cari, Carini et Numeriani* (*SHA, Car.*, III, 1-7): the biological chronology, predominant in the description of the times from Romulus to Augustus (*SHA, Car.*, 1-3), respectively the cyclicity of history, which characterizes later times (*SHA, Car.*, 4-7).

Despite the polemics surrounding the work, most research claims that *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* was elaborated in the late fourth century by a single author who appropriated six pseudonyms. The collection of imperial biographies is distinguished by acidic criticism mixed with irony and humor against emperors, but also by the plea in favor of the senatorial aristocracy, which advocated for a consistent monarchism regime and for the recognition of the traditional powers of the Senate. Despite the obvious partisanship, of the vague, allusive, veiled message, sometimes even obscure of the author, which masks caution, rebounded attitudes and hidden intentions, does not cancel the indisputable historiographical value of the work.

In our view, like Ammianus Marcellinus, **the author of the imperial biographies of *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* developed the metaphorical analogy of Rome's ages systematically and completely**, but his approach is tributary to the rhetorician Seneca. Therefore, **his modest childhood began with Romulus conditor**, encompassing the period of the monarchy until the banishment of Tarquinius Superbus; **adolescence, introduced by the verb *adoleuit***, is prolonged until the defeat of Carthagine, being characterized by the alternation of the periods of development with those in which Rome faced major challenges; **youth, suggested by the verb *creuit***, is marked by territorial expansion overseas; **and old age, designated by the verb**

consenuit, was dominated by the social unrest and civil wars that only Augustus put an end to, but at the cost of losing freedom (*liberate deposita*).

Our research highlighted the fact that the specificity of the approach lies in the fact that the reign of Octavianus causes a kind of healing or rejuvenation of the Roman state, which knows **another period of flowering (*effloruit*)**. I also noted that once at the old age of Rome, the author abandoned the metaphorical analogy, preferring to closely follow **the cyclical perspective encountered in the *Liber de Caesaribus***.

In our opinion, **the anonymous biographer traced six cycles of the Roman imperial monarchy: the first begins with Octavianus**, who imposed the monarchical regime, **and ends with the violence of the year of the four emperors; the second begins with Vespasianus**, which stopped the moral decay caused by the *uitia* and *flagitia* of the sovereigns, **and ends with Domitianus**, whose *inmanitas* ended the prosperity of Titus' time; **the third cycle evolves from Nerva**, when the situation began to be "more advantageous (*solito melior*)," **to the true *dissolutio* of the state**, which was provoked by Commodus, but **which was prolonged during the time of Pertinax and Didius Iulianus; the fourth cycle begins with Septimius Severus**, who restored the internal order through the severity of the mores (*morum parsimonia*), **ending with Severus Alexander**, whose reign had the effect of a *remedium* after the general decline during Heliogabalus' time; **the fifth cycle begins with Maximinus Thrax and ends with Carus, Carinus, and Numerianus**, marked by the crisis of the third century; **the sixth cycle begins with Diocletianus, *aurei parens saeculi*** („the father of a new golden century”), which ends the period of crisis, **continuing under Flavius Constantinus**.

As in the case of Ammianus Marcellinus, the age of *senectus* is the key to metaphorical analogy, but the biographer continues to present the rapid succession of the development and decline periods in order to portray the vicissitudes that the Roman state went through throughout the ages and thus demonstrate the permanent restoration of Roman power.

CHAPTER VII

The chronology of the history of Rome in Origo gentis Romanae

In chapter VII, in order to facilitate the understanding of the chronological scheme identified in the work, we analyzed the main theories regarding the personality of the author, the structure and purpose of the text, as well as the manner in which the studios related to this work. Most scholars consider *Origo gentis Romanae* to be a work written in the late fourth century by an unknown erudite author who explores Rome's mythical origins from a philopine perspective.

Our research demonstrated that **the chronological scheme of *Origo gentis Romanae*** presents the mythical and legendary events prior to the canonical foundation of Rome from a conservative perspective, which **closely follows Virgil's conception of the cyclicity of the "golden century."** The sequence of the eight evolutionary stages is suggested by references to the civilizing contributions of mythical or legendary characters: **the primordial era of Janus (I)**, in which the first inhabitants of Italy led a primitive existence, is followed by **the golden century of Saturnus (II)**, which managed to refine the rudimentary character of the inhabitants; **the period of decline under Picus and Faunus (III)**, prompted by the arrival of the Aborigines, was succeeded by **the golden century of Evandrus and Hercules (IV)**, which perpetuated the Saturnian spirit; in turn, **the decline in the time of King Latinus (V)**, caused by confrontations with neighboring populations, was followed by **the golden century of Aeneas and Ascanius (VI)**, characterized by the strengthening of royal authority; finally, **the period of decay during the time of the Albanian kings (VII)**, determined by internal and external conflicts, gave way to **the golden century of Romulus (VIII)**, suggested by the favorable auspices of the foundation of Rome.

In our opinion, the author of *Origo gentis Romanae* sought to update, systematize and rationalize the traditional values of the Roman civic body, removing the uncertainty and incoherence that characterized the immemorial events or justifying the contradictions found. I also pointed out that this tendency to historicize the myth also leaves a political goal in sight, that of placing the beginning of Roman history at a much earlier moment than the traditional *ab Vrbe condita*. From this perspective, the mythical existence of the inhabitants of Italy is placed in a natural continuity with the history of the Roman people, with the obvious purpose of ensuring the organic link between *gens* and *populus*.

CHAPTER VIII

The chronology of the history of Rome in De uiris illustribus Vrbis Romae

The eighth chapter highlights the essential aspects related to the identity of the author, the sources, structure and characteristics of the work, in order to investigate the specificity of the linear chronological scheme underlying the work. Most scholars believe that *De uiris illustribus Vrbis Romae* was drafted in the second half of the fourth century by an erudite pagan and a weighted traditionalist whose name is unknown. The work is a historical narrative elaborated according to biographical principles, the origins of which lie in a stereotyped tradition of moralization that crystallized in the form of *exempla*. Its sources are the traditions about the

republican past but which, in the imperial period, were emptied of the historical significance itself.

In our opinion, the biographies of *De uiris illustribus Urbis Romae* were sketched much earlier, leaving little room for the author's original contribution, so the descriptions are very small, the narrative is limited to specifying the characters and events associated with them, and the didactic purpose of the work is achieved by using standardized classical *exempla*. Even though the exposition of Roman history through a succession of biographies grouped in mnemonic devices compromised both the biographical character of the work and the presentation manner of historical events, the anonymous author managed to suggest four evolutionary stages that closely follow the classical and late sources.

Our research showed that **the chronological scheme identified in *De uiris illustribus Urbis Romae* is linear**, determined by the sequence of major events, and that it corresponds to the periodization used by modern historians: **the first stage covers the royal period; the second includes the events that led to the establishment and consolidation of the republican regime; the third corresponds to Roman expansion into the Mediterranean basin; the fourth coincides with the period of decline at the end of the Roman Republic.**

CONCLUSIONS

Research on the chronology of the history of Rome in historiographical writings in the area of Latin-speaking pagan culture in the second half of the fourth century proves that **the limits and peculiarities specific to these sources do not cancel out their historiographical value.**

Following our investigation we came to the conclusion that **all the authors studied developed chronological schemes using a variety of arbitrary criteria.** Each author followed his own vision of the chronology of the history of Rome, taking into account a variety of determining factors, so that the number, duration, content and significance of the stages drawn differ substantially. Of course, none of these manages to satisfy the accuracy and objectivity requirements imposed on the modern historian, since the Latin pagan historians of the second half of the fourth century do neither aim to fix exactly in time the historical events and processes, nor do they propose their definitive evaluation. On the contrary, **in all the researched writings, the periodization of Roman history is suggested and interested, being used as a useful tool in achieving a predilectionary didactic goal.**

Our research showed that **these authors resorted** to a careful selection of the presented material, resorted discretionary to the arsenal of the classical *exempla*, developed eloquent analogies and used terms and expressions that are common or that go beyond the vocabulary of the sovereign power in order **to fix chronological keys with which to specify the evolution of Rome and properly illustrate the didactic purpose of the historical work.**

Despite the heterogeneous, fragmentary and subjective character of the writings, **the chronological schemes identified in the eight sources included in our research provide a comprehensive picture of the history of Rome, from its mythical origins to the fourth century.** They demonstrate that, in an era dominated by political uncertainty and a strong sense of irreversible decadence, Latin pagan authors updated and systematized the past by capitalizing on the **conception of the cyclicity of historical phenomena** (*Liber de Caesaribus*, *Scriptores Historiae Augstae*, *Origo Gentis Romanae*), **the linear view of history** (*Breuiarium ab Vrbe condita*, *Breuiarium rerum gestarum populi Romani*, *De uiris illustribus Urbis Romae*) or **the biological conception of the evolution of Rome** (*Rerum gestarum libri*, *Scriptores Historiae Augstae*).

In our view, **all chronological schemes elaborated in this way reflect the continuity of Roman history and the resilience of political and cultural elites** in a changing world and in a context threatened by particularly profound transformations.

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