

Research program:
“The Romans beyond the Po River and the East. Towards a social prosopography between the two partes Imperii (from the origins to the 8th century AD)”

Annex Code 6

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Research subject:

- Production (paper & digital) of a prosopographical reference work abt. life, work and heritage of all those who have travelled from Italy beyond the Po River to Mediterranean East and/or from Mediterranean East have reached the lands beyond the Po River giving original contributions – no matter if they were intellectuals, imperial magistrates, military men, merchants, men of Church or else.
- The envisaged reference work is focused on an area grosso modo equivalent to provincia Transpadana at the beginning of 4th century AD (i.e. in broad terms the area of the present ‘Lombardia’ region). The envisaged product aims at providing students – especially historians and archaeologists – with an overview giving an appropriate structure to pre-existing data and at stimulating new researches abt. dynamics of long-term cultural and social interactions between the region beyond the Po River and the Mediterranean East.
- While the journey of G.V. Catullus on his brother’s footsteps in Bithynia had been an isolated case, the Augustean age encouraged various members of official as well as intellectual élites to move towards Mediterranean East, also in order to undertake important careers. Vergil from Mantua (70-19 BC) had visited Athens, the general from Cremona P.Q. Varus (46 a.C.-9 d.C.) had been legatus Augusti pro praetore in Syria. In 2nd and 3rd centuries, apart from Pliny the Younger (from Como: 62-114 AD), governor of provinces of Pontus and Bithynia, epigraphic evidence (i.e. milestones along the main roads of communication connecting with Mediterranean East) provides information about political, social economic life. The age of the ‘Tetrarchy’ and then of Constantine is marked by intensified relationships between Transpadana and Mediterranean East, especially given the new status of Milan, which became imperial seat from 286 to 402 AD; Milan became the ‘target’ of men of the social and political élites as well as of outstanding churchmen.
- Two bishops in Milan before Ambrosius (374-397) almost certainly came from the East, they are Eustorgius 1st (344 ca.-349 ca. AD), renowned also because of the Milanese basilica of the ‘Magi’ from the East, and Auxentius (355-374 AD). Ambrosius for his part not only promoted production of religious hymns after Oriental patterns but had a theological education especially based on Oriental Christian Literature. For the Milanese bishopric seat also Dionysius (349-355 AD) deserves mention: he was banned to Oriental exile in Cappadocia, presumably in Caesarea, as he had opposed the pro-Arian attitude of emperor Constantius 2nd. The virtues of Marolus, the bishop of Syriac origin who had been the successor of Ambrosius (408 ca.-423 ca. AD), have been praised by Ennodius in carm. 2,80. Oriental origin can be (and has been) supposed for other Milanese bishops of 5th and 6th centuries.
- The interrelation between the area beyond the Po and Mediterranean East was interrupted neither by the imperial court’s move to Ravenna (402 AD) nor by the later fall of the Roman Imperial Pars Occidentis (476 AD). During the so-called Three Chapters querelle the Milanese bishop Dacius (530-552 AD), whose death occurred in Constantinople – but his spoils were given back to Milan (564). After a short time the Lombards (hence “Lombardia”) entered the Po River Plain and a new historical phase began. Byzantine objects from the Eastern Mediterranean appeared in royal seats as well in tombs with Lombard array. Queen

Theudelinda (570-627 AD) was successful in rooting Lombard kings and dukes in the Catholic obedience and in taking part in the Mediterranean Roman world. A new net of trades and journeys between West and East was in this way developed (see evidence of early Mediaeval relics).

Research structure:

First step (approx. 2 weeks): elaboration of bibliographical criteria and framing of the prosopographical standard entry. Given the modern generally adopted criteria on an international scale the entry should at least consider the following elements for each and every person taken into account:

- . Full name and qualification
- . Biographical data with short exposition abt. the relevant sources
- . Account of the career with detailed discussion of sources
- . Notes about works the person under examination might have composed
- . Bibliography.

This standard entry might be reasonably adapted as a development of the research.

Second step (approx. 8 months): recovering, studying, classifying all the historical-literary as well as epigraphic witnesses that are necessary for the reference work and verifying the reliability of the biographical data. For the analysis of each and every person considered the basic targets of research are the following:

- Biographical data
- Pertinent social group and possible net of contacts
- Description of the undertaken activities
- "Nachlass" (texts or other)
- Information about the places where the activities were undertaken
- Relevant bibliography

Third step (approx. 3 months and a half): elaboration of the results and their written composition for an envisaged publication (paper as well as digital) with a first assessment of the attained results.