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## Polemon's contribution to the periegetic literature of the II century B.C.

### *The cultural genesis of Polemon's periegetic writings*

The genre of periegetic literature began properly only in the Hellenistic age, which was characterized by a considerable increase in interest in the field of history and antiquary, but its origins can be traced back to the Ionian literature of *Periploi* and travels. Among the Ionians of Asia Minor it is undoubtedly worth mentioning Hecataeus of Miletus, who wrote a *Περίοδος Γῆς* in two books, in which he describes the coasts of the Mediterranean and Black Sea with Gibraltar as the point of departure, adding for each region information about what we could call *paradoxa*, customs and traditions of the inhabitants. It was probably in the Hellenistic age that his work was given the title *Περιογήσις*, a term that came to be used from this period onwards to indicate the topographic description of a land, enriched with information of a historical and antiquarian nature. In classical times it was seldom used and tended to mean “shape, profile”, as the verb *περιογείσθαι* meant “to mark the outline” rather than “to guide”.<sup>1</sup>

One of the best-known authors in the periegetic literature of the Hellenistic age is Polemon of Ilion, an important and polyhedric personality who in addition to his periegetic writings also composed polemical writings and epistles among others. Unfortunately only about a hundred fragments have come down to us, thirty-eight of which belong to the periegetic writings and some of them are so limited that it is difficult to establish the real range and significance of his works.

The works of Polemon and of the other Hellenistic periegetic writers are based primarily on the idea of travel and the collection of information by means of visiting the places they deal with. The human horizon was extended significantly and became universal thanks to the spread of a common language, the *koine*, which offered intellectuals a further chance to travel and acquire new knowledge. It is no coincidence that Polemon came from Asia Minor, where the

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<sup>1</sup> F. De Angelis, *Pausania e i periegeti. La guidistica antica sulla Grecia*, in E. Vaiani (a cura di), *Dell'antiquaria e dei suoi metodi*, Pisa 1998, 2-14.



tradition of the *Periploi* originates and where there was the flourishing activity of Ionian logographers, whose writings took as their subject mythological and cosmogonic traditions, the foundation of towns, the introduction of cults and the description of places and peoples. We should also bear in mind that Herodotus likewise came from Asia Minor and as heir to the ionic spirit, his lively curiosity led him to focus frequently on everything which seems to be unusual as well as to pay particular attention to ethnographical *excursus*. Polemon appears to have kept in mind at all times the historian from Halicarnassus and his method, which consisted first of all in the ability to make a distinction between stories told by people and information deriving from direct observation and secondly in attaching great importance to his own opinion (*γνώμη*) and to research (*ἱστορία*).<sup>2</sup> To each of the places he visited during his many travels he dedicated a work in which he reported both what came from his direct experience and observation and the stories he was told.

Modern scholars have come to realize that it is impossible to generalize because of the big differences existing among periegetic works: the size of the area covered differs considerably as some deal with restricted areas, others with the entire inhabited world and they may concentrate on the geographical shape and appearance of a region while others favour a description of antiquities, monuments and ethnographical curiosities.<sup>3</sup>

In the field of the periegetic genre it is possible to distinguish two currents: the *periegesis* that is more specifically geographical in its sphere of interests, as opposed to what we could call antiquarian *periegesis*. While the former aims to represent the existing condition of places, the latter is interested in all the things that testify to the past. In other words it is a literary genre that refers mainly to antiquity and monuments and places the emphasis on historical information, which is why Jacoby speaks about “historical *periegesis*”.<sup>4</sup> In antiquarian *periegesis* geography still remains the framework inside which erudite information is presented, but the description of the country is notably reduced. Ethnography, religion, traditions, mythological origins of towns are some of the most frequent topics and they are presented in a view satisfying antiquarian tastes. It is possible to recognize a systematic criterion, according to which the information is given, alongside the topographical criterion, which is still followed. Attention is focused on objects and well-identified areas, such as temples, arcades and towns as is evident from the titles of some of Polemon's writings: *περὶ τῶν ἀναθημάτων τῶν ἐν Ἀκροπόλει*, *περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς προπυλαίοις πινάκων*, *περὶ τῆς ἐν Σικυῶνι Ποικίλης Στοᾶς*, *περὶ τῶν ἐν Δελφοῖς θησαυρῶν*. Here we find the thematic criterion in addition to

<sup>2</sup> Hdt. II 99, 1.

<sup>3</sup> On the difficulty of fixing classification on the basis of the ancient geographical terminology see H. Berger, *Geschichte der wissenschaftliche Erdkunde der Griechen*, Leipzig 1890, 74-77; C. Van Paassen, *The Classical Tradition of Geography*, Groningen 1957, 1-32, It. trans. ed. by A.M. Biraschi in F. Prontera (a cura di), *Geografia storica della Grecia antica*, Roma-Bari 1991, 229-273; D. Marcotte (Éd.), *Géographes grecs. Pseudo Scymnos: Circuit de la terre*, Paris 2000, LV-LXXIII; P. Cappelletto, *I frammenti di Mnasea. Introduzione, testo e commento*, Milano 2003, 29-31.

<sup>4</sup> Jacoby, *FGrHist* 369 Komm., 132.



the topographical one. Using Pasquali's words we could say that Polemon «makes a systematic choice while at the same time following a topographical line of research».<sup>5</sup>

As is evident from the number of names that tradition has handed down to us, there were authors who used Polemon's approach both in the Hellenistic age and in the following period, but we have only a few titles and fragments of their works and their date of composition is often difficult to establish with any degree of certitude. Two of them are referred to by Polemon himself: Themison,<sup>6</sup> who probably lived in the age immediately preceding Polemon and who composed a work on Pallene and Anaxandrides of Delphi,<sup>7</sup> the author of *περὶ τῶν συληθέντων ἐν Δελφοῖς ἀναθημάτων*. In addition to them we can mention two other figures whose approach in their works is very similar to that of Polemon: Diodorus, whose origin is unknown and who lived in the second half of the third century B.C., composed *περὶ μνημάτων* and *περὶ τῶν δήμων* while Heliodorus from Athens wrote *περὶ τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως* in fifteen books and was Polemon's contemporary or predecessor.<sup>8</sup>

If the Ionian *ἱστορία* constitutes an important precedent, the writings of Polemon and of the antiquarian periegetic writers, so exhaustive and detailed, on the one hand represent the height of the attidographs' antiquarian activity in the IV century B.C., characterized by the habit of gathering, classifying and interpreting monuments, inscriptions and cults and on the other hand receive a boost from the erudite research of the Hellenistic age, promoted by the peripatetic school of Athens and by the big cultural centres, such as Pergamum and

<sup>5</sup> G. Pasquali, *Polemone di Ilio*, in *Enciclopedia italiana*, XXVII, 1935, 617. See also Id., *Die Schriftstellerische Form des Pausanias*, «Hermes» XLVIII (1913), 176-77; Id., *Periegesi*, in *Enciclopedia italiana*, XXVI, 1935, 751; Jacoby, *FGrHist* 369 Komm., 132-136; P.E. Arias, *Periegeti*, in *EAA*, VI, 1965, 58; De Angelis, *Pausania*, cit. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Themison, *FGrHist* 374 F 1 (= F 78 Preller).

<sup>7</sup> Anaxandrides of Delphi, *FGrHist* 404 T 1 (C. Müller, *FHG*, III, Paris 1883, 137).

<sup>8</sup> The general survey of the authors, who belong to the periegetic genre, is wide and not homogeneous. This is not the place to give an account of all the authors who fit into this category. We can quote the *Περὶ γῆς Περιγὰμου* of Telephus, the *περὶ τῶν ἐν Δελφοῖς ἀναθημάτων* of Alcetas, active around 200/150 B.C., the *περὶ τῶν ἐν Δελφοῖς ἀναθημάτων* of Menetor and the *Περὶ γῆς Ἀργούς* of Socrates, which can be placed between the I cent. B.C. and the I cent. A.D. The anonymous periegetic work in the papyrus of Hawara, which can be traced back to the II cent. B.C. and the work *περὶ Ἀθηνῶν* of Meneclis-Callicrates are considered by Jacoby more as geographical *periegesis* than antiquarian. Similarly Heraclides deals with corography more than with buildings and monuments. See on this point A. Dihle, *Eraclide e la periegesi ellenistica*, in Prontera, *Geografia storica*, cit., 67-77. The following authors are usually considered as representative of the geographical *periegesis*: the Pseudo-Scymnos, who wrote a *periegesis*, which was addressed to king Nicomedes of Bithynia; Mnaseas of Patara, poligraph of the III/II cent. B.C., author of a *periegesis*, which has the same title as the two books of Hecataeus *Europe*, *Asia* and besides *Libya*; Asclepiades of Myrleia, that in the II-I cent. B.C. wrote on Bithynia; Agatarchides of Cnidos (II cent. B.C.), author of *περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν*, *περὶ τὴν Εὐρώπην* and of a *περὶ τῆς ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης*. Artemidorus, who in the II cent. B.C. composed a circumnavigation of the Mediterranean Sea and of the Euxine Sea, based his works on Agatarchides. Later on, in the II cent. A.D., Dionysius, so called Periegete, wrote a *periegesis* of the inhabited world, on which Rufus Sextus Avienus, Latin geographer poet from the IV cent. A.D., based his *Descriptio orbis terrae*.



Alexandria. Despite the fact that Athens had lost the political supremacy that had distinguished it in the classical age, it still remained an important cultural centre, around which Polemon undoubtedly gravitated and where his education had taken place. The philosophical school of Athens was famous throughout the Greek world and scholars and young people poured in from everywhere to listen to the teaching of great experts. We do not know exactly if Polemon joined one specific philosophical school or if he followed more than one, in accordance with a typical practice of his times.<sup>9</sup> The wide variety of topics he dealt with, his attitude to research which emerges from the surviving fragments and the remarkable interest for erudition suggest a peripatetical approach or at least a sensibility close to that of the Aristotelian school.<sup>10</sup>

His periegetic writings are the result of the period spent in Athens, of the various journeys he undertook in the rest of Greece and of the influence of the Hellenistic cultural atmosphere. The origin of regional monographies is linked to the enhancement of local history on account of the particular political situation which has led to a loss of power by the *poleis*. As a result they were anxious to show off to good advantage everything that connected them to a glorious past.<sup>11</sup> That is the reason why Polemon was given the title of *proxenos* of Delphi to which he dedicated the work *περὶ τῶν ἐν Δελφοῖς θησαυρῶν*. This monography was rich in information about myths, monuments and anecdotes, which gave luster to the city.<sup>12</sup>

If we can assume that Polemon was educated in Athens and travelled widely in the rest of Greece during the first two decades of the II century B.C., we have to assume also that he was acquainted with and may even have had some contacts with the two principal schools of the time: Pergamum and Alexandria. It is very difficult to establish of what nature they were, whether indirect or personal as a consequence of a visit or of a long stay.

There are some elements which suggest a probable relationship with the cultural centre of Pergamum, where he might have spent a period of time and where the erudite studies received a stimulus: Ilion was not far away and his periegetic works<sup>13</sup> about the region he was from and about the cities of Caria and Pontos show a specific antiquarian interest for Asia Minor, particularly for the

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. G. Cambiano - L. Repici, *Atene: le scuole dei filosofi*, in G. Cambiano - L. Canfora - D. Lanza (a cura di), *Lo spazio letterario della Grecia antica*, I, *La produzione e la circolazione del testo*, II, *L'Ellenismo*, Roma 1993, 527-551.

<sup>10</sup> On Polemon's education and life see M. Angelucci, *Polemone di Ilio: fra ricerca biografica e interessi antiquari*, «SCO» LVIX (2003), 165-184 [year of publication: 2008].

<sup>11</sup> Aristotle himself and his student Callisthenes were honoured in 330 B.C. by the Delphic Amphictiones, because they compiled the list of the winners at the Pythian Games. See *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 275; A. Chanotis, *Historie und Historiker in den griechischen Inschriften. Epigraphische Beiträge zur griechischen Historiographie*, Stuttgart 1998, 293-296; W. Spoerri, *Epigraphie et littérature de la liste des Pythioniques à Delphes*, in D. Knöpfler (Éd.), *Comptes et inventaires dans la cité grecque*, Droz 1988, 111-140.

<sup>12</sup> Jacoby, *FGrHist* 369 Komm., 132.

<sup>13</sup> On the Περιογήσις Ἰλίου see A. Trachsel, *La Troade: un paysage et son Héritage littéraire. Les commentaires antiques sur la Troade, leur genèse et leur influence*, Bibliotheca Helvetica Romana XXVIII, Basel 2007, 219-229.



areas where there were Greek settlements. This is hardly surprising if we consider the prestige that the town of Pergamum had enjoyed from Attalus I onwards. Attalus I, in an effort to link his dynasty with Greece, set out to appear as the preserver of the Hellenic freedom and to match through culture and art the power and the hegemonic role held by Athens in the classical age.<sup>14</sup> Eumenes II obtained not only many honours from the Greek world, particularly from Athens, but he devoted himself to the setting up of the Library,<sup>15</sup> which became in a short time one of the most important centres of science and culture in the Hellenistic world, capable of competing with its parallel institution in Alexandria. The title of the *Letter to Attalus*, composed by Polemon, seems to confirm the relationship that existed between the Periegete and the kings of Pergamum, but we cannot reconstruct with any degree of certitude who the receiver of the epistle was and nor is it possible to draw any useful information from the surviving fragments, which are confined to the report of the epithets with which Apollo and Dionysus were worshipped in Greece. The spread of the name Attalus throughout the Greek world, testified for the city of Athens alone by the huge prosopographical documentation of inscriptions,<sup>16</sup> appears to suggest that he was not one of the Attalid kings but a scholar with the same name.<sup>17</sup> If the *Letter to Attalus* cannot be quoted as definite proof of his affiliation with the cultural centre of Pergamum, it is nevertheless difficult to deny that he was acquainted with the philhellenic fame of the Attalid kings and with the cultural environment surrounding them.

If we can assume, but not assert, Polemon's affiliation with Pergamum, we cannot say much about his relations with Alexandria, fundamental point of

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<sup>14</sup> On the Attalids as defenders of Greek freedom and as promoters of Greek culture see R.E. Allen, *The Attalid Kingdom. A Constitutional History*, Oxford 1983, 145 ff.; B. Virgilio, *Gli Attalidi di Pergamo. Fama, eredità e memoria*, Pisa 1993, 30-38, 52-57; Chr. Habicht, *Gottmenschen und griechische Städte*, Zetemata 14, München 1970<sup>2</sup>, 125-126; Id., *Athens and the Attalids in the second century B.C.*, «Hesperia» LIX (1990), 561-77; E. Kosmetatou, *The Attalids of Pergamum*, in A. Erskine (Ed.), *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, Oxford etc. 2003, 170-171. Especially on the Nikephoria founded by Attalus I to celebrate the victory against the Galatians in 249 B.C. and raised to panhellenic dignity by Eumenes II, see M. Holleaux, *Sur la date de fondation des Nikephoria*, «REA» XX (1916), 170-171; L. Robert, *Notes d'épigraphie hellénistique*. XXXVII. *Sur les Nikephoria de Pergame*, «BCH» LIV (1930), 332-346 = OMS I, 151-65B; Id., *Héraklès à Pergame et un épigramme de l'Anthologie XVI 91*, «RPh» LVIII (1894), 7-18 = OMS VI, 457-468; B. Virgilio *Nota sui Nikephoria Pergameni*, Studi Ellenistici XII, Pisa 1999, 353-357; Id., *Lancia, diadema e porpora. Il re e la regalità ellenistica*, Pisa 2003<sup>2</sup>, 71-72 with footnote 213.

<sup>15</sup> Strab. XIII 4, 2. See F. Montanari, *Pergamo*, in Cambiano - Canfora - Lanza, *Lo spazio letterario*, cit., 639-655; A. Stewart, *Hellenistic Art: Two Dozen Innovations*, in G.R. Bugh (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic World*, Cambridge 2006, 167.

<sup>16</sup> J.S. Trail, *Persons of Ancient Athens*, III, Toronto 1994, 486-493 nn. 225290-226115.

<sup>17</sup> Similarly, it was not rare under the Ptolemaic dynasty to find scholars who had the same name as the kings of Egypt, see L. Preller, *Polemonis Periegetae Fragmenta*, Leipzig 1838, anast. reprint Amsterdam 1964<sup>2</sup>, 108. On the problem of the identification of the receiver of the *Letter*, for which modern scholars have considered both Attalus I and Attalus II or even a case of homonymy, see Preller, *Fragmenta*, cit., 108-9; Müller, *FHG*, cit., III, 135; F. Susemihl, *Geschichte der griechischen Litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit*, Leipzig 1965<sup>2</sup>, 667 n. 14; E.V. Hansen, *The Attalids of Pergamum*, Ithaca-London 1971<sup>2</sup>, 362-363; Angelucci, *Polemone*, cit., 170-172.



reference for scholars of the various Hellenistic sciences.<sup>18</sup> His criticism against Eratosthenes which can be found in his work *περὶ τῆς Ἀθήνησιν Ἑρατοσθένους ἐπιδημίας* is not sufficient evidence of any direct contacts with the Alexandrian environment. Clearly people who had anything to do with erudition needed to have some dealings with the scholars of Alexandria and it is possible that Polemon, among his many travels, stopped off in this important city too. Nothing, however, can be inferred from his fragments and from the literary sources that hand down evidence regarding the Periegete. What can be affirmed with certitude is that his works were known by the Alexandrian scholars, in particular by Didymus, who represents the intermediary we have to thank for the preservation of Polemon's writings till late antiquity. The questing spirit, the attention to erudite features and to antiquarian details bring to mind the school of Alexandria, where famous personalities like Callimachus and others, had worked and left a significant mark, influencing the way contemporary studies developed. Alexandria and Athens were very closely linked and it is difficult to speak about Polemon's affiliation with the school of Alexandria simply on the basis of his interests, which could be equally well ascribed to world of the Peripatos, as was mentioned earlier in connection with his philosophical education, or to his deep interest in Athens where we can assume he spent a considerable period of time.

At any rate the long-established school of Alexandria, following the experience of the Aristotelian one in Athens, gave a strong connotation to the Hellenistic culture and became a crossroads of the cultural stimuli acquired with the enlargement of the *oikumene*. We can be certain that it contributed to defining the hallmarks of scholars' activity such as that of Polemon and of the other periegetic writers, even if through an indirect influence.

### *Typology and features of Polemon's periegetic works*

Polemon's geographical work is quoted in the *Suida* as Πηριήγησις κοσμική ἤτοι Γεωγραφία.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless the expression *πηριήγησις κοσμική* is never to be found in Polemon's writings, so the question naturally arises as to whether

<sup>18</sup> On the school of Alexandria and on its rich Library see P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Oxford 1972 (reprinted Oxford 2001<sup>2</sup>), 305-335; R. Pfeiffer, *Storia della filologia classica: dalle origini alla fine dell'età ellenistica*, It. ed. Napoli 1973, 157-180; L. Canfora, *La biblioteca e il Museo*, in Cambiano - Canfora - Lanza, *Lo spazio letterario*, cit., 2-29; H. Maehler, *Alexandria, the Mouseion, and Cultural Identity*, in A. Hirst - M. Silk (Eds.), *Alexandria, Real and Imagined*, Publications for the Centre for Hellenic Studies, King's College London 5, Aldershot 2004, 1-14; N. Krevans - A. Sens, *Language and Literature*, in Bugh, *The Cambridge Companion*, cit., 188-189; P.T. Keyser, *Science, Medicine and Technology*, in Bugh, *The Cambridge Companion*, cit., 242. For a detailed bibliography on this subject see N. Istasse, *Alexandria docta: bibliographie générale*, in L. Canfora (Éd.), *La Bibliothèque d'Alexandrie et l'histoire des textes*, Liège 2004, 33-82; M. Berti - V. Costa, *La Biblioteca di Alessandria: storia di un paradiso perduto*, Tivoli 2010.

<sup>19</sup> *Suida* Π 1888 s.v. Πολέμων [...] ἔγραψε Περιοήγησιν Ἰλίου ἐν βιβλίοις γ', Κτίσεις τῶν ἐν Φωκίδι πόλεων καὶ περὶ τῆς πρὸς Ἀθηναίους συγγενείας αὐτῶν, Κτίσεις τῶν ἐν Πόντῳ πόλεων, Περὶ τῶν ἐν Λακεδαίμονι πόλεων· καὶ ἄλλα πλεῖστα· ἐν οἷς καὶ Κοσμικὴν περιήγησιν ἤτοι Γεωγραφίαν.



Polemon had ever composed either a single work, subdivided into a number of separate books, or single self-contained treatises, dealing systematically with the various regions examined. The word *πηρεγητής*, which often follows the author's name in the fragments, does not refer so much to the work title, as to the way he deals with the subject. The adjective *κοσμικός*, given to the *periegesis* to specify its unquestionably character, belongs to a later period and is thought to derive from the *Suida* or others. At any rate there are no elements enabling us either to state or to deny the hypothesis of a comprehensive work, intended to describe Greece as a whole, nor is it possible to say if this work was the result of a specific project rather than of an idea, which developed over a period of time. It is fairly sure that this title was not given by Polemon, but in the following age and that he composed and edited not a whole treatise but individual monographs.

Admittedly there may never have been in the author's mind the idea of a single title, but there is one element that is present in all his writings and that is the main feature of all the periegetic tradition, that is the idea of a linear itinerary along which monuments, objects and places are shown and described through progressive stages alongside what is considered to be their history.

With regard to the expression *ἤτοι γεωγραφία*, it would be wrong to think of a geographical description in a specific sense: that is very probably a gloss added in the *Suida* lexicon, where no distinction is made between geographical and antiquarian *periegesis*. If Polemon mentions towns, rivers or mountains, there is nothing to suggest that his interest was specifically geographical. He has an antiquarian approach which attaches importance to places and monuments and seems to pay considerable attention to anecdotes, cults, feasts and mythological stories, being drawn by strange and unusual stories about people and events.

Polemon does not set out to deal with the whole *oikumene*, but with Greece and other areas inhabited by Greeks, with a special predilection for Athens. It is possible to identify four groups among the periegetic writings, according to the titles that are present in the fragments and in the *Suida* lexicon: Greece, including Attica, Laconia, Arcadia, Boeotia, Phocis and Epirus; the area of Ilion; towns in Pontus, Caria and the island of Samothrace; towns in Italy and Sicily.

We do not know if these periegetic writings really correspond to everything he wrote or if he composed something which has since been lost. In any case what we have certainly suggests that his particular interest in certain towns, areas and regions is not casual but justified and influenced by the political and cultural situation of his time. In the age of Hellenism we can witness on the one hand a great cultural ferment led by the centres of Alexandria, Pergamum and Rhodes, that paved the way for the development of science, literature and the arts, on the other transformations in the political world that undermined the existing political balance and caused a sense of insecurity. Intellectuals reacted by increasing the value of the links with the past which were guaranteed by mythical traditions, cults and the artistic and cultural heritage as a way of upholding the cultural supremacy, which was still evident in the Greek world, even though the political and military power was no longer in the Greek hands.



Polemon focused on Athens, Sparta, Thebes and on the towns that had succeeded one another in the hegemony of Greece during the classical age. He dedicated several works, ten fragments of which have come down to us, to the city of Athens, an intellectual centre, extremely rich in paintings, sculptures and monuments. He devoted a work in a number of books to the description of the Acropolis or more precisely to the votive offerings to be found there. We have to add to this work the writings *περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς προπυλαίοις πινάκων, ἀναγραφή τῶν ἐπωνύμων τῶν δῆμων καὶ φυλῶν* and *περὶ τῆς Ἱερᾶς ὁδοῦ*, whose titles are known from his fragments.

After dealing with the cities which were centers of power, he took into consideration important sacred sites, which were practically speaking an essential stopping off point as much for periegetic writers as for pilgrims.<sup>20</sup> Delphi, a holy place from the very earliest of times, was a political and religious centre of primary importance. The description of the Treasuries is always given together with anecdotes, whose purpose was to recall the historical events connected with the votive offerings. Polemon wrote about Olympia, too: the offerings are always described in details, as we can see from F 22<sup>21</sup> with regard to the temple of the Metapontians in Olympia, which can be cited as an example of the meticulous reports which he was in the habit of providing. He says that there were one hundred and thirty-two silver cups (φιάλαι) plus three in gold, two silver jugs (οἰνόχοαι) and a silver vase for drinking (ἀποθυστάριον).<sup>22</sup> The town, besides being the seat of the temple of Zeus, was also the place where the most important Panhellenic games were held, by means of which the Greeks had, from earliest times, expressed their sense of belonging to the Greek nation, no matter what *polis* they came from.

Not only did the Periegete of Ilion visit Delphi and Olympia but also the monumental sanctuary in Samothrace, which flourished in the III-II century B.C., and the temple of Zeus in Dodona, where the most ancient oracle in Greece was located, an oracle which thanks to Pyrrhus enjoyed renewed popularity after a period of decadence caused by competition from Delphi. Polemon is considered by Stephanus of Byzantium to be a great expert on Dodona and the person who

<sup>20</sup> See S.E. Alcock - J.F. Cherry - J. Elsner, *Pausanias. Travel, Memory in Roman Greece*, Oxford 2001, 45-47.

<sup>21</sup> The numbers of the fragments quoted in this article are the same as in Preller, *Fragmenta*, cit.

<sup>22</sup> Athen. XI 479 f - 480 a (= F 22 Preller) Κρατάνιον· μήποτε τὸ νῦν καλούμενον κρανίον ἔκπωμα οὕτως ὠνόμαζον (479 f) οἱ ἀρχαῖοι. Πολέμων γοῦν ἢ ὅστις ἐστὶν ὁ ποιήσας τὸν ἐπιγραφόμενον Ἑλλαδικὸν περὶ τοῦ ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ λέγων Μεταποντίνων ναοῦ γράφει καὶ ταῦτα· «ναὸς Μεταποντίνων, ἐν ᾧ φιάλαι ἀργυραῖ ρλβ', οἰνόχοαι ἀργυραῖ β', ἀποθυστάριον ἀργυροῦν, φιάλαι γ' ἐπίχρσοι. Ναὸς Βυζαντίων, (480 a) ἐν ᾧ Τρίτων κυπαρίσσινος ἔχων κρατάνιον ἀργυροῦν, σειρήν ἀργυρᾶ, καρχήσια β' ἀργυρᾶ, κύλιξ ἀργυρᾶ, οἰνοχόη χρυσοῦ, κέρατα δύο. Ἐν δὲ τῷ ναῷ τῆς Ἥρας τῷ παλαιῷ φιάλαι ἀργυραῖ λ', κρατάνια ἀργυρᾶ β', χύτρος ἀργυροῦς, ἀποθυστάριον χρυσοῦν, κρατῆρ χρυσοῦς, Κυρηναίων ἀνάθημα, βατιάκιον ἀργυροῦν».



can be best relied on to explain the proverb connected with the bronze vase of the temple, used to indicate people who never stop talking.<sup>23</sup>

Sanctuaries were very rich in inscriptions, which proved to be of great importance for the antiquarian research conducted by Polemon, who was known as στηλοκόπας as a result.

The attention he devoted to epigraphs is testified in his periegetic writings as in all his works. Polemon's fragments are so limited and few in number, if we compare them with his entire literary production, that it explains why the epigraphical quotations that survive are fewer than one might expect. Three fragments contain explicit references to the inscriptions he saw during his voyages: the mention of the stele showing the inscribed name of Thucydides's father (F 4)<sup>24</sup> can probably be ascribed to him as well as the inscription regarding the victory of the Spartan Leon in a horse race during the eighty-fifth Olympic Games (F 19);<sup>25</sup> F 25 reports the epigraph inscribed under the statue of the cithara player Cleon, an epigraph that Polemon probably mentioned when he told the anecdote of the gold that was hidden in a cavity of the statue during the capture of Thebes by Alexander the Great in 335 B.C. To these three fragments can be added F 27, where Polemon recalls the votive offering made by the poetess Aristomache from Erythrae, who was victorious at the Isthmian Games. It is perfectly reasonable to suppose that he mentioned also any inscriptions connected with it. Similarly, it is not difficult to imagine that the Periegete, while dealing with ancient monuments and offerings, referred also the inscriptions related to them.

The attention he pays to epigraphs links him with Pausanias, the most famous and best known Periegete we know, whose work is the only periegetic one we have in its complete form.<sup>26</sup> Something else in common is given by the

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<sup>23</sup> Steph. Byz. s.v. Δωδώνη (= F 30 Preller): [...] προσθετέον οὖν τῷ περιηγητῇ Πολέμωνι ἀκριβῶς τὴν Δωδώνην ἐπισταμένῳ καὶ Ἀριστείδῃ τὰ τοῦτου μεταγεγραφότι, λέγοντι κατὰ τὴν β' «ἐν τῇ Δωδώνῃ στῦλοι δύο παρὰλληλοι καὶ πάρεγγυς ἀλλήλων. Καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν θατέρου χαλκίον ἔστιν οὐ μέγα τοῖς δὲ νῦν παραπλήσιον λέβησιν, ἐπὶ δὲ θατέρου παιδάριον ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ μαστίγιον ἔχον· οὐ κατὰ τὸ δεξιὸν μέρος ὁ τὸ λεβήτιον ἔχων κίων ἔστηκεν. ὅταν οὖν ἄνεμον συμβῆ πνεῖν, τοὺς τῆς μαστίγος ἱμάντας χαλκοὺς ὄντας ὁμοίως τοῖς ἀληθινοῖς ἱμάσιν αἰωρουμένους ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος συνέβαινε ψαύειν τοῦ χαλκίου καὶ τοῦτο ἀδιαλείπτως ποιεῖν, ἕως ἂν ὁ ἄνεμος διαμένῃ». See A.B. Cook, *The Gong at Dodona*, «JHS» XXII (1902), 5-28; Kern, *Dodona* (1), in *RE* V, 1903, 1262; H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus*, Oxford 1967, 91; F. Graf, *Dodona*, in *Der Neue Pauly* 3, 1997, 726.

<sup>24</sup> Marcell. *Vit. Thuc.* 16-17.

<sup>25</sup> Schol. Eurip. *Hippolyt.* 231.

<sup>26</sup> On relations between Polemon and Pausanias see W. Gurlitt, *Über Pausanias*, Graz 1890, 179 and *passim*; J.G. Frazer, *Pausania's Description of Greece*, I, London 1898 (reprinted New York 1965<sup>2</sup>), LXXXIII-XC; G. Pasquali, *Die Schriftstellerische Form des Pausanias*, «Hermes» XLVIII (1913), 161-223, 222; O. Regenbogen, *Pausanias*, in *RE* Suppl. VIII, 1956, 1059-1060. Frazer makes a systematic comparison between the passages from Polemon and Pausanias, pointing out analogies and differences. Lastly see L. Beschi - D. Musti (a cura di), *Pausania, Guida della Grecia*, I, *L'Attica*, Milano 1997<sup>3</sup>, XXXI-XXXIII; A. Jacquemin, *Pausanias, le sanctuaire d'Olympe et les archéologues*, in D. Knoepfler - M. Piérart (Édd.), *Éditer, traduire, commenter Pausanias en l'an 2000*, Actes du colloque de Neuchâtel et de Fribourg (18-22 septembre 1998), Genève 2001, 281-300 especially 287-288; W. Hutton, *Describing Greece. Landscape and Literature in the Periegesis of Pausanias*, Cambridge 2005, 251-263.



tendency to indulge in *excursus*, which is typical of Pausanias and present in Polemon as well, as we can see from his fragments.

In the work *περὶ τῶν ἀναθημάτων τῶν ἐν Ἀκροπόλει* Polemon raises the question how it came about that the flute-player Nemeades had such a name, since a law dating back no one knows how long prohibited the conferring of a sacred five-yearly feastname to hetaerae, slaves, prostitutes and flute-players (F 3).<sup>27</sup> This is a typical example of digression about practices and customs, connected with a particular place, that derived either from the direct observation of the law or from one of Nemeades's votive offerings.

In fragments 4 and 5 the *Periegete*, inspired perhaps by the statue of Eunobios, who promoted the decree to allow Thucydides to return to Athens, begins a digression on the historian: he discusses his father's name, the place of his burial,<sup>28</sup> which is believed to be Athens, and the cases of homonymy.<sup>29</sup> Both

On the epigraphic material handed down by Pausanias see C. Bearzot, *L'epigramma come fonte storica in Pausania*, in *Studia classica Iobanni Tarditi oblata*, I, Milano 1995, 695-710; C. Zizza, *Le iscrizioni nella Periegesi di Pausania. Commento ai testi epigrafici*, Pisa 2006 with bibliography.

<sup>27</sup> The fragment is handed down by Harpocration and in a simplified form by Athenaeus (XIII 587 c): Harp. v 10 s.v. Νεμέας (= F 3 Preller). <Νεμέαδος> ἀυλητρίδος μνημονεύει Ὑπερείδης (F 142 Jensen) ἐν τῷ κατὰ Πατροκλέους, εἰ γνήσιος. ὁ δὲ Πολέμων ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς ἀκροπόλεως παρατίθεται ψήφισμα καθ' ὃ ἀπείρητο Αθήνησιν ὄνομα πεντετηρίδος τίθεσθαι δούλη ἢ ἀπελευθέρῃ ἢ πόρνη ἢ ἀυλητρίδι ἄξιον οὖν ἀπορῆσαι πῶς οὕτως ὠνομάζετο ἢ ἀυλητρίς. The courtesans' wealth at times was so great that votive offerings and monuments offered by them were not unusual. Herodotus first (II 135, 1-6) mentions Rhodopis's offer, which was still visible in his lifetime in the temple of Delphi. The book XIII of Athenaeus reports a long and detailed list of the monuments which could be linked with famous hetaerae such as Frine, Cottina, Lamia, Pithyonice. It is reasonable to assume that the *Periegete* from Ilion had seen an offering by Nemeades on the acropolis of Athens and referred to the problem of the hetaera's name. The reaction of Polemon and of the ancients to such names can be connected with the disappointment caused by votive monuments, which were offered either by hetaerae or in their honour, as is testified by Plutarch (*Pyth. orac.* 401 d), Athenaeus (XIII 591 b), Theopompus (*FGrHist* 115 F 253) and Dicearcos (fr. 21 Wehrli = Athenaeus XIII 594 f - 595 a). The decree, mentioned by Athenaeus and Harpocration, however, was probably effective only to some extent and for a short period of time. See H. Herter, *Il mondo delle cortigiane e delle prostitute*, in G. Arrigoni (a cura di), *Le donne in Grecia*, Bari 2008<sup>2</sup>, 378-379; S. Lape, *The Psychology of Prostitution in Aeschines' Speech against Timarchus*, in A. Chr. Faraone - L.K. McClure (Eds.), *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*, Chicago 2006, 145-146.

<sup>28</sup> Marcell. *Vit. Thuc.* 16-17 (= F 4 Preller). (16) Μὴ ἀγνοῶμεν δὲ τοῦτο ὅτι Ὀλορος <οὐκ Ὀρολος> ὁ πατὴρ αὐτῷ ἐστὶ, τῆς μὲν πρώτης συλλαβῆς τὸ ῶ ἐχούσης, τῆς δὲ δευτέρας τὸ λ̄ αὐτῆ γὰρ ἢ γραφή, ὡς καὶ Διδύμῳ (p. 322 Schmidt) δοκεῖ, ἡμάρτηται. ὅτι γὰρ Ὀλορός ἐστίν, ἢ στήλη δηλοῖ ἢ ἐπὶ τοῦ τάφου αὐτοῦ κειμένη, ἐνθα κεχάρακται «Θουκυδίδης Ὀλόρου Ἀλιμουσίος». (17) Πρὸς γὰρ ταῖς Μελιτίσι πύλαις καλουμέναις ἐστὶν ἐν Κοίλῃ τὰ καλούμενα Κιμώνια μνήματα, ἐνθα δεικνύται Ἡροδότου καὶ Θουκυδίδου τάφος. εὐρίσκειται <δὴ> δηλὸν ὅτι τοῦ Μιλτιάδου γένους ὦν. Ξένος γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἐκεῖ θάπτεται. Καὶ Πολέμων δὲ ἐν τῷ περὶ ἀκροπόλεως τούτοις μαρτυρεῖ ἐνθα καὶ <Τιμό>θεον υ<ιόν> αὐτῷ γεγενῆσθαι προσιστορεῖ. On the problem of Thucydides's father, known as Oloros/Orolos, which was already a point of discussion in Didymus's age, see L. Piccirilli, *Storie dello storico Tucidide*, Genova 1985, 89-90 with bibliography.

<sup>29</sup> Marcellin. *Vit. Thuc.* 28 (= F 5 Preller). Μὴ ἀγνοῶμεν δὲ ὅτι ἐγένοντο Θουκυδίδαι πολλοί, οὗτός τε ὁ Ὀλόρου παῖς, καὶ δεῦτερος δημαγωγός, Μιλησίῳ, ὃς καὶ Περικλεῖ διεπολιτεύσατο· τρίτος δὲ γένει Φαρσάλιος, οὗ μὲνηται Πολέμων ἐν τοῖς περὶ ἀκροπόλεως, φάσκων αὐτὸν εἶναι πατὸς Μένωνος· τέταρτος ἄλλος Θουκυδίδης ποιητής, τῶν δῆμων



ancient and modern scholars have argued about the place of his burial. Nobody before Polemon had ever asserted that the historian had been buried in Athens. Cratippus and Timaeus, according to what we learn from Marcellinus himself,<sup>30</sup> located his grave in Thrace and in Italy respectively, information which Didymus questions resolutely denying their reliability. It was Polemon who discovered the stele with the inscription Θουκυδίδης Ὀλόρου Ἀλμίουσιος at Koile and who assigned it to Thucydides, because of the name Oloros, king of Thrace, the region with which the historian had close relations. This information, presented in Polemon's work *On the Acropolis*, was afterwards handed down to later authors through Didymus, who rely on them.

Many other examples could be cited: among them the reference to the temple of Afrodite Lamia in Thebes (F 15), which Polemon mentions in his work *περὶ τῆς ποικίλης στοᾶς*, in connection with the *Stoa Poikile*, which the famous hetaera Lamia had built in Sicyon,<sup>31</sup> and the reference to the celebrations, the so-called *Theoxenia* in the *περὶ Σαμοθράκης* (F 36),<sup>32</sup> that were held in Delphi.

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Ἀχεροδούσιος, οὗ μέμνηται Ἀνδροτίων (FGrHist 324 F 57) ἐν τῇ Ἀτθίδι, λέγων εἶναι υἱὸν Ἀριστῶνος. See the same list in POxy XIII 1611 F 1 V, 101-120 and the one in Schol. Aristoph. *Acarn.* 703 a-d and *Vesp.* 947 b.

<sup>30</sup> Marcell. *Vit. Thuc.* 33 = Timaeus, FGrHist 566 F 136 (cf. Marcell. *Vit. Thuc.* 25 = FGrHist 566 F 135); Cratippus, FGrHist 64 F 2. U. von Wilamowitz, *Die Thukydideslegende*, «Hermes» XII (1877), 326-367 and H.T. Wade-Gery, *Thucydides the Son of Meseias. A Study of Periclean Policy*, «JHS» LII (1932), 222 claim that it was a case of coincidence in the names, while other scholars such as K.W. Krüger, *Untersuchungen über das Leben des Thucydides mit einer Beilage: Über den Demos Melite*, Berlin 1832, 59 (reprinted in Id., *Kritische Analekten*, I, Berlin 1863, 56) and G.F. Unger, *Die Nachrichten über Thukydides*, «Jahrbücher für klassische Philologie» CXXXIII (1886), 97-111 especially 104 argue that Timaeus was speaking about Thucydides, Melesias's son.

<sup>31</sup> Athen. VI 253 b (= F 15). Καὶ Θηβαῖοι δὲ κολακεύοντες τὸν Δημήτριον, ὡς φησι Πολέμων ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆς ποικίλης στοᾶς τῆς ἐν Σικυῶνι, ἰδρῶσαντο ναὸν Ἀφροδίτης Λαμίας. Polemon, inspired by the arcade of Sicyon, mentioned the divine honours paid to the famous hetaera Lamia, who was loved by Demetrius Poliorcetes. Among them he cited the temple of Afrodite Lamia, which the Thebans had built to show the adulation for Demetrius. See Geyer, *Lamia* (5), in *RE* XII 1, 1924, 546. On the honours paid to the Poliorcetes see *Dem.* 10-13; *Diod.* XX 46, 1-3; W. Dittenberger, *Demetrios* (3), in *RE* IV, 1900, 2774; O. Andrei - R. Scuderi (a cura di), *Plutarco, Vite parallele: Demetrio, Antonio*, Milano 1989, 150 with footnote 86; Virgilio, *Lancia*, cit., 66, 88-91.

<sup>32</sup> Athen. IX 372 a-b (= F 36 Preller). Πολέμων δ' ὁ περιηγητὴς ἐν τῷ περὶ Σαμοθράκης καὶ κιττήσαι φησι τῆς γηθυλλίδος τὴν Λητώ, γράφων οὕτως: «διατέτακται παρὰ Δελφοῖς τῇ θυσίᾳ τῶν Θεοξενίων, ὅς ἂν κομίση γηθυλλίδα μεγίστην τῇ Λητοῖ, λαμβάνειν μοῖραν ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης. ἐώρακα δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς οὐκ ἐλάττω γηθυλλίδα γογγυλίδος καὶ τῆς στρογγύλης ῥαφανίδος. (372 b) ἱστοροῦσι δὲ τὴν Λητώ κύουσαν τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα κιττήσαι γηθυλλίδος: διὸ δὴ τῆς τιμῆς τετυχηκέναι ταύτης». Polemon explains the Delphic custom, according to which the person who brought Latona the biggest spring onion during the festival of the *Theoxenia* could join the ritual meal. On the *Theoxenia* see F. Pfister, *Theoxenia*, in *RE* V A 2, 1934, 2256-2258; M.P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung mit Ausschluss der Attischen*, Darmstadt 1957<sup>2</sup>, 160-162; A.D. Nock, *The Cult of Heroes*, in *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, Oxford 1972, 582-602 (especially 585-587); D. Flückiger-Guggenheim, *Göttliche Gäste. Die Einkehr von Göttern und Heroen in der griechischen Mythologie*, Bern-New York 1984, 25-27 and *passim*; B. Kowalzig, *Xenia*, in *Der Neue Pauly* 12/2, 2003, 610-12; M.H. Jameson, *Theoxenia*, in R. Hägg (Ed.), *Ancient Greek Cult Practice from the Epigraphical Evidence*, Proceedings



Unlike Pausanias however, Polemon shows to have a universalistic vision of Greece, in accordance with the typical viewpoint of the Hellenistic age.<sup>33</sup> His works do not regard only the traditional classical Greece, to which most periegetic writings are dedicated, but also Sicily, Magna Graecia and the coast of Asia Minor. He argues the value the Greek presence had for these regions through a careful exposition of foundations, genealogies, mythical traditions, religious celebrations and cults.

What marks out Polemon's writings is their breadth and number in relation to the being examined area, so that it is possible to speak about a macroliterature for a microcosm. Antiquarian periegetic writers are certainly closer to Pausanias than to Hecataeus, but the systematic nature of their works and the fact that they concentrate on such restricted areas, for which they provide an exceptional amount of information, to some extent distance them from Pausanias. The latter, whose antiquarian interests are undeniable, devotes only one book to Attica and his work sets out to be a *Periegesis of Greece* rather than a collection of extremely specialized writings about particular areas. Polemon's activity can be included in the wider context of the local guides and of the inventorial practices connected with sanctuaries.<sup>34</sup> The word *περιηγητής* can be found with the same meaning as *ἐξηγητής*, to indicate someone whose task is to explain the cults and constructions of a town or of a holy place.<sup>35</sup> The local sphere of interest displayed in Polemon's works is no mere coincidence: his output is the fruit and expression of local history and he sets himself up as the local scholar expert of every place.<sup>36</sup> The list of the objects on display in the Treasury of the Metapontians in Olympia (F 22) recalls the inventory of the temples, that were periodically compiled and could draw on information about votive offerings, their weight, the material used, the exact location, the person who offered items, and the gods to which they were dedicated.<sup>37</sup> The information provided by F 22, which was reported by Polemon and handed down by Athenaeus, is particularly interesting because nothing has survived of the votive offerings, which were located in the Treasuries<sup>38</sup> and because it enables us to complete the information given by Pausanias, above all where he is rather cursory or sketchy. This is the

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of the Second International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult (22-24 November 1991), Stockholm 1994, 35-57; L. Canfora (a cura di), Ateneo, *I Deipnosofisti*, Roma 2001, 932 with footnotes 3 and 7.

<sup>33</sup> On Pausanias's vision of Greece see C. Bearzot, *La Grecia di Pausania. Geografia e cultura nella definizione del concetto di Hellás*, in *Geografia e storiografia nel mondo antico*, CISA 14, Milano 1988, 90-112 and U. Bultrighini, *La Grecia descritta da Pausania: trattazione diretta e trattazione indiretta*, «RFIC» CXVIII (1990), 282-305.

<sup>34</sup> De Angelis, *Pausania*, cit., 4-5.

<sup>35</sup> S. Reinach, *Exegetae*, in *DA II*, 1892, 883-886; Kern, *Ἐξηγηταί*, in *RE VI 2*, 1909, 1583-1584.

<sup>36</sup> G. Pasquali, *Polemone di Ilio*, in *Enciclopedia italiana*, XXVII, 1935, 617. Cf. Alcock - Cherry - Elsner, *Pausanias*, cit., 47.

<sup>37</sup> M. Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca*, II, *Epigrafi di carattere pubblico*, Roma 1970, 189-191. See also T. Linders, *The Purpose of Inventaires: a close Reading of the Delian Inventories Independence*, in D. Knöpfner (Éd.), *Comptes et inventaires dans la cité grecque*, Droz 1988, 37-47.

<sup>38</sup> A. Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, Darmstadt 1972, 163-166.



case of the Treasury of the Byzantians,<sup>39</sup> which Polemon describes in F 22 after the Treasury of the Metapontians and which Pausanias mentions very briefly, maybe because he had already referred to it in a passage, which has since been lost.<sup>40</sup> If we put together the information given by Polemon and Pausanias, it is possible to have a more complete account of the considerable number and of the nature of the objects placed in the Treasuries. In regard to the Treasury of the Metapontians, to be identified with the tenth building of the terrace,<sup>41</sup> Pausanias cites Endymion's statue made of ivory;<sup>42</sup> Polemon dwells on the sizeable quantity of precious vases that were to be found here. Similarly, regarding the impressive temple of Hera, Polemon mentions the various kinds of silverware and goldware, while Pausanias<sup>43</sup> describes statues and votive offerings. Because of the context the passage is taken from, it is obvious that his quotation refers largely to vases; we do not however know how he continued his description or whether he mentioned also the statues and the votive offerings seen by Pausanias.

In regard to Pausanias Polemon may have been one of the sources of his *Περιήγησις τῆς Ἑλλάδος*, in which towns and regions, being already described by Polemon in the second century B.C., are discussed in details. Because of the fragmentary nature of Polemon's works, it is not easy to say something sure and definitive about the relation of the two authors. After a first period, in which the critique affirmed a tight, fast literal, dependence of Pausanias on Polemon,<sup>44</sup> scholars today think that Pausanias must have been acquainted with Polemon, but preserved his own opinion and point of view.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>39</sup> On the Treasury of the Byzantians, to be perhaps identified with the foundations of the fifth building of the terrace, see K. Hermann, *Beobachtungen zur Schatzhaus-Architektur Olympias*, in *Neue Forschungen in griechischen Heiligtümern*, Tübingen 1976, 339-343; Id., *Die Schatzhäuser in Olympia*, in W. Coulson - H. Kyrieleis (Eds.), *Proceedings of an International Symposium on the Olympic Games*, Athens 1992, 29; G. Maddoli - M. Nafissi - V. Saladino (a cura di), *Pausania, L'Elide e Olimpia*, Milano 1999, 321-323.

<sup>40</sup> Paus. VI 19, 8-9.

<sup>41</sup> See Mallwitz, *Olympia*, cit., 174; A. Mallwitz - H.V. Hermann, *Die Funde aus Olympia. Ergebnisse hundertjähriger Ausgrabungstätigkeit*, Athens 1980, 148; A. Moustaka, *Grossplastik aus Ton in Olympia*, «*OlFor*» XXII (1993), 122-124, 159.

<sup>42</sup> Paus. VI 19, 11. Endymion was a mythological figure who played an important role in the myths concerning the origin of competitions. His burial was located at the far end of the stadium (Paus. VI 20, 9). See A. Mallwitz, *Das Stadion*, «*OlBer*» VIII (1967), 21 ff.; T. Scheer, *Endymion*, in *Der Neue Pauly*, 3, 1997, 1027; Maddoli - Nafissi - Saladino, *Elide*, cit., 326. Cf. M. Giangiulio, *Le città di Magna Grecia e Olimpia in età arcaica*, in A. Mastrocinque (a cura di), *I grandi santuari della Grecia e l'Occidente*, Trento 1993, 105 ff.

<sup>43</sup> Paus. V 16, 1 ff.

<sup>44</sup> Wilamowitz, *Die Thukydideslegende*, cit., 345-47; A. Boetticher, *Olympia, das Fest und seine Stätte: nach den Berichten der Alten und den Ergebnissen der Deutschen Ausgrabungen*, Berlin 1883, 7-8.

<sup>45</sup> Gurlitt, *Über Pausanias*, cit., 179 and *passim*; Frazer, *Pausania's Description*, cit., LXXXIII-XC; C. Robert, *Pausanias als Schriftsteller: Studien und Beobachtungen*, Berlin 1909, 68; Pasquali, *Die Schriftstellerische Form*, cit., 222; O. Regenbogen, *Pausanias*, in *RE Suppl.* VIII, 1956, 1059-1060; Beschi - Musti, *L'Attica*, cit., XXXI-XXXIII; Chr. Habicht, *Pausanias' Guide to ancient Greece*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1998<sup>2</sup>, 165-71; Jacquemin, *Pausanias*, cit., 286-291; W. Hutton, *Describing Greece. Landscape and Literature in the Periegesis of Pausanias*, Cambridge 2005, 251-63; 303.



The distance between Polemon and Pausanias, whose work can neither be easily classified as a periegetic writing nor as purely antiquarian, help us to understand how literary categories, while necessary, sometimes represent a limit. In some cases it is also the very small number of fragments that have come down to us, that makes it impossible to include a work in one category rather than in another.<sup>46</sup>

Polemon's periegetic writings do not contain any explicit reference to historical events. In actual fact he does not set out to write a political history, but even though we have no evidence it is reasonable to suppose that through the usual technique of *excursus* he did in fact pay attention to the events that led to the dedications of monuments and votive offerings. The reference to the *anathema* effectively involves the recalling of historical events. Both Herodotus and Pausanias mention, for instance, the bronzed quadriga dedicated by the Athenians as the tenth part of the victory over Boeotians and Chalcidians (506 B.C.).<sup>47</sup> Herodotus also makes reference to the epigraph inscribed under the offering, which recalls the events connected with the dedication. Offerings and inscriptions in this way preserve information and names essential for the historical reconstruction.<sup>48</sup>

Painting as well were "living part of history":<sup>49</sup> their political function had been well known from the time of Philip II and Alexander the Great, who used them as an instrument to spread a particular image of the king.<sup>50</sup> An example of painting for the sake of propaganda, mentioned by Polemon, is the painting produced by the school of Melanthios and Apelles, which represents Aristratos, the tyrant of Sicyon at the time of Philip II, near the Chariot of Victory (F 13).<sup>51</sup> When Aratos freed the town from tyranny in 251 B.C., he ordered it to be destroyed together with everything that might remind people of the tyrants of the previous age, but Nealkes managed to dissuade him, by replacing the figure of Aristratos with a palm-tree.

Further evidence of the connection between history and antiquary is provided by Polemon's work ἀναγραφή τῶν ἐπωνύμων τῶν δήμων καὶ φυλῶν: dealing with the eponyms of certain tribes such as the Antigonides, the

<sup>46</sup> Regarding the difficulty of assigning a literary work to a specific genre on the basis of formal laws and genre rules see L.E. Rossi, *I generi letterari e le loro leggi scritte e non scritte nelle letterature classiche*, «BICS» XVIII (1971), 69-94.

<sup>47</sup> Hdt. V 77; Paus. I 28, 2. See Beschi - Musti, *L'Attica*, cit., 367 with bibl.; G. Nenci (a cura di), Erodoto, *Le Storie*, V, *La rivolta della Ionia*, Milano 1994, 272-75.

<sup>48</sup> Two inscribed bases have come down to us: one epigraph belongs to the end of the VI century B.C.; the other one, that goes back to the age of Pericles, carries, in inverted form, the couplets quoted by Herodotus (V 77). See *IG<sup>2</sup> I 394*.

<sup>49</sup> See P. Moreno, *Pittura greca. Da Polignoto ad Apelle*, Milano 1987, 16.

<sup>50</sup> Moreno, *ibid.*, 133.

<sup>51</sup> Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* X 10, 15 (= F 13 Preller). Ἀπὸ Ωγύγου τοίνυν ἐπὶ Κῦρον, ὅποσα ἀπὸ Μωσέως ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον, ἔτη ,ασλζ'. Καὶ Ἑλλήνων δέ τινες ἱστοροῦσι κατὰ τοὺς αὐτοὺς χρόνους γενέσθαι Μωσέα· Πολέμων μὲν ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἱστοριῶν λέγων· «Ἐπὶ Ἀπίδος τοῦ Φορωνέως μοῖρα τοῦ Αἰγυπτίῳ στρατοῦ ἐξέπεσεν Αἰγύπτου, οἱ ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ καλουμένη Συρία οὐ πόρρω Ἀραβίας ᾤκησαν», αὐτοὶ δηλονότι οἱ μετὰ Μωσέως.



Demetriades and the Attalides means also referring as well to the historical individuals of Antigonos Gonata, Demeterios Polyorcetes and Attalus I. When the Periegete mentions the thirtieth day of the month (F 7),<sup>52</sup> which was called Demetriades by the Athenians, he was perhaps inspired by the Demetriades tribe and it leads us to think there may have been an *excursus* on the Macedonian king and particularly on the tributes he received.

Although Polemon may not be considered by modern scholars to be a historian, *Suida* calls him ιστορικός and his work is defined as ιστορία in two fragments (F 11, F 13). If antiquarian research may not envisage the chronological exposition of military events, its link with history is on occasions perfectly clear. His work is, in fact, a form of research and bears witness to different aspects of Greek civilization, albeit without rigorous and systematic references to political events.<sup>53</sup> Such writings were addressed to a broad, unspecialized public and were very popular in Hellenistic times. The historiography of Timaeus, Ephorus and Theopompus took an interest in the culture of the barbarian peoples, which went beyond a merely political and military viewpoint and which included themes of cultural history, that were much appreciated by the public.<sup>54</sup>

The specifically political historiography like that of Thucydides and Polybius was, on the other hands, addressed to a restricted group of readers. The authors were well aware of this as Thucydides makes clear in a passage from the ἀρχαιολογία: «The lack of a fantastic element in these facts will make them appear, perhaps, less pleasant to the listener, but if those who are intent on discovering the truth of past or of future events (which will be the same or similar on account of human nature) find my work useful, than that is all I wish for. It will be something of eternal importance rather than a mere display of skill».<sup>55</sup> In confirmation of this passage we find the words of Dionysius of Halicarnassus: «Those who can really understand Thucydides are a small minority and even these are unable to understand some of his passages without a linguistic commentary».<sup>56</sup> On the contrary antiquarian writings had a large circulation and Polemon had in mind and knew he was writing for a broad public, albeit of a certain cultural level.

<sup>52</sup> Harp. ε 59 s.v. ἔνη καὶ νέα (= F 7 Preller). Ὑπερείδης ἐν τῷ Πρὸς Ὑγιαίνοντα τὴν ὑφ' ἡμῶν τριακάδα καλουμένην ἔνην καὶ νέαν καλοῦσιν Ἀθηναῖοι ἀπὸ τοῦ τὴν τελευταίαν ἔχειν τοῦ προτέρου μηνὸς καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ ὑστέρου. Πολέμων δέ φησιν ὅτι ἐκάλεσάν ποτε αὐτὴν Ἀθηναῖοι Δημητριάδα ἐπὶ τιμῇ Δημητρίου τοῦ Μακεδόνα.

<sup>53</sup> See A. Momigliano, *L'origine della ricerca antiquaria*, in Id., *Le radici classiche della storiografia moderna*, Firenze 1992, 59-83. The author defines as antiquarian «that kind of man who is interested in historical events, even if he is not interested in history» (p. 59).

<sup>54</sup> E. Gabba, *True History and False History in Classical Antiquity*, «JRS» LXXI (1981), 50-62 (translated into Italian *Storia vera e storia falsa nell'antichità classica*, in Id., *Cultura classica e storiografia moderna*, Bologna 1995, 11-37). See also A. Momigliano, *Tradition and the Classical Historian*, «H&T» XI, 3 (1972), 279-293 (reprinted in Id., *Quinto contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*, Roma 1975, 14-31); Id., *The Historians of the Classical World and their Audiences: some suggestions*, «ASNS» ser. 3, VIII (1980), 59-75 (reprinted in Id., *Sesto contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*, Roma 1980, 361-376); T.P. Wisemann, *Clio's Cosmetics. Three Studies in Greco-roman Literature*, Leicester 1979, 149.

<sup>55</sup> Thuc. I 22, 4.

<sup>56</sup> Dionys. Hal. *De Thuc.* 51.



In conclusion, Polemon's works stand out in the periegetic output because they are extremely useful to understand various aspects of the Greek civilization, since they are rich in information that is not very easy to be found in other authors. Leaving aside the differences that exist between the works of Polemon, Pausanias and others, what is important is that we can make out an ideal thread, that binds the Ionian *ἱστορία* with the period of the great flowering of the Hellenistic times, the imperial age of Pausanias and the writers that succeeded them.

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