

ROME, TARENTUM AND THE DEFECTION OF THE LUCANIAN LEAGUE, 326-298 B.C.*

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The crisis started in 327 B.C. at Naples had a great importance for the development of the relationships between the communities of Italy during the last decays of the IVth century B.C. This led to the outbreak of the Second Samnite War, which allowed Rome to establish its power over the middle area of the peninsula, after twenty years of fights. In the same time, the incidents which happened at Naples in 327-326 B.C. represented the opportunity to define some new systems of agreements, very important for the balance of forces in Italy.

The development of the crisis of Naples was described to us due to two versions, preserved by Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. The first historian presents the following evolution of the events: in 327 B.C., the Greeks from Naples and Palaeopolis committed hostile acts against the Romans from Falernum and from Campania and they refused to discuss the possible repairs which could peaceably solve the situation; facing such an attitude, the Romans began military operations against the city, entrusting the leadership to the consul Q. Publilius Philo; the other consul, L. Cornelius Lentulus, with an army, was charged to prevent a possible Samnite intervention in favour of the Greek city (8.22.7-10); in spite of these measures, 2.000 soldiers from Nola and 4.000 Samnites managed to enter the city by intimidation rather than request (8.23.1-2); in 326 B.C., the Lucanians and the Apulians concluded treaties with Rome, promising soldiers and weapons (8.25.3); due to the siege length, the privations implicated by the isolation of the city and the numerous Samnite presence, some of the Naples inhabitants decided to come to a diplomatic solution with Rome, although there were some rumours about the arrival of some supports from Tarentum (8.25.7-8); after the negotiations with the proconsul Q. Publilius Philo, the Samnite and Nolan troops had been evacuated outside the city; this action proved to have

* This paper work had been made during the training stage financed by the Alexander von Humboldt and Fritz Thyssen foundations during the summer of 2006, at „Seminar für Alte Geschichte“, Bonn University. We express our profound gratitude towards the two foundations and towards prof. dr. Gerhard Wirth and prof. dr. Vasile Lica, without support of which this training period would not have been possible.

useful consequences, because, in the same year, Naples concluded a treaty with Rome which preserved its independence (8.25.9-8.26.7).

The version of the crisis of Naples preserved in *The Roman Antiquities* of Dionysius offers a different view upon the events happened in 327-326 B.C.: the inhabitants from Naples committed hostile acts against the Campanians who were in friendly relationship with the Romans; the Roman ambassadors asked Greeks not to bring damages to the subjects of Rome and if they have any litigation they should solve it by discussing and not by war; but privately the delegates of the Roman Republic were negotiating with the weighty men of Naples the city revolt under the Samnites and its entering in good relationships with Rome (15.5.1); in the same time, ambassadors were arriving from Tarentum, refined men who had traditional relationships with the people of Naples; together with them, delegates from Nola advised the inhabitants not to make any agreement with Rome and not to abandon the Samnite friendship; the Greeks were advised not to give up in the case of open warfare with Rome, because the Samnites would send help and Tarentum would put a strong fleet to their disposal (15.5.2-3); the members of the council could not manage to take a decision and thus the debates took place in the assembly of the people; influenced by the Samnites representatives, who promised the retrocession of Cumae which was occupied by them two generations ago, the people send the Roman ambassadors back home without any answer, thus beginning the warfare (15.6.1-5).

Among other variations of details, both versions result in the fact that four „actors“ actively participated in climbing over the pressures between 327-326 B.C. In the main foreground there are Rome and Naples which were on the edge of warfare, but in the secondary ground the texts present two other powers interested in the development of the crisis, the Samnite League with its allies from Nola and the Dorian colony of Tarentum.

The participants' grouping in a coherent formula and the explanation of the role played by each and everyone in the development of the events does not represent an easy target. Either direct or indirect, the Tarentum's participation to the incidents that took place around the Greek city from Campania had been disputed by some researchers inclined to believe that the Tarentine intervention could only be an anticipation of the strained relationships between Rome and the Dorian colony of the following decades¹. If we had in view only the Livian paragraphs, than we might have doubts concerning the Tarentine appearance in the crisis of Naples. The text of Livy includes enough elements that indicate, in all likelihood, hidden behind the narration, an annalistic source which distorted the events to Rome's advantage. The responsibility of the conflict is assigned to the Greeks who committed acts of violence against the Romans from Campania and Falernum and refused to accept a diplomatic solution to end the crisis². In their turn, the Samnites succeeded in bringing troops within the city more by intimidation and pressures and not necessarily by the inhabitants' request³. These

¹ DE SANCTIS 1907, 299.

² Livy 8.22.7.

³ Livy 8.23.1.

examples of the Livian version probably represent traces of the annalistic intervention upon the description of the events, meant to emphasize the ethics of the position adopted by the Romans in 327-326 B.C. They can undoubtedly be submitted to a critical examination.

But the exclusion of the Tarentine intervention cannot find arguments strong enough in the literary tradition that preserved the events of the years 327-326 B.C. If we only study the text of Livy, then the denial of the Tarentine participation would be taken into consideration. But the other version of the crisis, preserved in the work of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, offers another perspective upon the events and Tarentum appears as well in the narration of the Greek historian. Dionysius gathered many of the episodes of the history of the Roman Republic from the annalistic literature but the investigated issue seems to count among the exceptions. In accordance to his variant, the Greeks of Naples did not commit hostile acts against the Romans in close proximity, as Livy is describing, but against the Campanians⁴. During the negotiations between Rome and Naples, the Roman ambassadors were having private „underground“ talks with the important members of the community, in order to take out the Samnite influence upon the city⁵. These two elements of Dionysius's version rise question marks upon the author's source of inspiration. Would an annalist really have recognized that the Roman delegates negotiated secretly and simultaneously with the official talks in order to spread the Roman influence upon the city? The most likely answer is not and thus it makes us question about the annalistic source of the paragraphs elaborated by the Greek historian about the crisis of Naples. Other short descriptions seem as well to be unknown by the annalistic horizon. The source of Dionysius had been able to inform him about the existence of a council and a public assembly at Naples which represents specific institutions of a Greek city. In accordance with the description of Dionysius, the strained situation appeared in 327 B.C. had been first discussed in the council, without any conclusion, and then the decision had been moved in the assembly of the people⁶.

The elements emphasized above have little chances to be found in a work elaborated by an annalist. These component parts of the narration of Dionysius prove the existence of a Greek source as informative base for the episode of the crisis from 327-326 B.C. The political involvement scheme of the four actors, Naples, Rome, the Samnite League and Tarentum probably arises from the same literary source and there are insufficient reasons to dwell upon it with an excessive doubt⁷.

From our point of view, Tarentum was one of the powers that participated to the evolution of the crisis of Naples from 327-326 B.C. Its presence is clearly certified by both of Dionysius and Livy, and political and strategical explanations

⁴ Dionysius 15.5.1.

⁵ Dionysius 15.5.1.

⁶ Dionysius 15.6.1-2.

⁷ HOFFMANN 1934, 21sq., 131sq.; FREDERIKSEN 1984, 208sq.; OAKLEY 1998, 640-642; FORSYTHE 2005, 293-294.

may be discussed in order to justify the intervention⁸.

There is no doubt that Naples and Tarentum had connections before 327 B.C. The Italiote League seems to be the structure within which there have been developed the previous relations. The Greek league of the cities from Italy had been established around 396 B.C., in order to be able to withstand against the aggressiveness of the Syracusan tyrant Dionysius the Elder and against the attacks of the Italic populations in close proximity⁹. In the IVth century B.C., after the going out of Dionysius, there have been certified as the members of the league the cities of Croton, Thurii, Metapontum, Naples, Tarentum and Heraklea. Probably around the half of the century, during the the greatest flourishing of the Dorian city under the leadership of Archytas, the headquarters of the federal organism moved from the Cape of Lacinium, from the territory of Croton, to Heraklea, colony of Tarentum¹⁰. The settle of the league's capital at Heraklea, a city under the direct influence of Tarentum, shows that the great Dorian colony succeeded to establish itself as the leadership of the Italiote federal structure.

Going back to the crisis of Naples, it is hard to believe that Tarentum together with the members of the Italiote League passively assisted to the convulsions that were about to put the city under the Roman control. The two versions that we have to our disposal only present the Tarentine reaction to the incidents that took place between 327-326 B.C., but this focus can easily be understood if we take into account the position of Tarentum within the league. The danger that threatened Naples was more likely to be the subject of the common debates between the members of the Italiote alliance¹¹. The sending of a military expedition to Campania was definitely not an easy decision due to the distance and the possible implications of the intervention. The long and contradictory debates, as well as the necessary time for the equipping of the army and of the fleet that were about to leave to Naples, all these represent suppositional elements that might help us to understand however the reason why the help of the Greek league did not manage to come in the right time¹².

As the leader of the Italiotes, the Dorian colony had probably been the one

⁸ The involvement of Tarentum had been accepted by MOMMSEN 1987, 213; CIACERI, 1927, 20-21; PAIS 1928, 134; HOFFMANN 1934, 22sq.; WUILLEUMIER 1939, 89-90; AFZELIUS 1943, 162; FREDERIKSEN 1984, 208; BRAUER 1986, 73-74; LOMAS 1993, 46sq.; OAKLEY 1998, 680-682.

⁹ The set up of the Italiote League: CIACERI 1932, 413; the Greek alliance from Italy already existed in 393 B.C. when Dionysius the Elder besieged Rhegium (*ibidem*); see also WUILLEUMIER 1939, 64, BRAUER 1986, 43-44.

¹⁰ Data concerning the history of the league and its structure: CIACERI 1932, 436-437, BRAUER 1986, 55, LOMAS 1993, 46.

¹¹ LOMAS 1993, 40 noticed the fact that there was a confusion in sources concerning the federal decisions and the individual initiatives of the league's members; from this point of view, it is hard to tell which actions refer only to the Tarentine affaires and what decisions resulted after the commun consultations.

¹² The relationships between Naples and Tarentum developed not only within the political sphere but also in the economic field. It is possible that Tarentum would have issued coins after the weight standard of some coins from Naples. The dating of this currency issue with „Campanian influences“ is uncertain (see FREDERIKSEN 1984, 208 sq., LOMAS 1993, 202, n. 38).

that informed the Greeks of Naples that the other cities were not indifferent concerning their fate and assured them about receiving help. Another reason for which Tarentum took over the mission of encouraging the Greek resistance at Naples, facing the war with Rome, is suggested in the text of Dionysius. At Naples arrived delegates of Tarentum, selected among the elite of the city, who had traditional relationships of hospitality with the citizens of the Greek city from the Campanian coast¹³. This detail plunges an interesting view upon the relationships developed between Tarentum and Naples before 327 B.C. and explains once again the reason why the powerful Dorian city of south had been very active diplomatically during the crisis.

In 326 B.C., after one year of siege, Naples concluded with Rome a treaty in favourable terms. Although the situation was politically solved without dramatic consequences for the Greek community, the crisis of Naples however represented an essential point for the further development of the balance of power from Italy. The premises of the Second Samnite War are found in the incidents that took place at Naples in the years 327-326 B.C. The war stained with blood the middle part of Italy till 304 B.C. but, in the same time, the strong efforts of the two adversaries determined the spreading of the war's consequences towards the south of the peninsula. From another view, the intervention of Tarentum at Naples, as well as the entering of the Greek city from Campania under Rome's protection, represent the starting points of some Roman-Tarentine relationships that had been very strained during the last years of the IVth century B.C. and the first decades of the following century. The Italiote League had lost an important member and Tarentum felt the loss of the city from its influence like a bad stroke. From this moment, Rome and Tarentum suspected each other and the political game of the alliances developed in the peninsula proves that both powers were trying to be as cautious as possible¹⁴.

On this background, the diplomatic approaches were considerable intense. As early as 326 B.C., at the beginning of the Second Samnite War, according to Livy, the Lucanians and the Apulians concluded treaties with Rome¹⁵. As it was to be expected, these diplomatic connections made up the subject of some contradictory debates in the modern literature.

The evolution of the Roman-Lucanian relationships until the end of the Third Samnite War is marked by some disputed episodes: in 326 B.C., as we already noted, Livy mentioned an alliance between the two powers¹⁶; over only one year,

¹³ Dionysius 15.5.2.

¹⁴ The Roman-Tarentine strains might have older sources, during the presence of Alexander the Molossian in the south of Italy. In 331 B.C., the king expanded his area of action towards Poseidonia. This context of events led to a treaty between Rome and Alexander (Livy 8.17.10-11; Justin 12.2.12), terms of which did not preserved. It is possible that this diplomatic act would have been received as an hostile attitude by the Tarentines, who were in conflict with the king because his trying to assert himself independently in the Italic area.

¹⁵ Livy 8.25.2-3: *et alia nova nihil tum animo tale agitantibus accesserunt auxilia. Lucani atque Apuli, quibus gentibus nihil ad eam diem cum Romano populo fuerat, in fidem venerunt, arma virosque ad bellum pollicentes; foedere ergo in amicitiam accepti.*

¹⁶ Livy 8.25.2-3.

this treaty had been broken due to the Tarentine incitements¹⁷; in 317 B.C., the author from Patavium describes in detail a Roman military expedition to Nerulum, in Lucania¹⁸; after the Samnites' attack over the Lucanians, in order to bring them about within the antiRoman coalition, in 298 B.C., the Lucanian League concluded an alliance with Rome¹⁹. The picture resulted from the connection of all these episodes must be unitary treated in order to be able to be understood and explained. From our point of view, Tarentum was doubtlessly not a negligible element in the history of Roman-Lucanian political relationships.

G. de Sanctis, E. Salmon and S. Oakley denied the authenticity of the treaty signed by Rome with the Lucanian League during 326 B.C.²⁰. The rejection's motivation as an approach, resembles to the one proposed occasionally in order to deny the Tarentine intervention at Naples: the alliance between Rome and Lucania represents only an anticipation of the diplomatic relationships developed between these two powers at the beginning of the following century. During the whole period of the Great Samnite War, as the Italian historian shows, the Roman forces did never convey transit through Lucania to get to Apulia, where a second battlefield was opened. When the Rome's troops had to move towards Apulia, they always had to march through the central area of the Appennines Mountains, covering the territories of those small Sabellian federations from the north of the Samnite territory²¹. E. Salmon added to G. de Sanctis's observations another possible explanation of an antidating alliance between Rome and Lucania in 326 B.C.: the annalistic tradition or Livy probably mixed up the volscian community of Luca with the Lucanian League²².

In the literary tradition there cannot be found a single mention about a Roman army covering the Lucanian League's territories towards Apulia. Apparently, this stillness of sources seems to be a strong argument for supporting the assumption of G. de Sanctis. Still, if we wish to make an accurate assessment of the Roman-Lucanian relationships during the Samnite Wars, then we have to admit that the material of the literary sources is only a scheme of these kind of relationships. Thus, from Livy for instance, we learn of the fact that in 326 B.C. the two powers concluded a treaty and then, during the next year, the relationships had been broken due to a Tarentine intervention, but there were resumed in 298 B.C., on the eve of the Third Samnite War. Only these brief pieces of information can not tell us for certain what was negotiated in 326 B.C. – if we accept the contacts mentioned by the historian from Patavium – or what were the terms of the alliance concluded in 298 B.C.

Among the modern researchers who placed the beginning of the Roman-Lucanian relationship in 326 B.C., the majority of them estimated that we might

¹⁷ Livy 8.27.6-11.

¹⁸ Livy 9.20.9-10.

¹⁹ Livy 10.11.11-10.12.2; Dionysius 17.1.1-17.2.2.

²⁰ DE SANCTIS 1907, 303; SALMON 1967, 215; OAKLEY 1998, 651.

²¹ DE SANCTIS 1907, 303; see also PAIS 1928, 137, CIACERI 1932, 21-22, SCULLARD 1951, 109, GIANNELLI 1974, 354-355, 362.

²² SALMON 1967, 215.

speak, in general terms, about the concluding of an alliance²³. On the other hand, concerning the problem of balance of forces from the central area and the meridional region of Italy, we consider that it is essential to establish, even hypothetical, if this alliance was motivated and against whom it was directed.

One of the major consequences of the crisis of Naples was probably represented by the rapprochement between Tarentum and the Samnite League. The reasons for this agreeable stand are connecting with the events happened at Naples, in which the two powers had been involved. Beginning with 327 B.C., the Samnite League was at war with Rome and the operations started the next year, in the Liris Valley and Campania. The agreement concluded between Rome and Naples in 326 B.C. was felt by Tarentum as a stroke against its personal interests and it perceived it as an intervention within its own sphere of influence. The juncture of the years 327-326 B.C. was made to establish a new polarisation of the Italic states, on the basis of some specific interests. Due to solving of the crisis of Naples in favour of the Roman Republic, Tarentum and the Samnite League had reasons to consider Rome a common target in their foreign policy as early as 327-326 B.C.²⁴. We do not know for certain if the two powers interested in Rome's fighting concluded a formal alliance, but surely the new context of the peninsula could bring in the Tarentines and the Samnites in a close relationship²⁵.

Rome had to find an urgent diplomatic answer to this coalition. The reinforcement of the Samnite and Tarentine relationships encouraged the extension of the Roman political relations in the southern extremity of Italy. The Lucanian League had no reason to encourage the contacts between the Dorian colony and Samnium, if we take into account the warlike relationships developed with Tarentum along its history before the Great Samnite War. The Dorian colony proved to be a strong opponent for the Lucanian League tempted to spread itself on the account of the Greek cities from Magna Graecia²⁶. If Tarentum and Samnium have found common references in the foreign policy

²³ MOMMSEN 1987, 214; HOFFMANN 1934, 46 sq.; AFZELIUS 1943, 161; HEURGON 1973, 208; FREDERIKSEN 1984, 208; BRAUER 1986, 73-74; LOMAS 1993, 47.

²⁴ MOMMSEN 1987, 214; HOFFMANN 1934, 46sq.; AFZELIUS 1943, 162.

²⁵ According to A. Afzelius and M. Frederiksen, the beginning of the Samnite-Tarentine approaching can be chronologically placed before the incidents from Naples. In 334-331 B.C., as a request of the Italiote League, the Epirot king Alexander the Molossian fought in the south of the peninsula against the Italics who put in danger the existence of the Greek cities. The general brought from Greece respected at first his duties and acted in the name of those who called him; then, the Epirot king tried to create a personal domain in the meridional part of Italy and conflicted with Tarentum and the other Greeks. Eventually, his former protégés could freely breathe: Alexander was defeated and killed in the battle of Pandosia by the Lucanians and by the Bruttians, in 330 B.C. (Livy 8.23.4-8.23.14, Justin 12.2.1-12.2.14.). In the context of the divergences with the king, Tarentum understood that the Samnites could have been dangerous enemies for the ambitious general who had to be eliminated (AFZELIUS 1943, 162; FREDERIKSEN 1984, 208).

²⁶ We mention here only one episode of the near past: the Lucanians were in conflict with Tarentum and the allies of the city during the first stage of the expedition of Alexander the Molossian in Italy; beginning with 331 B.C., the Lucanians together with the Bruttians opposed to the king's tendencies of creating a domain in the south of the peninsula (Justin 12.2.1-12.2.14, Livy 8.24.4-14).

beginning with the year 327 B.C., then we do not have many reasons to doubt that Lucania had been troubled by this rapprochement and searched in its turn to respond by an alliance. In the restless context of 327-326 B.C., Rome proved to be the best partner of the Lucanian Federation in order to conclude an alliance that would answer to the new external needs, due to its war with the Samnite League and the strained relationships with Tarentum.

Thus, there is not any strong reason to allow the denial of the Roman-Lucanian alliance recorded by Livy for the year 326 B.C. Its existence seems natural within the new alignment of the Italic powers, generated in the context of the incidents from Naples²⁷. On the same background, we may hypothetically reconstitute the content of this treaty, although the historian from Patavium notes only its contraction²⁸.

As we pointed out above, the Lucanian Federation was harmed by the rapprochement between the Samnite League and Tarentum. This was a fear reason but probably not strong enough to begin a war against the Samnites. The main Lucanian's concern was to continue to stay in the south of Italy and its feared opponent was Tarentum which exerted the hegemony upon the Greek cities from Magna Graecia. The dissensions between the Dorian colony and Rome could have been handled by the Lucanian League, at the beginning of the Second Samnite War, in order to attract the Roman Republic in its anti-Tarentine policy. Such an approach of its interests in the southern area became convenient for Rome as well. The war from Samnium had just begun and probably between 327-326 B.C. none of the Roman politicians did not dare to debate upon the final result or its length. In order that the chances of victory would increase, it was obviously that Samnium had to be isolated from its potential upholders. In the south of the peninsula, such an important mission could be accomplished by the Lucanian League which was able to keep Tarentum to distance from the Italic conflict through a permanent threat.

This appears to be the picture of the political relationships between the Italic states that took contact with the Second Samnite War. On its basis, we may suppose that the Roman-Lucanian alliance from 326 B.C. had first been conceived against Tarentum, and contained terms concerning the possibilities of a common action in front of the danger. Still, if the text of the treaty had contained articles concerning the league from Samnium, there would probably have been arranged in a more defensive formula, following that Rome would support Lucania only in the case of a Samnite attack. Such an organization spared the troops of the Lucanian League from the presence on the Samnite front but Rome got an ally which had all the interest to be vigilant about the southern extremity of Italy and

²⁷ After the expression of FREDERIKSEN 1984, 209: "The main alignments of the Italian powers are clearly visible".

²⁸ The fact that Livy recorded the treaties without any accuracy can also be proved by other situations: concerning the Roman-Carthaginian treaty from 306 B.C., he only mentions that it had been renewed for the third time (Livy 9.43.26) while the peace from 304 B.C., between Rome and the Samnite League, is presented as a renewal of the old Roman-Samnite alliance (Livy 9.45.4); both cases urged to prudence and the Livian descriptions must not be taken literally.

about Tarentum especially²⁹.

The alliance's consequences, recorded by Livy in the narration referring to the year 326 B.C., offer support for this interpretation. During this year, in accordance with the Livian narration, it broke out the war between Tarentum and Rome. According with Livy, the Tarentines were disturbed by the entering of Naples under Roman control, they feared of the Rome's alliances from Apulia and Lucania, they felt the war approaching the city's gates and they would rather had the Romans as opponents rather than masters³⁰. Tarentum is not being pointed out as a direct participant to the open warfare during the Second Samnite War, but this absence could be explained by the existence of the Roman-Lucanian alliance. Having an ally of Rome in its flank, we may suppose that Tarentum hesitated to directly interfere in the operations from the center and the south-east of Italy. In exchange, its only option was to encourage the Samnite efforts and to hope that these ones would obtain the victory.

The next move concerning the Roman-Lucanian relationships is a naive exploitation of the Tarentine hostility by the annalistic historical tradition. In 325 B.C., some young Lucanians, incited by the Tarentines, claimed they were beaten with rods at the consuls' demands, on the reason that they entered the Roman camp³¹. After contradictory debates upon this incident, the Lucanians decided the breaking off of the treaty with Rome and the renewal of the alliance with the Samnite League³². From our point of view, the incident has little chances of having a real historical nucleus³³, although it had been some attempts in order to rehabilitate this event³⁴.

The third episode of the relationships between Romans and Lucanians was sometimes used as an argument against the historicity of the alliance of 326 B.C. In the context of 317 B.C., Livy mentions the extension of the military campaigns towards south, in Lucania, where the Roman troops captured Nerulum, locality placed close to the Greek colony of Thurii³⁵. Due to this single recording, some historians were tempted to assert that the Lucanian Federation shared the

²⁹ FREDERIKSEN 1984, 208; LOMAS 1993, 46 foreseen in the alliance of 326 B.C. an antiSamnite project.

³⁰ Livy 8.27.1-3: *Aliud subinde bellum cum alterius orae Graecis exortum. Namque Tarentini, cum rem Palaeopolitanam vana spe auxilii aliquamdiu sustinuissent, postquam Romanos urbe potitos acceperere, velut destituti ac non qui ipsi destituissent, increpare Palaeopolitanos, ira atque invidia in Romanos furere, eo etiam magis, quod Lucanos et Apulos – nam utraque eo anno societas coepta est – in fidem populi Romani venisse allatum est: quippe propemodum perventum ad se esse, iamque in eo rem fore, ut Romani aut hostes aut domini habendi sint.*

³¹ Livy 8.27.6-9.

³² Livy 8.27.9-10.

³³ It was rejected by HOFFMANN 1934, 49 and OAKLEY 1998, 685-686; WUILLEUMIER 1939, 90-91: the Lucanians incitement to cancel the treaty with Rome represents a tricky way of accusing the Tarentines and of hiding the failure of the Roman diplomacy who was trying to isolate Samnium.

³⁴ LOMAS 1993, 49: Tarentum sustained the antiRoman party from Lucania in order to protect its own interests.

³⁵ Livy 9.20.9-10. During the same expedition, the Roman army also captured Forentum, characterised by Livy 9.20.9 as „strong fortress from Apulia“; the position of this fortress seems to indicate that it was still on the Lucanian territory (see DE SANCTIS 1907, 320, SALMON 1967, 231).

Samnite side during the war³⁶. The risks of a demonstration in the favour of the reality of this expedition were not assumed by all the researches and further on J. Beloch proposed a solution approved by E. Salmon³⁷. The consuls of 317 B.C. had been C. Junius Bubulcus and Q. Aemilius Barbula, recorded also by Livy, as well as in *Fasti Consulares*³⁸. Both of them are presented by Livy having military activities in Apulia, but the lack of some separated areas of operation is not doubtful concerning the year 317 B.C. The cessation of the hostilities with the Samnites, following the fight from Caudium in 321 B.C., had set free Rome by the pressure of the Samnite War. From the military point of view, the Caudine peace represented the closing of the main front from the Liris – Campania area, and the loss of it allowed the concentration of efforts in the regions where Rome wished to strengthen its presence before the reappearance of the hostilities with the Samnite League³⁹. Taking into account the objectives of these years, it is not unlikely at all the fact that both of the consuls would have been sent in Apulia in 317 B.C. The name of one of them, C. Junius Bubulcus, as well as his activity in the southern region, seem to be the essential factors for separating reality from fiction and for establishing until where the Roman campaigns were taken place in 317 B.C. After Pyrrhus left Italy in 278 B.C., the Roman forces did their best to fill up the emptiness left in the south of the peninsula due to the leaving of the Epirot king. One of the consuls of 277 B.C., C. Junius Bubulcus, the son of the magistrate from 317 B.C., had been the commander of the troops sent in Lucania⁴⁰. The similitude of name between the consul of 317 B.C. and the one of 277 B.C. is possible to have generated confusions between their actions that the annalistic tradition would have probably mixed up⁴¹. Accepting the dates of this interpretation, it is less venturesome to place the military activities of the year 317 B.C. in Apulia and not to drive it towards south, in Lucania, as Livy is inferring.

The last episode of the Roman-Lucanian relationships that retains our attention took place at the beginning of the Third Samnite War. Further more, as it is resulting from our sources, Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, this episode represented the pretext for the beginning of the hostilities. On a first stage, the narration of Livy contains attacks of the Samnites upon Lucania in order to make it to conclude an alliance and to take part to the war prepared against Rome (10.11.11-12). But the Lucanians were ready to bear anything but they did not

³⁶ DE SANCTIS 1907, 303, 320; CIACERI 1927, 22.

³⁷ BELOCH 1926, 401-402; SALMON 1967, 231 accepts the hypothesis of J. Beloch but he also suggests that it might be another confusion between the Volscian community of Luca and Lucania.

³⁸ Livy 9.20.7; *Fasti consulares* 317; BROUGHTON 1951, 155.

³⁹ The consequences generated by the Caudine peace: SALMON 1967, 226sq., OAKLEY 2005a, 34-38.

⁴⁰ *Fasti consulares* 277; *Fasti triumphales* 277 register him having military successes against the Lucanians and the Bruttians; see BROUGHTON 1951, 194.

⁴¹ BELOCH 1926, 401-402; SALMON 1967, 231. The conquest of Forentum is assigned to the consul C. Junius Bubulcus by Livy 9.20.9, while Nerulum was conquered by the other consul Q. Aemilius Barbula, in 317 B.C. Having the same field of operations in the south-east of Italy, it is possible that the literary tradition would have mixed up the actions of the two magistrates.

wish to bring another outrage to the Roman people (10.11.12). They asked the senators to take them under their protection and to protect them against the Samnites, by offering hostages as a guarantee of loyalty (10.11.13). The Roman senate decided to accept the offered alliance, then the fetials were sent to Samnium with the request of evacuating the territories conquered in Lucania (10.12.1-2). Due to the negative response, the Roman people declared war to the Samnites (10.12.3).

The version of Dionysius contains a narrative thread close to the one preserved by Livy. This variant also mentions about the Samnite attacks against Lucania and its request addressed to Rome in search for help (17.1.1-2). Due to the fact that during the past the Lucanians had violated the alliance with Rome, this time the request was accompanied by hostages in order to guarantee the good-faith (17.1.2). The Roman senate accepted the proposal, the people ratified the alliance and an embassy went to Samnium to announce that the Lucanians were friends and allies of Rome and the Samnites had to return the conquered territories and stop the attacks (17.1.3-4). As a reply, the Samnites showed that the Lucanians were not the allies of the Roman Republic in the moment when they attacked them and the Romans signed the treaty only when the Samnite League began the war with the Lucanian Federation (17.2.1-2).

A few details make the difference between the two versions but the nucleus of the Roman-Lucanian relationships from 298 B.C. stays the same. As it indicates the numerous common elements, the narrations are influenced by the same source or, at least, exploit the similar informative nodes⁴². Also, it contains signs that prove the annalistic source of the description and the tendency of distorting the events in a proRoman signification. Although in the past the federation canceled the alliance, the senate's goodwill demonstrated within the relationships with the Lucanian League⁴³ represents an obvious sign of the fact that the annalistic tradition processed the material in order to obtain an image as favourable as possible of the Roman policy at the beginning of the Third Samnite War. Attacked by the Samnites, the Lucanians appealed to those whom they offended years ago, but in spite of the past incident, the senate decided to conclude an alliance that saved the Lucanian League⁴⁴.

Many voices of the modern historiography considered this episode as the starting point of the juridical relationships between Rome and the Lucanian League, denying the alliance mentioned by Livy at the level of the year 326 B.C.⁴⁵. Actually, if we look carefully to the two texts related to the agreement of 298 B.C., it clearly results a very important aspect of the composition: the sources of Livy and those of Dionysius distorted the diplomatic contacts which had preceded the beginning of the Third Samnite War, organizing them in such a way that it could be adjusted to the relationships from the previous period. Thus, in the „outrage“ mentioned by Livy 10.11.12 and the „violated alliance“ from the paragraph of Dionysius 17.1.2 we must distinguish two references to the incident happened in

⁴² OAKLEY 2005b, 167.

⁴³ Livy 10.11.12-13; Dionysius 17.1.2.

⁴⁴ Livy 10.12.1-2; Dionysius 17.1.3-4.

⁴⁵ OAKLEY 2005b, 167-168.

325 B.C., with the great participation of Tarentum⁴⁶. The giving up of the hostages is also connected with this event because they were going to hinder the future turns over and represented the guarantee of the new alliance.

Other pieces of information presented in the literary tradition as well as in the epitaph of L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus, allow us to reconstitute, at least hypothetical, the real development of the Roman-Lucanian relationships at the beginning of the IIIrd century B.C. In accordance with the Livian narration, as proconsul, in 296 B.C., Q. Fabius Rullianus suppressed some seditions broke in Lucania due to some incitements of few plebeian agitators⁴⁷. The epitaph of L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus, describing his achievements as consul in 298 B.C., reminds us about his activities in Lucania⁴⁸. Due to this final piece of information, colligated with the negotiations mentioned by Livy and Dionysius, it seems to appear the existence of a possible connection between the presence of L. Cornelius Scipio in Lucania and the signing of the treaty with Rome.

In Italy, the new Gallic invasion from 299 B.C. agitated the spirits temporarily dulled by the peace signed in 304 B.C.⁴⁹. The short period of time between 299-298 B.C. was intensely used by both Rome and the Samnite League in order to find new allies and to verify the soundness of the treaties previously signed. In the case of Lucania, it is highly possible that it might have emerged a proSamnite party, in the convulsive context of the years 299-298 B.C., that began to fear the interferences of Rome in the south. This might be the reason why Q. Fabius Rullianus, in the narration of Livy, appears to be involved in the suppression of some seditions happened in Lucania. Following the same logical thread, it is also possible that the activity of L. Cornelius Scipio in the south, two years ago, to had been connected with the political instability from Lucania, generated in the context of preparations for war from Samnium⁵⁰. Because the outbreak of a new Samnite war was only a matter of time, Rome had to take urgent measures not to lose the Lucanian League from the its net of treaties. In these circumstances, the old alliance had been renewed but the success of the proRoman grouping is likely to have been ensured by the presence of the legions commanded by L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus. Further more, drawing the necessary conclusions of this experience, the Roman senate tried to prevent the loss of an important ally in the

⁴⁶ It appears at Livy 8.27.6-11; it is possible that this fabricated episode to exist in *The Roman Antiquities* of Dionysius but they were preserved only in excerpts after 444/443 B.C.; the lack of a fluent narration hinders any reliable conclusion.

⁴⁷ Livy 10.18.8: ... *et Lucanorum seditiones a plebeiis et egentibus ducibus ortas summa optimatium voluntate per Q. Fabium, pro consule missum eo cum veteri exercitu, compresserat*. The vocabulary seems to be inspired from the Roman realities.

⁴⁸ *CIL* I² 6,7 = *ILLRP* 309: ... *subigit omne Loucanam opsidisque abducit*. Livy describes another distribution of the provinces: L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus received the command in Etruria and upheld a battle at Volaterrae; the second consul from 298 B.C., Cn. Fulvius Centumalus, fought in Samnium, where he conquered Bovianum and Aufidena (10.12.3-9). *Fasti triumphales* 298 considers the latest as the one who celebrated a victory against the Samnites and Etruscans; cf. OAKLEY 2005b, 170-175 for a discussion upon the distribution of the consular headquarters in 298 B.C.

⁴⁹ Livy 9.45.4.

⁵⁰ SALMON 1967, 260sq.; FORSYTHE 2005, 328-329.

south of Italy. For the guarantee of the loiality, the giving up of the hostages was the hardest thing to be done.

The content of the new alliance probably included differences in contrast to the old treaty signed in 326 B.C. Due to the internal agitations of the federation, the Rome's confidence in the loiality of the Lucanian League had been shaken. Because the antiRoman grouping had been supported by a Samnite military intervention, the new structure of the alliance seemed to involve terms against the league from Samnium, in contrast to the one negotiated in 326 B.C. Thus, in 294 B.C., Livy records the presence of a Lucanian cohort beside the Roman legions engaged against the Samnites⁵¹. Also, other political and military events developed in the south of Italy at the end of the IVth century B.C. and at the beginning of the next one are likely to impose some changes in the content of the old Roman-Lucanian alliance. These incidents connect to the presence of two disturbing characters in the south of the peninsula, Cleonymus and Agathocles.

After the peace from Bovianum in 304 B.C., it was obvious that Tarentum could not count anymore on the Samnite League against Rome. Its political and military isolation was increasing even more the fear of a possible conflict with the Lucanian League and Rome. In order to outrun the situation, there were fastly found some measures, probably even when the Romans and the Samnites were negotiating. In 303 B.C., after the Lucanians opened the warfare against Tarentum⁵², the Spartan Cleonymus went to Italy, as a request of the Dorian colony, taking the commitment to protect it against the aggressions it was submitted by the Italics⁵³. In 303 B.C., under his leadership, there were gathering more than 30.000 fighters⁵⁴.

During the first stage of his expedition, the main issue of Cleonymus had been the adjustment of the relationships with the Lucanian Federation. Diodorus of Sicily does not describe any military fight between the forces of Cleonymus and the ones of the league, but it only records that the Lucanians did not risk a military fight with a strong expeditionary group and they would rather signed a peace treaty⁵⁵.

Alongside with the reasons reported by the Sicilian historian, it is possible

⁵¹ Livy 10.33.1.

⁵² Diodorus 20.104.1-2. Writting down the reasons for his landing in Italy, the Sicilian historian records that Tarentum was in conflict with the Lucanians and with the Romans and this situation determined the call to Sparta. The text of Diodorus 20.104.1 seems to indicate not necessarily an open conflict between Rome and Tarentum, but moreover a worry within the Dorian colony at the same time with the isolation of the city after the exit of the Samnite League from the war. Lucania, allied with the Roman Republic from 326 B.C., was waiting for this moment for many years and the context allows us to understand the reason why, during the years 304-303 B.C., it gathered its troops against the Dorian colony: it opened the hostilities with Tarentum immediately after the concluding of the peace of Bovianum. Behind it there was the threatening shadow of Rome. From this point of view, Diodorus probably noted only a frame of mind and the fear that Rome would send its troops towards south for helping its ally.

⁵³The western expedition of Cleonymus: Diodorus 20.104.1-4, 20.105.1-3, Livy 10.2.1-3.

⁵⁴ Diodorus 20.104.2.

⁵⁵ Diodorus 20.104.3: „Because he had a strong army under his leadership, the Lucanians concluded a treaty with the Tarentines“ (*philia*).

that we might identify a succession of factors that lead to the end of the hostilities between the Lucanian League and Tarentum. The events happened in 298 B.C., as we have already mentioned, reveal the existence of the two groupings with different views concerning the foreign policy of the federation. One of them favoured Rome, the other one seemed to be pro-Samnite and it presupposes that it supported a relaxation of the relationships with Tarentum. The two groupings stand out in the history scene only in the context of the beginning of the Third Samnite War but their delimitation might be a phenomenon which happened at the end of the IVth century B.C., in the same time with the extension of the Roman influence towards the south of Italy. Probably Cleonymus knew well his opponent and he was familiar with the agitations from within the league. As it is described in another paragraph of Diodorus, the Spartan found the best way to strengthen the position of the anti-Roman and pro-Samnite grouping. Speculating about the adversary's inclinations towards robbery and violence, he left Metapontum which refused to obey him at the Lucanian League's discretion⁵⁶.

From the point of view of the alliance contracted in 326 B.C. with Rome, the Lucanian-Tarentine agreement from 303 B.C. could not be interpreted as a violation of this juridical act. It did not cancel the alliance, but the Roman politicians were not able to see in a good way the new situation from the south of Italy. The diplomatic intrigues from 303 B.C. have doubtlessly been accepted as an expression of a duplicitary attitude and thus, a distrusted atmosphere established between the two partners, visible in the treaty of 298 B.C.

The first years of Agathocles's career consumed in terribly fights against Carthage⁵⁷. In 306 B.C., confronted with the resistance of some Greek cities from Sicily, Agathocles concluded a treaty with the traditional enemy of Syracuse in honourable conditions⁵⁸, which allowed him to rule upon the Sicilian territories from the east of Halycus river. Beginning with 305 B.C., when he managed to defeat the refractory cities of his domain, the tyrant was free to consolidate his position and to extend his possessions⁵⁹. After 306 B.C., Syracuse needed to recover its strength and Agathocles did not risk to bring about a new conflict with the African state. The necessity of finding new resources for revival and a new action field outside Sicily urged the tyrant to look beyond the borders of the isle towards the Italic coasts⁶⁰.

⁵⁶ Diodorus 20.104.3-4.

⁵⁷ The great African expedition: TILLYARD 1908, 103 sq., CARY 1927, 624 sq., MEISTER 1984, 393 sq.

⁵⁸ Diodorus 20.79.5; Justin 22.8.15; TILLYARD 1908, 188-190; MEISTER 1984, 404.

⁵⁹ In the west of Sicily any political or military interference risked to bring back the tyrant in war against Carthage. The idea of a revenge, after the defeat from the conflict of 312-306 B.C., did not leave Agathocles until the last days of his life. The land troops and the fleet were prepared in 289 B.C. for a new war but the tyrant died during the same year, leaving unfulfilled his plans against Carthage.

⁶⁰ The Syracusan presence in the affairs of southern Italy was not a fact related only to the period of Agathocles. At the apogee of its power, Syracuse showed a special interest for the Greek colonies from Magna Graecia. Dionysius the Elder led his troops many times in the south of Italy, at the beginning of the IVth century B.C., getting important achievements. By war or by diplomacy, many of the Italian cities were brought under the

In 304 B.C., Diodorus points out the presence of Agathocles in the Italic waters, when he plundered the Lipare isles⁶¹. Around 300 B.C., the same author describes the repression of a rebellion of the Ligurians and the Etruscans from his army, incident followed by a conflict with the Bruttians who managed to defeat the forces of Agathocles⁶². Five years after this event, in 295 B.C., Agathocles conquered Croton, ruled by the tyrant Menedemus and concluded alliances with the Iapyges and the Peucetii⁶³. Probably during the same campaign, his troops succeeded to conquer Hipponion⁶⁴. The Bruttians, frightened about the city collapse, concluded peace with the tyrant but after he left Italy, they defeated the force of occupation let by Agathocles and set them free from the Syracusane domination⁶⁵.

After the robbery of the Lipare isles in 304 B.C., the first target of the military actions developed by Agathocles in the peninsula might have been Cleonymus, who came in 303 B.C. planning to establish a personal domain in the regions occupied by Greeks in the west⁶⁶. Agathocles probably considered him a possible enemy in the meridional part of Italy after he used force against Metapontum, in collaboration with the Lucanian League⁶⁷. The two characters could hardly find a way to live in peace, because the intentions of the Spartan general contradicted the traditional interests of Syracuse in the southern region of Italy. In these circumstances, it seems that Agathocles tried to strengthen the Syracusane presence in the peninsula in order to anticipate a possible expansion of Cleonymus.

The second campaign, started in 295 B.C., proves that after 300 B.C. Agathocles tried to remake the traditional sphere of influence of Syracuse from Bruttium, lost due to the entire concentration of forces against Carthage, during the previous period⁶⁸. At the level of the year 295 B.C., after the occupation of

control of the Syracusane tyrant, becoming an appendix of his Sicilian kingdom. After the death of Dionysius, his descendants did not managed to stop the fission of the Syracusane domination, but his interest for the regions from the south of Italy opened a new direction in the foreign policy of the great Sicilian city (the Syracusane extension in Italy under Dionysius the Elder: CAVEN 1990, 124sq.).

⁶¹ Diodorus 20.101.1.

⁶² Diodorus 21.3. Agathocles received news about the mercenaries rebellion while he was fighting at Corcyra, against Cassandrus, who wished to occupy the isle, event happened in 300 B.C. (Diodorus 21.2-3).

⁶³ Diodorus 21.4. As a chronological reference, we have an important fact. Agathocles occupied Croton using a stratagem, when he accompanied his daughter Lanassa to Epir, where she became the wife of Pyrrhus; the first year of their marriage is 295 B.C. (Diodorus 21.4).

⁶⁴ Diodorus 21.8; see also Strabo 6.1.5; cf. VATTUONE 1987-1988, 66-67.

⁶⁵ Diodorus 21.8.

⁶⁶ VATTUONE 1987-1988, 63-64. The rumours about his intention of releasing Sicily from his domination, spread even from the first year of his western military adventure, probably determined Agathocles to keep an eye close to the event from the south of Italy (Diodorus 20.104.4).

⁶⁷ Diodorus 20.104.3-4.

⁶⁸ Diodorus 21.4, 21.8; see also Justin 23.1.3-23.2.2; the insurrection of the Bruttians, reported by Diodorus 21.8 immediately after the last Italic expedition of Agathocles, was probably happened after his death in 289 B.C.; Strabo 6.1.5 mentions the building of a harbour station at Hipponion by the tyrant, which suggests that the Syracusane presence in the southern area of Italy was longer than it may be understand from the text of Diodorus (see GIANNELLI 1974, 379-380, MARASCO 1984, 100).

Croton and Hipponion and the concluding of the treaty with the league from Bruttium, Agathocles succeeded in giving an outline to the southern region of the peninsula where Syracuse used to have interests⁶⁹. Moreover, his diplomatic relationships were making progresses towards north where he concluded alliances with the Iapyges and the Peucetii.

Rome's response in front of the new balance of forces from the meridional region of the peninsula can only be supposed, in the circumstances of the sources' reticence. The restoration of the Syracusan domination in Bruttium after 304 B.C. as well as the possible contacts of the tyrant with Tarentum were supposed to stir the senate's fears. The alliances contracted by Agathocles with the Iapyges and the Peucetii, in a region where Tarentum also had the tendency of demonstrating its influence, seem to prove that the tyrant and the Dorian colony found a common point concerning the balance of power from the south of Italy. In 298 B.C., Rome renegotiated the alliance with the Lucanian League first taking into consideration its relationships with Tarentum and the reopening of the hostilities against the Samnites. On the other hand, we must keep an eye on the Roman-Lucanian alliance which had again been discussed in 298 B.C., in times when Agathocles was already been operating in Bruttium and he was probably in contact with Tarentum. The chronological arrangement of events and the equation of power from the south of the Italic peninsula makes us believe that the presence of Agathocles imposed the acceleration of contacts settlement of Rome with the Lucanian League. If he was planning to cross over the borders of the Bruttian region, the tyrant announced himself as a possible enemy and could not be meaningless to suppose that the Roman-Lucanian alliance of 298 B.C. also included stipulations in order to block his advance.

Drawing a conclusion of the relationships between Rome and Lucania at the end of the IVth century B.C. and at the beginning of the next one, we may assert that Tarentum played a leading part in the developing of these relations. Among the four episodes mentioned in the literary tradition, only two of them can be considered as being historical realities. Rome signed an alliance with Lucania in 326 B.C. and then, in 298 B.C., it renewed this treaty essential for its meridional policy. The anti-Tarentine policy of the two partners represented for over more than 20 years the leading idea of the external positions adopted by Rome and the Lucanian League in the southern area of the peninsula.

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⁶⁹ GIANNELLI 1974, 373 sq.; VATTUONE 1987-1988, 66-67; LOMAS 1993, 43; MARASCO 1984, 104-105 also investigated the possibility that the Italiotes would have called the help of Agathocles, offering him a reason for his interventions in the peninsula.

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