3. Windows on the Past

As part of the Roman Empire, *Bithynia et Pontus* was one among many provinces, and the Bithynian cities with which we are primarily concerned in this book were three among hundreds of Roman cities. Any study of urban life in Roman Bithynia will naturally base itself on sources related to Bithynia itself or to Roman Asia Minor, but to interpret them properly, one needs to include evidence from all over the Empire, and to draw on the analogy of other cities and other provinces.

Townscapes and landscapes

There are not many monumental remains to inform us about the topography and appearance of ancient Prusa or Nikomedia. Both are now large cities, their ancient cores overlaid by modern construction and roads. In addition, Nikomedia is plagued by frequent earthquakes – by the late fourth century most of the Hellenistic and early Roman city had been destroyed beyond recognition. Fortunately, neither seismic activity nor modern construction could obliterate the characteristic hillside topography of Nikomedia and Prusa, giving the modern observer some “feel” of the relation of the city to its environment and useful pointers for interpreting the written evidence. The Acropolis that formed the centre of ancient Prusa remains an oasis of quiet at the epicentre of Bursa’s bustling traffic and the Acropolis on the crest above modern Nikomedia still dominates the city. Little is left above foundation level, however; for an impression of the splendours of the imperial residence, one must go to the western imperial capital at Trier or to Diokletian’s retirement palace in Split on the Adriatic.

On the face of it, it seems much easier to visualize the ancient appearance of Nikaia. The course of the main streets, the theatre and numerous minor monuments all help the modern visitor create a mental image of the ancient city; but she needs to remember that much of what is visible today is not the Nikaia of Pliny or Dion, but later – even the church where the Nicene council was held in AD 325 has been replaced by a later structure, today’s Aya Sofya Camii.

Outside the city gates, archaeological evidence is even scarcer, but again it is Nikaia that offers the most complete picture. A visitor approaching Nikaia from the east, cresting the hill and seeing the city spread out on the lakeshore, then following the road that runs parallel to the aqueduct and skirts the mod-

Fig. 5. Nikaia seen from the east (author's photo).

ern cemetery, finally entering the city through the east gate of the Roman walls, will have a fairly good impression of what it was like to approach Nikaia from the same direction some 1,700 years ago (fig. 5). Further afield, few ancient farmsteads or villas have been located, but inscriptions found within the city's territory and naming farm stewards testify to their existence. Even without the bronze sculpture that once adorned it, the extravagant, obelisk-like funeral monument of C. Cassius Philiskos to the north-west (figs. 22-24) is striking evidence of the wealth enjoyed by some Nikaian landowners.

Within the territory of Nikomedia and Prusa, evidence for rural settlement is much sparser. From other parts of the empire, we have evidence for a fairly close-meshed pattern of agricultural exploitation close to the cities; that it has not been recorded in Bithynia so far is perhaps mainly due to the absence of systematic investigation. In the hinterland of Sinope on the coast of Pontos, recent archaeological survey[1] has revealed a pattern of intensive Roman settlement, and a similar research effort might yield comparable results in Bithynia. But time is running out, and in the ever-expanding suburbs of Bursa and Izmit, housing estates and industrial plants are obliterating all surface traces of ancient habitation and rendering systematic archaeological survey impossible. For the time being, perhaps for all time, we must rely on the example of Nikaia and the literary sources for an impression of the cultural landscape of rural Bithynia.

The road network of Roman Bithynia is not well preserved. Although its main outlines are known and key points (city gates, bridges, mountain

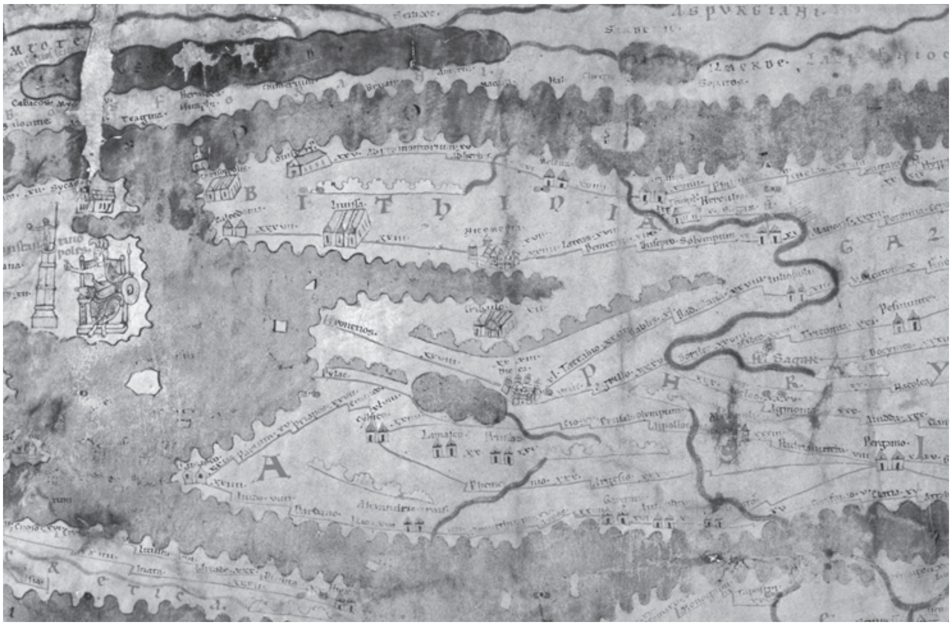

Fig. 6. Detail of the Tabula Peutingeriana *(Staatsbibliothek, Vienna)*

passes, fords etc.) can be securely located, the roads themselves are rarely preserved in their original state, more often ploughed over or overlaid by modern highways. The third-century *Itinerarium Antonini* lists only one route through our region, Chalkedon-Nikomedia-Nikaia-Ankyra; the same route is decribed in more detail in the *Bordeaux Itinerary* of the following century.[2] The *Tabula Peutingeriana*, a medieval copy of a late Roman itinerary in map form (fig. 6) shows several routes through Bithynia. One, coming from Hadrianoutherai, passes through Prusa, Prusias ad Mare/Kios (which the cartographer has rendered as two distinct places) and along the southern shore of lake Askanios to the port of Kyzikos (which appears as an inland city on the *Tabula*). A second route from Anatolia passes through Nikaia and continues eastward along the northern shore of the lake, with a branch road leading north-westwards to the Gulf of Izmit. A third route, coming from Amaseia and Pompeiopolis, leads through Nikomedia to Chalkedon. Some routes can also be identified from remains of late Roman bridges (e.g., fig. 35) and finds of Roman milestones.[3]

Literary sources

History

In the late Hellenistic age, corresponding to the last century of the Roman republic, Asia Minor was visible to the Roman eye mainly as a trouble spot, and that is how we encounter it in the narrative history of Appian (*The Mith-*

ridatic Wars) and in Plutarch's biographies of Roman commanders and their adversaries. The early Empire, on the other hand, was a period of comparative tranquility in western Asia Minor, which makes only intermittent appearances in the works of Roman historians.

Tacitus or Suetonius tend to focus on events taking place in Italy itself or at the borders of the empire; more detail is sometimes provided by the third-century historian Dion Cassius, who was of Nikaian descent. For the early third century, he is supplemented by Herodian and the notoriously unreliable *Historia Augusta*. Still, given the emperors-and-battles approach that characterizes most Roman historians, it is not much that we learn about everyday life in distant provinces. It is only with the establishment of a permanent imperial residence at Nikomedia and the transfer of the capital from Rome to Constantinople that Bithynia finds itself within the range of imperial historians such as Lactantius and Ammianus Marcellinus.

Letters

For more mundane details, we must turn from the sphere of formal historiography to the slightly less formal sphere of letter-writing. In the Roman world, this was a literary *genre* in its own right. We possess the collected letters of numerous persons with a direct interest in Asia Minor: M. Tullius Cicero, who served as governor of Cilicia and whose brother, Q. Cicero, was governor of Asia; M. Iunius Brutus, who likewise served as governor of Cilicia;[4] and of course the younger Pliny, governor of Bithynia et Pontus. From the fourth century, we have the letters of Basil the Great, bishop of Kaisareia, and his younger brother Gregory of Nyssa; Gregory of Nazianzos; the pagan sophist Libanios;[5] the emperor Julian, and others. Imperial rescripts (see below under *Legal texts*) form a special subcategory that includes some of Trajan's letters to Pliny.

It is worth keeping in mind, however, that ancient letters are, for better or for worse, works of literature and that unlike modern private correspondence, they were composed for a wider audience. It was not uncommon for the recipient of a letter to read it aloud or circulate it among his acquaintances, who might even make copies or excerpts for their own use. For instance, Gregory of Nyssa relates how he has received a letter from Libanios:

> as I was going to the metropolis of the Cappadocians [Kaisareia], I met an acquaintance, who handed me this present, your letter, as a New Year's gift. And I, overjoyed at the occurrence, threw open my treasure to all who were present; and all shared in it, each getting the whole of it, without any rivalry, and I was none the worse off. For the letter by passing through the hands of all, like a ticket for a feast, is the private wealth of each, some by steady continuous reading engraving the words upon their memory, and others taking a copy of them upon tablets.[6]

Realizing that his letter would come under the close scrutiny of many eyes and ears, the sender would take pains over its composition and perhaps emulate other letter-writers that were considered stylistic models. If he retained duplicates of his correspondence, the writer could later publish the letters, giving himself a second chance to go over their style and content, perhaps even adapting them to changed political circumstances. On the other hand, the awareness that his original letter might have been copied and retained by unknown third parties presumably set a limit on the scope for later revision. If the content of the original letter was politically controversial or cast an unfavourable light on the past activities of its writer, it would be easier and safer to omit it altogether.

In short, when writing a letter, the author is projecting a certain image of himself to the recipient and to the recipient's circle of friends and clients; when editing a collection of his letters for publication, the writer is drawing a self-portrait for posterity. From time to time, the modern reader catches revealing glimpses of the writer's personality – Pliny's indecision, the brash arrogance of Basil, Libanios' hypochondriac worries – but it is naïve to assume that the edited correspondence lays bare the entire character of its author.

From a Bithynian viewpoint, the most important of the letter collections at our disposal is the tenth book of Pliny's *Letters*. The majority of these were composed in Bithynia et Pontus and deal with provincial concerns; they are complemented by the emperor's replies to Pliny's missives. For a detailed discussion of the *Letters* the reader is referred to the monumental commentary of Sherwin-White (1966) and the recent précis of the main problems by Woolf (2006), but it will be useful to summarize some key questions. The date at which the letters were collected for publication is nowhere indicated, but if the first nine books were collected and edited by Pliny himself, and if he died in office in Bithynia, as is often assumed, then the tenth book must have been published posthumously by another. This would explain why book ten differs from the other nine in several significant respects. The first nine books contain letters *from* Pliny but not those he received. In the published collection, many of Pliny's outgoing letters open with a short summary of the incoming letter to which he is replying. This is a conventional way of opening a letter also found in other writers[7] but Pliny uses it often – 30 % of the letters in the first nine books are prefaced in with a summary of the correspondent's previous message.[8] This obviously makes it easier for Pliny's reader to follow the discussion between Pliny and his correspondents. The correspondents themselves would rarely need such prompting, which is sometimes taken to extremes. For instance, in *Ep.* 4.10, Pliny not only summarizes the missive he has received from Statius Sabinus but even quotes a phrase from Sabinus' letter which Sabinus, in his turn, had quoted from a legal document.[9]

One possible explanation is that, intending to publish his correspondence at some future date, Pliny had collected the incoming letters of his friends and copies of his own outgoing letters. He only intended to include the latter in his publication, but if the reader were to appreciate their content, some clues to their context were needed. While reworking a letter for the public, then, Pliny sometimes inserted a summary of the incoming letters, to provide the reader with the minimum of background information required to understand Pliny's replies. In the first half of the collection this is done only sparingly, but in books six, seven and nine, nearly half the letters are provided with such opening summaries, and the trend carries on into the first fifteen letters of book ten.

The composition of book ten differs from the other books not only in including letters *to* Pliny but also in omitting letters from Pliny to family and friends; all letters in the tenth book are directed to, or received from, the emperor Trajan. The first fifteen letters (1-14) form a separate group antedating the appointment of Pliny to Bithynia, some by as much as ten years; some even antedate the early volumes of private letters.[10] This small group includes three letters from Trajan to Pliny (10.3b; 10.7; 10.9) and three letters by Pliny opening with a summary of three other letters (not included in the published collection) received from Trajan.

The remainder of book ten has an altogether different character. First, the ingoing and outgoing letters are more evenly balanced (though Pliny's letters still outnumber those of Trajan by two to one). Secondly, Pliny's letters are much shorter than in the preceding part of the collection, less "literary" in character and – except for one[11] – without the opening formula summarizing the content of the incoming letter.

Clearly, from the outset of his publication project, Pliny intended to reserve his correspondence with Trajan for a separate volume, which would in some cases include the emperor's reply, while in others the main outlines of the imperial letter would be incorporated into the edited version of Pliny's reply. The scanty material that he collected during the first decade of Trajan's reign was edited for publication, but the much larger volume of imperial correspondence accumulated during Pliny's term as governor of Bithynia et Pontus was never dealt with in the same manner. Presumably he fell ill and died while still in office, and one of his friends or collaborators combined the provincial correspondence with the edited imperial letters to form a separate volume, a sequel to the nine that had already been published. On this assumption, the letters from 10.15 onwards have come down to us more or less as their copies were found at the time of Pliny's death.

Central to any interpretation of Pliny's letters as historical sources is the nature of the relationship between the emperor and his legate. A first reading generates an impression of familiarity between the two correspondents, perhaps even a personal interest in Pliny on the emperor's part. But these are precisely the images that the respective letter-writers wished to project: the governor as an intimate of the monarch, the emperor as a ruler concerned for the welfare of his subjects and subordinates. That these roles conform to modern positive archetypes render them all the more convincing to our eyes.

A closer reading of the individual letters and a comparison with the other nine books of Pliny, and with other ancient letter collections (the letters of Cicero, which served later writers as a model, and Fronto's letters to the Antonine emperors) reveals a rather more asymmetrical relation between the correspondents.

First, it is noteworthy that in the entire collection of Pliny's letters, we find no letters to Trajan that antedate the latter's accession as emperor. Since his personal relationship with Trajan is at the centre of Pliny's tenth book, we may take it that if any epistolary evidence of a personal contact prior to Trajan's elevation existed, it would have been included or at least referred to in the published collection.[12] It is not; thus the conclusion imposes itself that Pliny had no prior personal relationship with the emperor. From start to finish, their relation was one of subject and ruler, reflected in Pliny's consistent use of *domine*, "lord", when addressing Trajan. *Domine* is the form used by a social inferior when addressing his superior, or of a junior addressing a senior.[13] When referring to Trajan in the third person (in letters to his other correspondents) Pliny likewise uses formal expressions like *princeps*, *Caesar* or *imperator noster*.[14]

Writing to Trajan, Pliny takes care to present his ideas as petitions, proposals, suggestions, or queries. This feature and the near absence of personal content is in striking contrast to the style of the letters in books one to nine, where a personal touch is often present. Equally instructive is a comparison with the letters of Fronto: clearly, Fronto enjoyed a closer, less formal relationship with the ruling dynasty than Pliny ever did.[15]

Speeches

Our richest source for the political life of the Bithynian cities is the collection of *Orations* preserved under the name of Dion Chrysostomos. Dion, a scholar, sophist and philosopher, returned to his native Prusa after an abortive career in Rome and years of exile. He immersed himself in municipal politics and travelled widely across Bithynia and Asia Minor. Dion's contemporaries valued his rhetorical style highly, and many of his speeches were preserved for posterity by his admirers. They did not, however, succeed in preserving the entire *oeuvre* of their master. The biography of Dion by Synesios and the tenth-century *Suda* list works by Dion that were lost at an early stage, since they do not appear in the *Bibliothêke* of Photios.[16] Some of the lost pieces may have been philosophical exercises of a frivolous or sophistic character (e.g., "Encomium of a parrot") but Dion also wrote a larger work, *Getika,* presumably based on his own travels and observations among the Getae on the northwestern Black Sea coast.

The Dionian *corpus* that has been handed down to us comprises eighty pieces, in form and style ranging from set speeches to dialogue, myth, and novel, but conventionally all known as "orations". Their order is not chronological, but loosely thematical: the collection opens with the four so-called "kingship speeches" to the emperor Trajan, and the "municipal" orations are grouped between *Or.* 38 and *Or*. 51.[17] The *corpus* includes two speeches (37 and 64) that are not by Dion himself, possibly by his pupil Favorinus.

One would obviously like to know how the speeches came to be preserved. Were Dion's municipal orations extempore performances taken down in shorthand by city clerks, or noted down by his admiring pupils sitting among the audience? Though a number of commentators, most recently Cécile Bost-Pouderon (2006), assume that Dion's orations were taken down in shorthand, the theory is not supported by the evidence of the texts themselves, where we find no traces of different "hands" or misheard phrases that might point to a shorthand original, nor of interruptions by the audience.[18] Even a skilled shorthand clerk would have found it difficult to render Dion's Atticisms and quotations from the classics correctly. A second problem is the assumption that a shorthand writer would always be available. While shorthand may have been used for the senatorial *Acta* at an early date, there is no good evidence for shorthand records of municipal council proceeedings in the late early or early second century AD[19] and we have no reason to believe that small-town council secretaries such as T. Flavius Silôn, *grammateus* of Prusa in Dion's time,[20] had a team of trained tachygraphers at his disposal.

It appears more likely that the texts as they appear in the *corpus* are based on Dion's speaking notes. This would explain why some "orations" are mere fragments or introductions to longer speeches, the remainder of which has not been preserved. In these cases, Dion apparently did not require a full manuscript for his speech. He could write out the opening paragraphs and rely on his sophistic training and rhetorical experience to improvise the remainder of the oration and a conclusion tailored to the reactions of his audience. Sometimes, sections of previous orations would be recycled for new occasions, the result being word-for-word correspondence between different speeches;[21] if the speeches had been held extempore or from memory, we would expect some devations in their wording.

In the *corpus*, each text has a short descriptive rubric, usually indicating either the subject or the audience of the speech in question (e.g., *Or.* 4: *Peri basileias*; *Or.* 35: *en Kelainais tês Phrygias*), or both (*Or.* 36: *Borysthenitikos … en tê patridi*). Again, we would like to know when the rubrics were inserted and by whom.[22] Arnim pointed out that the rubrics of some Bithynian speeches "den thatsächlichen Inhalte der Stücke nicht entsprechen" suggesting that they are the work of a not very efficient "Sammler und Ordner".[23] This argument, however, cuts both ways: even a moderately competent editor could have extrapolated the information required for a short rubric from the content of the oration itself, or replaced a misleading rubric with a better one. Since the imperfect rubrics were retained, they presumably possessed an authority equal to that of the text itself, perhaps being derived from marginal notes by Dion himself or added by a source considered to be reliable, such as Favorinus. Especially important for our purposes are the statements that some Prusan orations were held *en ekklêsia* or *en boulê* (e.g., *Or.* 48; 49). Since this information could not be extracted from the text itself, we must assume that it came from a note in the actual manuscript or from a source close to the author.

A possible reconstruction of Dion's *modus operandi* and the preservation of his municipal speeches is that for most occasions, Dion did *not* write his speech beforehand. In the council, deliberations had the nature of a discussion with fairly brief interventions by each councillor. As Dion was unable to foresee which course the day's discussion would take,[24] it would be difficult to prepare a text in advance; instead, he would extemporize, perhaps supplementing with scraps of previous orations where appropriate. Taking the evidence of the rubrics at face value, only two of the preserved orations were held *en boulê*, and one of these consists almost entirely of generalities that have clearly been recycled from an earlier speech by way of an introduction to the point at issue.[25]

For the longer speeches in the Prusan *ekklêsia* and in other Bithynian cities, Dion apparently sometimes wrote up his speech beforehand – not necessarily from scratch, but incorporating material from previous occasions; and not necessarily the whole speech, but sometimes only the opening, leaving the rest to be improvised on location or read from another document, such as the letter from the emperor attached to *Or.* 44 (but now lost).

For the modern reader, Dion's municipal speeches provide a fascinating insight into small-town conflicts, ambitions and trivialities. It needs to be borne in mind, however, that despite their "documentary" appearance, the orations of Dion are literary works, composed or re-composed with a specific public in mind and intended to convey a very specific image of their author.

Legal texts

When Bithynia was incorporated as a province in the late Republican period, Roman provincial administration was still based on the personal authority of proconsular or propraetorian governors, tempered by the *lex Calpurnia* of the mid-second century BC which had given provincials the right to file a suit *de repetundis* at the end of a governor's term of office.

The sphere of action of the governor was further limited by a provincial code – in the case of Bithynia et Pontus, the *lex Pompeia* – by rules of procedure, by custom and local law and by the governor's edict (below, p. 63-64), creating a complex of legal sources that varied from province to province.

It is useful to distinguish between three main categories of texts that complement the laws themselves: edicts, which are issued on the initiative of the emperor or a magistrate; *sententiae* or opinions, i.e. jurists' exposition of existing law; and rescripts, which are the emperor's response to a specific case or problem which is laid before him.

In the imperial period, a gradual process of legal harmonization and standardisation across the Empire can be observed. Important mileposts are the *Constitutio Antoniniana* extending Roman citizenship to all free provincials and Diokletian's administrative reorganization in the late third century. One aspect of this process is a proliferation of imperial rulings that apply across the empire, creating a common and (at least in theory) consistent legal basis for its administration. These rulings and other sources of law were collected in the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, which gives us a detailed picture of late Roman law; it also preserves important relics of older law codes and commentaries on non-Roman law, including the peregrine law of Bithynia.

Being normative texts, statutes, edicts and rescripts need to be handled with some care when used as historical sources. They do not describe the world as it was, but at best, as the emperor intended it to be. Furthermore, like a letter-writer, the legislator was making a statement that would be read and repeated many times, and like a letter-writer, he was concerned to convey a desirable impression of himself (or of the emperor, if he were a jurist in the imperial chancery). In some cases, the primary motive behind a piece of legislation may have been to project a positive image of the ruling power.

Inscriptions

The legal sources in turn provide a frame of reference for interpreting the documentary evidence provided by the epigraphic sources. We are fortunate to possess a significant body of Bithynian inscriptions, of which the two most important categories for our purposes are civic inscriptions and funerary epitaphs. The civic inscriptions are often honorific in character; they record the achievements of individuals or groups of persons and usually include a detailed description of the honorand's career as well as the names and sometimes also the status and titles of the dedicant(s).[26] Funerary inscriptions tend to be less detailed and shorter, but may include family relationships and other information not found in the honorific inscriptions; also, they cover a slightly wider social spectrum. A further advantage of funerary inscriptions is that they provide a complete biography of the person up to his death.

Within Bithynia, the civic inscriptions of Prusias ad Hypium (mod. Konuralp) form a special group that must be taken into account in any discussion of Bithynian urban life. In the mid-third century, Prusias ad Hypium was hastily fortified in anticipation of a Gothic siege.[27] Numerous inscribed stones and slabs were incorporated into the walls and thus preserved for posterity, providing the most complete epigraphic record for civic life in Bithynia generally. For instance, of the 64 Bithynian archons whose names have been recorded for posterity, 45 are from Prusias ad Hypium; of 26 Bithynian agonothetes, 22; and eight out of ten censors.[28] Though Prusias ad Hypium was located some distance from the three cities that are at the focus of this study, its inscriptions are indispensable for a deeper understanding of Bithynian municipal government.

This raises the wider question of how, and to what extent, it is possible to draw parallels from one city to another, or even from one province to another.

Some studies, such as the recent work by Dimitriev (2005), are based on the assumption that city administration followed similar patterns throughout Asia Minor; hence, information about conditions in one city may – in the absence of evidence to the contrary – be taken to cover all cities in the region. The attraction of this approach is that once it is accepted that city power structures were the same throughout, the fragments of information that we possess can be combined into a "standard" civic structure. Two problems, however, need to be taken into account. The first is that although certain legal principles and practical procedures apply throughout the provinces of the Roman Empire (e.g., the right of appeal of a Roman citizen), before the third century there were few serious attempts at harmonization of local and regional administrative structures.

The second is that the Roman vocabulary for administrative offices was limited and highly adaptable. The terms *legatus, curator, decurio, prafectus* or *tribunus* had a wide range of meanings and could apply to civilian and military positions alike. Unless their nature is specified by the addition of a qualifying noun (e.g., *curator civitatis*) one cannot be sure that they refer to identical or similar functions. Greek designations for urban offices such as *logistês, epimelêtês, prostatês, logothetês* etc. likewise cover a fairly wide semantic spectrum; and as noted by Dölger in his study of Byzantine administration, titles persist even when the nature of an office changes over time,[29] just as the praetorian prefecture of the fourth century had nothing in common with the office of praetorian prefect under the early empire.

It also needs to be remembered that in what we may call biographical inscriptions – a category that includes both honorific and funerary inscriptions – what is recorded may be exceptional rather than typical, and that there is a strong social bias. Inscriptions on stone or bronze were expensive, and we do not find many working-class heroes in the epigraphic record.

Finally, formal inscriptions provide an incomplete and one-sided view of Greek perceptions of the ruling power: hostile attitudes could be voiced in the *agora* or elsewhere, but writing them down was a different matter. Only in exceptional cases we do find hostility expressed in the epigraphical record, for instance by a citizen of Kourion in Cyprus who put a curse on the Roman governor in connection with a court case.[30]

Coins

The ancient world knew only one mass medium: coinage. The main purpose of early coin images and legends was to authenticate the origin, purity and quality of the coin itself, but from the late Republic onwards, Roman moneyers developed and exploited the propagandistic potential of coinage by combining short, abbreviated titles and slogans with images carrying powerful symbolic connotations.[31] The imperial mints were large-scale operations producing coins in gold, silver and bronze, which circulated throughout the

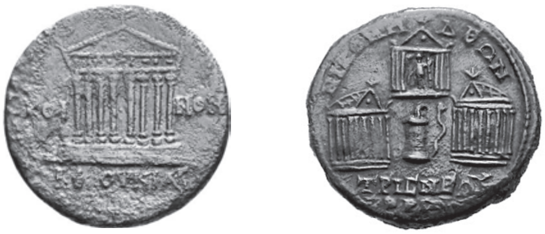

Fig. 7. Left: Bronze coin of the Bithynian koinon*, struck under Hadrian (AD 117-138); the reverse shows the facade of the imperial temple in Nikomedia.* RGMG *1.2 Commune Bithyniae 44 (Münzen und Medaillen Deutschland). Right: Nikomedian bronze coin of Valerian, Gallienus and Valerian II (AD 256-258). The reverse shows a bird's eye view of the Nikomedian temple precinct with an altar at its centre, flanked by three temples. In the central temple, the artist has omitted two columns, allowing us to see the cult statue inside.* RGMG *1.3 Nikomedia 407* = SNG *Aulock 860 (Classical Numismatic Group).*

empire (with the exception of Egypt, which had its own mint in Alexandria and its own closed currency system).[32]

At a lower level, regions and cities also struck coins in bronze for local use (fig. 7). From the mid-first to the mid-second century AD, coins were struck in the name of the Bithynian *koinon*, and the cities of Bithynia continued to strike bronze coins until the mid-third century. Earlier scholars, such as Bosch (1935), assumed that local mints were small-scale counterparts of the large imperial mints, and that each city had its own permanent workshop and mint-master. This would imply the existence of hundreds of local mint workshops in Asia Minor. Since the work of Konrad Kraft (1972), however, it is accepted that most Asian cities had no mints of their own but were supplied from outside, and that at any given time, perhaps no more than a dozen mints were operating in Asia Minor.[33] Some of these were itinerant enterprises, moving from city to city in response to local demand.[34] Since the obverse die did not wear out as quickly as the reverse die, and as the obverse legend and image were not related to a specific city, a mint-master might sometimes use the same obverse die for coin series struck on behalf of different issuers. For instance, an obverse die of the emperor Gordian was used to strike coins for Nikaia, Nikomedia and Prusias ad Mare, with different reverse designs.[35]

Like their imperial counterparts, the local moneyers used coinage as a medium to convey a message on behalf of the city or *koinon* responsible for the issue. Most city coins of Asia Minor follow the same format with a standard portrait of the emperor or another member of the ruling house on the obverse, which thus closely resembles the output of the imperial mints. On the reverse, there was scope for local variation and self-representation. The range of symbols, images and legends on coin reverses reveal how the city elite viewed themselves and their city, and what image they wanted to project. Furthermore, engravers often included depictions of monuments, especially temples, and coins thus provide important pointers to the topography and architectural history of individual cities.[36]

Notes

1 Doonan 2004.
2 *It.Ant.* 139-143; *It.Burd.* 571-575.
3 For an attempt at reconstructing the road network of Bithynia et Pontus, see Marek 2003, map V.
4 On the authenticity of Brutus' letters, see, most recently, Moles 1997.
5 Libanios travelled back and forth through Anatolia *en route* between his hometown Antioch and the capital; he also spent seven years of his life teaching ín Bithynia, first in Nikaia (342-344) then in Nikomedia (344-349). Unfortunately from our point of view, none of his letters prior to 350 have survived; Bradbury 2004, 73.
6 Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep.* 14, adapted from H.C. Ogle's translation in *NPNF*.
7 E.g. in Fronto's correspondence with Marcus Aurelius; also in some of Trajan's letters *to* Pliny, cf. *Ep.* 10.18; 10.34; 10.44; 10.50; 10.66; 10.80; 10.93.
8 For a familiar example, cf. the openings of Pliny's two letters to Tacitus about his uncle's death, *Ep.* 6.16 and 6.20.
9 Sherwin-White 1966, 6-9, addresses the stylistic aspect of Pliny's letter-openings, but devotes little attention to their function.
10 In *Ep.* 10.3a Pliny asks Trajan for permission to act as prosecutor of Marius Priscus in a case *de repetundis*, c. AD 100; the same case is mentioned in *Ep.* 2.11 and 2.12.
11 *Ep.* 10.51.
12 Compare *Ep.* 2.11, in which Pliny recounts how he has been pleading a case before the emperor and takes pains to emphasize the "interest" (*studium*), "attention" (*cura*) and "concern" (*sollicitudo*) shown him by Trajan, with Dion's *Or.* 45.3, where he claims to enjoy the "interest" (*spoudê*) and "friendship" (*philanthropia*) of the same emperor.
13 Sherwin-White 1966, 557-558.
14 E.g., *Ep*. 2.11; 3.18.
15 Millar 1977, 114-115.
16 The *corpus* of eighty speeches known to us was established by the time of Photios, but in the version he used, the speeches were arranged in a different order, e.g. the *Euboicus* (*Or.* 7) was known to Photios as the 13th oration, and the "*homonoia* orations" (*Or.* 38-41) as nos. 21-24. On Photios as a source for the life and *oeuvre* of Dion, see Schamp 1987, 263-270; Hägg 1975, 160-183.
17 For a detailed discussion of the arrangement of Dion's speeches, see Arnim 1891.
18 Compare, e.g., the lively to-and-fro of the assembly meeting recorded in *P.Oxy.* 2407 (late third century)
19 Well into the second century, municipal council proceedings were still taken down in note form and rendered in *oratio obliqua*, Coles 1966b.
20 *IK* 39.3; see also p. 103-104.
21 E.g., *Or.* 32.67 and 33.57.
22 They were certainly in place before the time of Photios, who gives the rubrics in more or less the same form that we find them in the mss. of the *corpus*; cf. Hägg 1975, 161.

23 Arnim 1891, 368-369
24 The normal order of speaking in Roman city councils, as in the senate, was according to seniority and the rank of one's previous magistracies (*Digest* 50.3.1); as a recent arrival who had not held the archontate, Dion would not be among the first speakers of the day.
25 *Or.* 49; in 49.1-13, Dion provides a wide-ranging discussion of philosophical attitudes to the exercise of political power, with examples drawn from faraway places like Persia and Gaul; then in 49.14-15, he briefly states his reasons for declining the offer of an archontate. The contrast between the two sections is striking.
26 For a discussion of the nature and development of the honorific inscription as a genre, see Quass 1993, 29-35.
27 Ameling, *IK* 27 p. 17.
28 Fernoux 2004, 321, tab. 14.
29 Dölger 1927, 10-11; also 67-71. Some titles used in the fiscal administration of the fourth and fifth century, such as *dioiketês*, survived the feudalization of the Byzantine empire and remained in use as late as the twelfth century.
30 *IKourion*, 127-145.
31 Hannestad 1986, 21-27, 56-58.
32 For the Egyptian coinage see, most recently, Christiansen 2003.
33 Kraft 1972, 90.
34 Kraft 1972, 92-93.
35 Kraft 1972, Taf. 102, 38a-b.
36 Price and Trell 1977, 99-106; 201; 213; 215; Kraft 1935, 213-220.