

THE SPEECHES IN APPIAN'S *MITHRIDATEIOS*: A PRELIMINARY APPROACH

LOS DISCURSOS EN EL *MITHRIDATEIOS* DE APIANO: UNA APROXIMACIÓN PRELIMINAR

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Abstract: Appian's *Mithridateios* contains a considerable number of formal speeches, to which others found by the author in his sources could have been added, but he chose not to develop them. Most of these passages relate to the First Mithridatic War, in line with the prominence that Appian attributes to Sulla in the crisis of the Roman Republic. While the Roman general delivers the longest speeches in this work, Mithridates has only three, which also appear notably abbreviated. Very possibly, Pompeius Trogus' historical work was the source for the main rhetorical passages.

Resumen: El *Mithridateios* de Apiano contiene un buen número de discursos formales, a los que habría que unir otros que el autor encontró en sus fuentes pero decidió no desarrollar. La mayoría de estos pasajes se refieren a la primera Guerra Mitridática, de acuerdo con el protagonismo que Apiano da a Sila dentro de la crisis de la República romana. Mientras que el general romano pronuncia los discursos más largos de esta obra, Mitridates tiene sólo tres, que además aparecen notablemente recortados. Muy probablemente, la fuente de los principales pasajes retóricos fue la obra histórica de Pompeyo Trogo

Keywords: Appian, *Mithridateios*, Mithridates, Sulla, Pompeius Trogus.

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1. Introduction*

Appian's work includes a significant irregularly distributed number of formal speeches that he uses to describe different characters and situations of particular interest. The *Mithridateios* is an example of this use of rhetoric; the placement of the oratorical passages and the choice of protagonists reveal certain aspects of Appian's working methodology, including the sources he used and the criteria he adopted when conceiving this part of his *Roman History*. In the present contribution, I reflect on the issues underpinning the *Mithridateios*, an ostensibly simple but extraordinarily complex text.¹ My aim is to underscore Appian's selection of the speeches he encounters in his sources on Mithridates, while also highlighting certain details that may guide us in identifying the origin of the main oratorical passages recorded in this book.

The *Mithridateios* was not conceived entirely as a biography of King Mithridates Eupator—just as Appian's book on Hannibal, which focuses on the vicissitudes of the Second Punic War in Italy, was not a biography of the Carthaginian leader. As I have stated elsewhere, it seems that the author's original intention was to write a history of the province of Bithynia and Pontus, a well-differentiated region within the Roman Empire. The book begins with the mythical origins of the Bithynian royalty and concludes with Caesar's victory over Pharnaces II, son of Mithridates, and the definitive incorporation of the Anatolian territories of the Pontic crown under Roman rule.² Appian, or his source, might have wanted to downplay Pompey's involvement in the victory over Pontus while representing

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¹ The only specific study on the *Mithridateios* remains the one carried out by McGing (1993), to which we must add the extensive introduction to that book by Goukowsky (2001) for the Budé Edition. Although Hahn (1982) largely bases his argument on the use of speeches in Appian, the only monographic approach to this topic is that of Carsana (2013), which does not refer to the book at hand. See further the brief remarks by Westall (2015: 138), and McGing (2019: xxviii-xxx). For a non-exhaustive study on the speeches in the *Mithridateios*, see further Goukowsky (2001: xxiii-xxvi; lix-lxvi). An analysis of Appian's orations related to the First Mithridatic War is developed by Desideri (1973).

² Ballesteros Pastor (2013a: 186); Id. (2013b: 16); cf. Bucher (2000: 419). The province's name had been *Pontus et Bithynia* under Augustus, but it was later changed to *Bithynia et Pontus* (Wesch-Klein, 2001), perhaps explaining why Appian started with the mythical history of Bithynia (*Mith.*1). This could be compared to the beginning of the African book, which commences with the legend of Dido (*Afr.*1). However, our author declares no interest in the mythical origins of Iberia (*App. Hisp.*2; cf. *Ill.*2).

Caesar's triumph over Pharnaces II in Zela as the extinction of a royal house that had caused so many problems for Rome.³ Mithridates dominates much of the book, a diachronic narrative spanning from the king's involvement in the dispute over the Cappadocian throne in the early first century BC to his death in 63 BC. Appian might have found it easier to write about the life of Mithridates than the lives of the Bithynian kings, which would have required the use of more varied and scattered sources. Nevertheless, the Mithridatic Wars were the most significant episode in the history of the region before it was definitively annexed by the Romans.

2. Developed, outlined, and implicit speeches in the *Mithridateios*

The *Mithridateios* contains a considerable number of oratorical passages that characterize not only the king himself but also other protagonists, both Roman and Eastern. Let us begin by identifying the passages we are referring to, putting the corresponding chapter numbers in parentheses: the speech given by the Pontic emissary Pelopidas to the Roman mission and Bithynian dignitaries (12); the response of the envoys of Nicomedes IV of Bithynia (13); Pelopidas' response to the previous speech (14); Pelopidas' speech to the Roman generals after the Pontic conquest of Cappadocia (and a summarized reply from the Romans) (15-16)⁴; the statement of the *strategos* Archelaus to Sulla in the peace negotiations after the Pontic debacle in Greece (54)⁵; Sulla's response, with a brief reply from Archelaus

³ App. *Mith.*120-121; cf. Flor. 2.13.61. We cannot determine whether this idea was original to Appian, who likely took it from his sources. Appian and Florus may have shared a common source on Mithridates, possibly Pompeius Trogus: Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 96). It is also noteworthy that Justin (37.1.6-9), Memnon (*BNJ* 434 F1 22.2), and Florus (1.40.1-2) include an *encomium* of the king at the beginning of their respective accounts, following the example of Sallust on Catilina (*Cat.* 5) and Jugurtha (*Jug.* 6.1-2), and Livy on Hannibal (28.12) and Masinissa (29.29.5-12): cf. Van Wickevoort Crommelin (1993: 289 n.844, 292 n.857; 294 n.859). On the relationship between Appian and Florus, see Goukowsky (2001: cv); Id. (2008: xix-xxxvii); Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 19 n.68); Osgood (2015: 27-28); Rich (2020).

⁴ Appian only speaks of generals (*στρατηγοί*), but alongside the proconsuls of Asia and Cilicia, the Roman mission sent to Bithynia was presided over by Manius Aquillius (*cos.* 101 BC), along with Manlius Mancinus and others whose names do not appear in the sources: see Ballesteros Pastor (1996: 84-86); Id. (2013: 210-211).

⁵ The speeches delivered during these negotiations, summarized in Plutarch's *Sulla* 22.3-4, undoubtedly derived from a different source. Both Sulla and Mithridates were renowned for their proficiency in the art of oratory: see respectively Steel (2019); Plu. *Sull.* 24.2.

(54-55); exchanges between Sulla and the envoys dispatched by Mithridates to negotiate peace (56); Mithridates' speech to Sulla before an agreement was concluded at Dardanus (56); Sulla's reply (57-58); Sulla's oration to the representatives of the cities in the province of Asia (62); Mithridates' harangue before commencing the final war against Rome (70); and a summary of a discourse by Mithridates rejecting any kind of agreement with Rome when Pompey proposes he surrender (98).⁶

In addition to these passages, we can add other speeches that Appian must have found in his sources but chose not to develop (in particular, the exhortations during battles would correspond to the type known as the *epipoleis*): orders of Mithridates, during the siege of Rhodes, sailing among his ships, directing them to encircle the enemy vessels (24);⁷ the king's exhortation, as he sailed around his fleet, urging his men (25);⁸ Sulla's words to his soldiers encouraging them to persist in the siege of Athens (40);⁹ Archelaus' words to his troops before engaging the Romans at the battle of Chaeronea (44); the plea of the Pontic soldiers for their comrades to open the camp gates in the same battle (44); a phrase uttered by Sulla during the battle of Orchomenus, reproducing the *topos* of defending one's insignia against the enemy (probably part of a longer exhortation to his troops) (49);¹⁰ Sulla's exhortation to his men (given on horseback) in the same battle, when he urges them not to cease until victory (49);¹¹ Sulla's exhortation to his soldiers in the same battle that they continue fighting until they take the enemy camp (50);¹² Mithridates' final words upon accepting Sulla's conditions at Dardanus (58); Sulla's order to Fimbria to surrender and the latter's reply (59); the Pontic ambassadors' appeal to L. Licinius Murena and his reply (64); Lucullus' words to his troops before the siege of Cyzicus (72);¹³ a message from an envoy of Lucullus to Mithridates

⁶ This speech has been associated with a section of Mithridates' harangue in Justin (38.6): Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 56-57); Id. (2015: 85).

⁷ Carmona (2014: 140 n.61, 161, 271; cf. 215). In general, on this type of exhortation, see Ibid. (2014).

⁸ Carmona (2014: 140 n.61, 161-162 with n. 630, 201, 263).

⁹ Carmona (2014: 140 n.61, 265, 271).

¹⁰ Carmona Centeno (2009: 286-289); cf. Id. (2014: 103-105, 140 n. 61, 195, 225, 263, 271). This exhortation must have become famous, as it also appears in Plu. *Sull.*21.2; Front. *Str.*2.8.12; Polyae. 8.9.2; and Amm.16.12.41. For other oratorical passages of Sulla collected by Plutarch, see Steel (2019: 25-26).

¹¹ Carmona (2014: 272).

¹² Carmona (2014: 293).

¹³ This speech also appears in Memn. *BNJ* 434 F1, 27.8; cf. with Lucullus' words in Plu. *Luc.*8.4.

(72); exchange between the defenders of Cyzicus and the king's prisoners (73); an exchange between the king and his *philoi*, who recommend lifting the siege on that city (75); Mithridates' proposal to the prefect Pomponius and his response (79);¹⁴ exhortation of Mithridates to his troops during the battle of Cabira (80); a harangue given by Tigranes II of Armenia to his men (85);¹⁵ exchange between Tigranes and Pompey (104-105); a transcription (in quotation marks) of the words of Pharnaces' supporters when he rebels against his father (110) (it is unclear whether this final example comes from a formal speech or was simply an isolated phrase within the narrative); and an exchange between deserters and troops loyal to Mithridates (111).

3. Appian's interest in the First Mithridatic War

The above lists indicate Appian's particular interest in the First Mithridatic War; his account of the second war includes hardly any speeches, and the third has only two that are developed, albeit notably abbreviated.¹⁶ Moreover, the author drastically reduced the length of the speeches from which the passages in the second list were drawn. The sources on the final conflict between Mithridates and Rome would have contained many orations Appian chose to omit or mention only in passing—for instance, Lucullus' and Tigranes' speeches marking two climactic episodes, namely the siege of Cyzicus and the battle of Tigranocerta.¹⁷ At the same time, if we acknowledge that Appian must have used the same source as Memnon of Heraclea, we are bound to conclude that the former does not even hint at some speeches, such as those delivered at this city on the Euxine in favour

¹⁴ This episode was also recorded by Plutarch, *Luc.* 15.2, and Memnon, *BNJ* 434 F1, 30.2 (who does not reproduce the words between the ruler and the prefect). This Pomponius or Pompeius has been identified with the ancestor of Pompeius Trogus who fought in this war: Goukowsky (2001: 208-209 n.730).

¹⁵ This famous saying of Tigranes II can be also found in Plu., *Luc.* 27.4; Memn. *BNJ* 434 F1, 38,4-5; *Suda*, s.v. Λούκουλλος, and, in indirect style, in D.C. 36.1b.2. This phrase may have been part of a harangue rather than a conversation between the Armenian ruler and Mithridates, as Appian seems to suggest: Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 45); Id. (2015: 83). It derived from a Neo-Assyrian tradition: Schropp; Manning (2019). Concerning the selection criteria employed by ancient historians in relation to the speeches they encountered in their sources and the adaptation they undertake, see Brock (1995).

¹⁶ This preference was noted by Goukowsky (2001: xxv-xxvi), who attributed it to an evolution of Appian's aesthetics. See further McGing (2003: 320).

¹⁷ See App. *Mith.* 72; Memn. *BNJ* 434 F1, 27.8; cf. Plu. *Luc.* 8.4, during the siege of Cyzicus. On the harangues before the battle of Tigranocerta, see nn.10, 18, 19.

of and against an alliance with Mithridates.¹⁸ The same could be said of Plutarch, whose account of this war sometimes bears comparison with Appian's and incorporates snippets of what must have been orations in his sources.¹⁹

Appian was concerned principally with the causes of the First Mithridatic War. If, as McGing has asserted, Appian's main interests were war and diplomacy, this book offers a good example.²⁰ Pelopidas' arguments justifying Mithridates' grievances—which are not found in any other source—are well-developed, as are the responses from the representatives of Nicomedes IV and, albeit summarised, the Roman ambassadors.²¹ Similarly, Sulla's pronouncements in his negotiations with Archelaus and the encounter with Mithridates at Dardanus detail Roman objections to the king's attitude. Another aspect worth highlighting is that Sulla's speeches take up more text than those of any other character; leaving aside the brief letter to the Chians, the Pontic monarch merits only three

¹⁸ Memn. *BNJ* 434 F1 35.3, and further: Mithridates' speech to the Heracleans (29.4); Lucullus' words to the Amisenians urging them to surrender (30.3); conversation between Appius Claudius and Tigranes (31.2); words of Triarius to calm his men for the loss of loot in the capture of Heraclea (35.6); arguments of the Pontic leaders in Sinope for and against surrendering to Lucullus (37.4); Lucullus' harangue before the battle of Tigranocerta (38.5). See further above n. 15.

¹⁹ Negotiations of Sulla during the siege of Athens (*Sull.* 13.4; 14.5); Sulla's exchange with his men in Boeotia (*Sull.* 16.6); Lucullus' exchange with the Cyrenaeans (*Luc.* 2.4); negotiations between Sulla and Archelaus (*Sull.* 22.4-5); Sulla's conversation with the Pontic envoys and a conclusive intervention by Archelaus (*Sull.* 23.3-4); peace talks with Mithridates at Dardanus (*Sull.* 24.1-3); Sulla's justification in the face of protests from his men for arranging peace with the king (*Sull.* 24.4); negotiations between Sertorius and Mithridates (*Sert.* 23.4-24.1); Lucullus' harangue to explain the need to free Cotta from the Pontic blockade (*Luc.* 8.4); Lucullus' exhortation during the siege of Cyzicus (*Luc.* 9.2); words of the Pontics to the Cyzicenes (*Luc.* 9.4); grievances of Lucullus' soldiers and the commander's reply (*Luc.* 14.2-6); Monime's last words (*Luc.* 18.4); Lucullus' lament after the fall of Amisus (*Luc.* 19.4-5); exchange between Appius and Tigranes (*Luc.* 21.6-7); conversation between Tigranes and Metrodorus (*Luc.* 22.2-3); Lucullus encourages his men before entering Armenia (*Luc.* 24.8); Tigranes' mockery, disparaging Lucullus' generalship (*Luc.* 25.1); Tigranes' words in the battle of Tigranocerta and an exchange with Taxiles (*Luc.* 27.4-5; see above n.15); Lucullus' harangue to his soldiers before the battle (*Mor.* 203a; *Luc.* 27.7); disdainful words of Lucullus' men refusing to continue the campaign (*Luc.* 30.4); speech of L. Quintius against Lucullus (*Luc.* 33.4-5); complaints of Publius Clodius before Lucullus' men (*Luc.* 34.2); conversation between Lucullus and Pompey (*Pomp.* 31.6-7); meeting of Pompey and Tigranes (*Pomp.* 33.4-5); disdainful words of Tigranes the Younger (*Pomp.* 33.5). For other speeches, see above nn.10-15. On the use, among others, of a common source on the Mithridatic Wars by Appian, Memnon, Trogus, and, partially, Plutarch, see Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 15-20, 40-46 and *passim*); Id. (2016: 67-71); cf. Goukowsky (2001: cxi-cxii). See further Schropp; Manning (2019). On Plutarch's influence on Appian, see recently Marco (2022).

²⁰ McGing (1993: 506-507 and *passim*); Id. (2019: xxvi).

²¹ App. *Mith.* 12-16.

rhetorical passages.²² Appian's decision to combine direct and indirect styles in the first two instances above was the result of the work that he carries out with respect to his source.²³ These criteria of selection lead us to think that, indeed, the author from Alexandria did not write a biography of Mithridates but an analysis of the decades-long struggle of Roman imperialism. Once the causes of the conflict are presented, the characterization of the central figure becomes a secondary matter.

Appian has a particular interest in the struggle between Marius and Sulla, as can be seen in his account of the Civil Wars.²⁴ Sulla is one of the central protagonists of this turbulent period; his attitude in the First Mithridatic War is particularly important because it predetermines to a certain extent his actions upon returning to Italy. It is also striking that Lucius Licinius Lucullus (*cos.* 74 BC), who played a leading role in the final conflict between Eupator and Rome, is not assigned any developed oratorical passage. Appian may, therefore, have regarded the general as a secondary actor.²⁵ As with the account of the preliminary peace talks of the winter of 86/85 BC and the exchanges between Sulla and Mithridates at Dardanus (85 BC), the king's words are boiled down to their essentials, in contrast with those of the Roman commander.²⁶ Meanwhile, Sulla's address to the representatives of the cities of Asia comprises a disquisition of his view of the region and a description of how the Greeks were treated by the Roman Republic.²⁷ The passage explores both the motives of the provincials in embracing Mithridates' cause and the funding problems of the Roman state (one of the primary concerns of our author).²⁸

4. Noteworthy parallels

As we have already suggested, an analysis of the content of the speeches reveals certain things about their origins. For instance, the first discourses

²² App. *Mith.* 56, 70, 98.

²³ This device would tend to emphasise the conclusive idea in the speeches: cf. Rich (2015: 80).

²⁴ App. *Pro.* 14; Gabba (1956), 92-97 and *passim*; cf. Cuff (1967: 180).

²⁵ However, Appian's account seems to be favourable to Lucullus: McGing (1993: 516); Dueck (2006: 56); Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 45); cf. Goukowsky (2001: liii-lvii).

²⁶ Compare App. *Mith.* 56, and 58-59; Santangelo (2009: 62-63).

²⁷ App. *Mith.* 62; Cuff (1983: 159-160); Thein (2014: 178, 182-183, and *passim*); cf. Santangelo (2007: 50-66).

²⁸ On this topic, see McGing (2019: xxv); cf. Cuff (1983: 156 and *passim*).

of Pelopidas and Sulla before Archelaus (which, as McGing has observed, are quite similar) must have come from the same source. For example, both passages refer to Mithridates' preparations for war, with particular reference to the recruitment of 'lookouts and helmsmen' (πρωρέας και κυβερνήτας) for the royal fleet, in almost identical prose.²⁹

Moreover, Sulla's oration to the representatives of the cities of Asia is curiously precise, chronologically speaking. He states that 23 years of peace have passed in Asia from the end of the War of Aristonicus (129 BC) to the beginning of the conflict with Mithridates. Interestingly, an obituary-like passage in the same book (although doubts have been raised over where it should be placed) speaks of Mithridates' almost 42-year struggle against the Romans.³⁰ This claim has not received a great deal of attention but seems to be an error, given several sources state that the Mithridatic Wars lasted 40 years.³¹ Appian may be alluding to the conquest of eastern Paphlagonia by Eupator, who then shared the kingdom with Nicomedes III of Bithynia. Only Justin mentions this episode, which must have taken place around 105 BC.³² The author of the *Epitome* was therefore able to assert that the Roman order for the Pontic king to evacuate this territory would have constituted 'another form of war'.³³ In my opinion, the reference to 42 years derives from the same tradition that speaks of 40 years; the latter period has simply been rounded down. Appian refers to 42 and 40 years in Chapter 118, so some translators have considered the former figure to be a manuscript error.³⁴

5. Reflection on the sources

These and other parallels prompt us to reflect on the sources of these speeches. The immediate assumption may be that Sulla's prominence in the

²⁹ App. *Mith.* 13; 57; cf. McGing (1993: 515).

³⁰ App. *Mith.* 62; 118. Regarding the problematic placement of this last passage, see McGing (2021). Some modern editions maintain this chapter and the following one at the beginning of the book, as if they were an encomium: Veh; Brodersen (1987: 330); Goukowsky (2001: XII.1-3), following Schweighäuser: cf. Van Wickevoort Crommelin (1993: 294 n.859).

³¹ App. *Mith.* 112, 118; *Syr.* 48; Flor.1.40.2; Oros.5.9.12; 6.1.28; 6.5.11; Eutr.6.12.3; Schol.Iuv.10.273; Aug. CD 5.22; Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 93-94).

³² Iust.37.4.3-9; Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 160-169).

³³ Iust.38.5.4: *Quid, cum Paphlagonia se decedere iusserint, non alterum illud genus belli fuisse?*; Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 93-94, 241-242). Salomone Gaggero (1979: 133-134), related these events to the struggle for succession in Cappadocia.

³⁴ Such is the case with Sancho Royo (1980: 593).

narrative derives from Appian's use of the dictator's memoirs.³⁵ However, certain details rule out such a hypothesis: Sulla's discourse at Dardanus refers to Manius Aquilius (*cos.* 101 BC) only by his *praenomen*, as is the case elsewhere in the *Mithridateios*.³⁶ Alluding to a Roman figure in this manner was not uncommon amongst the Greeks; indeed, the same consular is referred to by his *praenomen* in Memnon's history of Heraclea (which shares many similarities with Appian's work).³⁷ In the speech delivered in Ephesus, Sulla speaks about his office as *propraetor* of Cilicia using the word ἄρχων, whereas Appian normally employs the term στρατηγός when referring to governors of Roman provinces.³⁸ In the exchange between Sulla and Mithridates, Appian's source would have given the king the final word, interrupting the general's plea and declaring agreement with the conditions being imposed.³⁹ Although there was no hard and fast rule that the king should speak last, it may be an indication that the source was written from an Eastern perspective. It is reasonable, therefore, to surmise that the source was Greek or that a Latin author translated it from Greek.⁴⁰ According to Steel, Appian selected certain of Sulla's speeches to stress the brutality of Roman imperialism.⁴¹ In my view this cannot be the case; Appian is simply more interested in Sulla and hence gives him greater prominence.

I believe that all the formal speeches in the *Mithridateios* share the same provenance – Pompeius Trogus. It is known that Appian made extensive use of Latin sources, so the *Philippic Histories* would have been particularly useful to him. It would also explain the critical, though not entirely anti-Roman tone of his work.⁴² The echoes of Trogus' work point to a tradition that disapproves of certain aspects of Roman imperialism and

³⁵ Calabi (1950: 245); cf. Goukowsky (2001: cxiii, cxxiv-cxxv).

³⁶ App. *Mith.* 17, 57, 113; cf. 19.

³⁷ Memn. *BNJ* 434 F1 22.7. On the exclusive use of the *praenomen* to refer to a Roman, see, for instance, Plb.15.2.11; *IMac.*15.16; *LAI* 14.217; cf. Bean (1948: 53). On the analogies between Memnon and Appian on Mithridates, see above n.19.

³⁸ App. *Mith.* 62; cf. Luce (1961); Goldmann (1988: 86-87).

³⁹ Smith (2012: 104).

⁴⁰ On this possibility, see Ballesteros Pastor (2013b:15-46 and *passim*).

⁴¹ Steel (2017: 26).

⁴² On the affinities between Appian and Trogus/Justin regarding the history of Mithridates Eupator, see above all Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 15-20 and *passim*). Other authors have argued that this critical tone towards Rome would come from Timagenes of Alexandria: see, among others, Reinach (1890: 444); Gabba (1957: 349-50); Rizzo (1963: 39-41); cf. Ballesteros Pastor (1999: 138), and the skepticism of Rich (2015: 74-75).

is detected not only in the speeches but also in other passages.⁴³ For instance, Appian describes the different circumstances in which Roman leaders break an oath, justifying accusations of perfidy against various leaders, such as those levelled by Mithridates himself (who protests against having to return Greater Phrygia because it had been granted by the Romans to his father and, apparently, to him also).⁴⁴ Similarly, the Senate's delay in ratifying the Dardanus peace agreements, which only Appian directly alludes to, would be another example of the Romans' limited fidelity to their given word.⁴⁵

Mithridates' harangue is the longest rhetorical passage assigned to the Pontic king in Appian's work, yet it does not equal the length of Sulla's main speeches.⁴⁶ Furthermore, it is the sole harangue before an assembly of troops recorded in Appian's books concerning foreign wars.⁴⁷ Most likely, the original exhortation was located in Book XXXVIII of Trogus' *Philippic Histories*, which included events following the peace with Sulla, along with many others: the reign of Ptolemy VIII Evergetes, the first part of the reign of Demetrius II of Syria, his capture by the Parthians, and the reign of Antiochus VII Sidetes.⁴⁸ Appian's mention of Mithridates' campaign against the Colchians and Bosporans after the agreements with Sulla corresponds to the digression on the history of these peoples that appeared at the end of Book XXXVII of the *Philippic Histories*, as the *Prologues* inform us.⁴⁹ According to Appian, Mithridates begins his exhortation by

⁴³ For criticism of Rome in Justin, see Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 61-71), and further Adler (2009: 37-58); Santangelo (2009).

⁴⁴ About this complaint of Mithridates, see in particular App. *Mith.* 11, 13; 15; 56-57; *Iust.* 38.5.3; 38.5.5; McGing (1980); Adler (2009), 44-45; Ballesteros Pastor (2013b), 237-242; cf. Desideri (1973: 6-7 n.19). Appian's presumed anti-Roman bias was questioned by Desideri (1973) and McGing (2019: xxxii). Deception is one of the central themes in the *Roman History*: Cowan (2015).

⁴⁵ App. *Mith.* 65, 67-68, 70; cf. Sall. *Hist. fr.* 4.60.13 Ramsey; Adler (2011: 25).

⁴⁶ See above n.20.

⁴⁷ Carmona (2014: 174).

⁴⁸ Trog. *Prol.* 38. The resemblance between these harangues of the king in Appian and Justin was already noted by Goukowsky (2001: xxvi), who simply supposed that the former had sought to rival Trogus' exhortation. See further Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 57, 272-273).

⁴⁹ App. *Mith.* 64; Memn. *BNJ* 434 F1, 25.3; cf. Trog. *Prol.* 37: *Dictaque in excessu regum Bosporanorum et Colchorum origines et res gestae*. Regarding the division of Mithridates' biography in Trogus' work, cf. Ballesteros Pastor (2016: 79-81). Nevertheless, there is the possibility that this digression was not at the very end of Trogus' book XXXVII. After the conclusion of the Second Mithridatic War, Appian (*Mith.* 67) makes a brief reference to the Achaeans of the Euxine, who lived north of Colchis, but he expands more on them in chapter 102, where he returns to what was already mentioned in the former passage.

referring to his ancestors, following the example of Pericles' famous funeral oration recorded by Thucydides.⁵⁰ However, Appian has no interest in this theme and dismisses the initial part of the speech, considering it a reflection of the king's vanity.⁵¹ Thus, Mithridates appears to focus on the possibility of defeating the Romans, who are beset by internal strife. A reference to the Pontic lineage also appears in a section of the king's long speech in Book XXXVIII of Justin's *Epitome*.⁵² This part of the discourse would have come from the same source as Appian's harangue, but Justin appends other rhetorical passages from Trogus to construct an extensive address from Mithridates that accords with the importance he wishes to ascribe to him.⁵³ He concludes the king's allocution by making a mistake with the date (to avoid appearing anachronistic) but adds a connecting Latin phrase that evokes the one Appian uses to conclude the king's exhortation.⁵⁴ Here and elsewhere in the *Mithridateios*, Appian does not bother to reproduce extensive fragments, opting to summarize in an indirect style the most part of the harangue, highlighting a few phrases that he deems particularly relevant.⁵⁵

6. The *Mithridateios*: an unfinished book?

As Brian McGing has suggested, Appian may have died before completing the editing of the *Mithridateios*.⁵⁶ This would explain, for instance, the

⁵⁰ App. *Mith* 70. Th.2.36.1-2. On Appian's reading of this passage, see Goldmann (1988: 7 n.6; 74 n.149), and on Thucydides' influence on Appian, see recently Pitcher (2023: 241-242; with further bibliography). Concerning the mention of ancestors in speeches, see especially Loraux 1981; and further Iglesias Zoido (2007: 147-148); Id. (2011: 69, 113).

⁵¹ Appian describes Mithridates' tone in this speech as 'boastful' (μεγαληγόρως): Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 57); Id. (2016: 81-82). The king's *superbia* was also echoed by Justin: 37.4.5: Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 52), and also appears in Memn. *BNJ* 434 F1, 22.3; Plu. *Pomp.* 37.1; Sall. *Hist.* fr.2.60-62 Ramsey.

⁵² Iust.38.7.1; Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 280-285); cf. Id. (2023).

⁵³ On the composition of Mithridates' harangue in Justin, see Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 52-61, 222-296); Id. (2016: 84-85).

⁵⁴ Iust.38.8.1: *Sic excitatis militibus, post annos tres et XX sumpti regni in bella Romana descendit*; App. *Mith.* 71: ταῦτ' εἰπὼν καὶ τὸν στρατὸν ἐρεθίσας ἐνέβαλεν ἐς Βιθυνίαν. According to Justin, the date would be 89 BC, just before the outbreak of the First Mithridatic War (cf. Leydold 2019). However, Justin's date could refer to 99 BC, which marks 23 years since the death of Mithridates V Evergetes, Eupator's father. This aligns with the onset of the conflict between Eupator and Rome upon the death of Ariarathes VII of Cappadocia in the early first century BC, as suggested by Appian, *Mith.* 17, and Memnon, *BNJ* 434 F1 22.1. On the chronology, see Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 87-91).

⁵⁵ This same device appears in App. *Mith.* 11, 14, 56.

⁵⁶ McGing (2019: xxviii-xix); Id. (2021: 798). On Appian's modifications in his work during composition, see further Bucher (2000: 418).

duplication of possibly necrological passages at the end of the text and details such the Mithridatic Wars having started in 99 or 89 BC and lasting forty or forty-two years, thus presenting four different chronologies;⁵⁷ the interchangeable description of Machares as *basileus* and *archon*;⁵⁸ the reference to Mithridates as the sixth king of the dynasty at the beginning of the book and the eighth in the first of the obituaries;⁵⁹ and the two different versions of the reception of Tigranes II by Pompey.⁶⁰ It is also clear that Appian consulted various accounts of Alexander's stay in Anatolia.⁶¹ Likewise, it is possible that he originally intended to incorporate other speeches but ultimately decided against it.

7. Conclusion

In sum, Appian's *Mithridateios*, like the other books in his *Roman History*, is a meditation on how the Roman empire achieved its greatness.⁶² It is therefore understandable that Sulla is prominent, certainly more so than the other Roman generals who fought against Pontus and even the king himself. Therefore, the selection of speeches delivered by the dictator is driven by an interest in his role in the crisis of the Republic, although it cannot be assumed that his memoirs were Appian's principal source for the First Mithridatic War.⁶³ István Hahn claimed that Appian copied speeches which he found in his source material only; in other words, he did not compose any original ones.⁶⁴ Although this hypothesis is strongly contested, if we admit that Pompeius Trogus was one of the most important sources for the *Mithridateios*, the *Philippic Histories* provided all

⁵⁷ See above nn. 24-27. Appian says that the conflict that started in 89 BC was the first war between Rome and Mithridates (*Mith.* 19; 64; 66; 92), but also places the outbreak of the hostilities around the 173th Olympiad (*i.e.* July 100 BC – July 96 BC: *Mith.* 17; see above n. 54). In general, see Ballesteros Pastor (2013b: 19). Regarding possible sources used by Appian for this book, see further McGing (1991: 500); Mastrocinque (1999: 59-75 and *passim*); Goukowsky (2001: ciii-cxxv).

⁵⁸ App. *Mith.* 67; 83 (βασιλεύς); *Mith.* 78 (ἄρχων).

⁵⁹ App. *Mith.* 9, 112.

⁶⁰ App. *Mith.* 104.

⁶¹ App. *Mith.* 8. For other inconsistencies in Appian's book, see McGing (1991), 517-520; Goukowsky (2001: xxii).

⁶² McGing (2019: xiii).

⁶³ Hypothesis proposed by Calabi (1950: 245) and Mastrocinque (1999: 64-69, 75), partially followed by Goukowsky (2001: cxii-cxiii, cxxiv-cxxv, with further bibliography).

⁶⁴ Hahn (1982: 252-254).

of its rhetorical passages because it should have contained all the speeches in this book. The recurrence of phrases and themes that do not appear in any other text would substantiate the importance of this Universal History as a source.⁶⁵ Appian found in Trogus an account of the vicissitudes of the Pontic king, and it was convenient for him to adapt it to Greek —just as he had done with other Latin sources— while applying his own perspectives.⁶⁶

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⁶⁵ On Trogus as the main source for the *Mithridateios*, see above nn. 42-50. On the speeches in the *Historiae Philippicae*, see Ballesteros Pastor (2017). In support of Appian's reworking of the speeches he found in his sources, as well as his composition of original discourses, see, e.g., Carmona Centeno (2005); Id. (2014: 146 n. 577); Hopwood (2015); McGing (2019: xxviii). Carsana (2013) distinguishes between fictional speeches and those that may have actually delivered.

⁶⁶ On Appian's use of Latin sources, see above all Famerie (1998), and further Gabba (1971); Mastrocinque (1999: 59-72); Torres Guerra (2006); Santamato (2013). Osgood (2015: 113) argued that Appian used Roman sources for the period from 80 BC onwards.

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