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Sergey Litovchenko

Candidate of History, Associate Professor

V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

4 Svobody Sq., 61022, Kharkiv, Ukraine

Email: litovchenkosd@gmail.com

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7602-9534>

ARTAXIAS II AND THE MURDER OF THE ROMANS IN GREATER ARMENIA¹

In 30 BC, by the order of the king of Armenia Artaxias II, all Romans in the kingdom were killed. However, this crime had virtually no effect on the reign of the new king of Armenia. A significant Roman presence in Armenia during this period is confirmed neither by material sources nor by numismatic evidence. More rational may be the hypothesis about Roman merchants who fell victim to the Armenian sword, but their presence in Greater Armenia is just an assumption. In our view, there were simply not enough Roman citizens for a massacre in Armenia. Most likely, if there were victims (and this cannot be denied, since it was Artaxias who seized his father's kingdom), then they were Roman soldiers who might not have had time to leave the kingdom to help Antony. Given

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the means of communication available in this era, this would not be surprising. But the king of Armenia simply did not have the opportunity to carry out a massacre similar to that perpetrated by Mithridates in Asia. In our view, the story of a murder of Roman citizens by the order of Artaxias II, which, for objective reasons, could not have been a mass event, can be attributed to Roman propaganda, which was preparing the ground for a possible forceful removal of the king of Armenia. However, the refusal of Augustus to take active steps in the East in the 20s BC apparently weakened the intensity of the spread of rumors about a massacre of Romans. The method of overthrowing Artaxias II no longer required the popularization of stories about the murder of Roman citizens, which probably did not go beyond Italy and found virtually no reflection in the sources. At the same time, Augustus himself probably believed that propaganda had formed such a negative image of Artaxias II in the Roman eyes that the possibility of turning Greater Armenia into a Roman province could be openly discussed.

Keywords: Artaxias II, Tigranes III, Greater Armenia, Rome, Augustus, Cassius Dio, Res gestae divi Augusti, propaganda.

The struggle between Mark Antony and Octavian led to notable upheavals across both the Roman possessions in Asia and the allied states of the East. One such event was the re-accession of Artaxias (Artaxes, Artashes) II as king of Armenia in 30 BC and the expulsion of Artavasdes (king of Media Atropatene and a Roman ally) from Greater Armenia. The legitimate son of Artavasdes II, king of Armenia, Artaxias II tried to take the throne of Greater Armenia in 34 BC, after Antony had captured his father and divided the kingdom between the son of Cleopatra VII and the king of Media Atropatene. Artaxias II could not retain his dominion in confrontation with Atropatene and the Roman legions for a long time, and was soon forced to flee to Parthia. The situation changed radically in 31 BC, when Antony summoned all Roman troops from Greater Armenia to fight Octavian². In 30 BC Artaxias II, probably with the help of Parthia, regained his father's throne³. The re-accession of the king of Armenia was accompanied by an unprecedented act the likes of which Rome had not encountered in the East for many years. By order

² Dio XLIX, 44, 4

³ Tac. Ann. II, 3, 3

of the king, all Romans in the kingdom were killed⁴: ὧν ἐγὼ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐάσω, δύο δὲ δὴ μόνων ὀνομαστὶ μνησθήσομαι: τὴν μὲν γὰρ Ἰωτάπην τῷ Μῆδῳ καταφυγόντι μετὰ τὴν ἥτταν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐκὼν ἀπέδωκε, τῷ δ' Ἀρτάξει τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καίπερ αἰτήσαντι οὐκ ἔπεμψεν, ὅτι τοὺς ὑπολειφθέντας ἐν τῇ Ἀρμενίᾳ Ῥωμαίους ἀπεκτόνει⁵. (I shall omit most of these cases and mention only two. Of his own accord he restored Iotape to the Median king, who had found an asylum with him after his defeat; but he refused the request of Artaxes that his brothers be sent to him, because this prince had put to death the Romans left behind in Armenia⁶).

However, this crime had virtually no effect on the reign of the new king of Armenia. The alleged murderer of Romans reigned for ten years without any Roman interference, and even in his overthrow Rome took only an indirect part. Augustus only refused to extradite the relatives of Artaxias II, who had been removed from Armenia by Antony⁷. But the Romans did not have to fulfill this demand in any case, since the ruler of Greater Armenia was an open ally of Parthia. In fact, there was no Roman reaction to the murder of Roman citizens.

Absolute, as far as we know, majority of modern researchers unconditionally accept the message of Cassius Dio (Baumgartner 1896, 1326; Asdourian 1911, 67; Debevoise 1938, 135; Grosso 1957, 242; Pani 1972, 10; Timpe 1975, 163; Volkmann 1979, 617; Sullivan, 1990, 290; Chaumont 1992, 181; Garsoian

⁴ Dio LI, 16. 2

⁵ The verb «ἀποκτείνω» can be translated both as «to kill» (it is this meaning that most dictionary entries indicate in the first place) and «to execute». Cassius Dio himself repeatedly used this verb (more than 300 times) both in the meaning of «to kill» and «to execute». Modern translations offer «to kill» (German translations, French translations and an Italian translation) or «to execute» (Russian translation), or «to put to death» (English translation). However, in our case, the choice of the meaning of the key verb is not so important. In the case of «to kill» it can be a small number, and in the case of «to execute» — a large one; but in the quotation above, the key is the very fact that Artaxias II killed/executed the «...Romans left behind in Armenia» — that is, all Roman citizens that remained in Greater Armenia became victims of the king of Armenia. This is probably why modern scholars often amplify the message of Cassius Dio by using the words «massacre», «slaughter» (Reinhold 1988, 82; Patterson 2015, 93; Kovacs 2016, 27).

⁶ Translation from E. Cary (Dio Cassius 1917).

⁷ Dio LI, 16, 2

1997, 61; Sicker 2000, 156; Luther 2003, 17, n. 33; Panov 2008, 11; Vardanyan 2018, 39; Luther 2018, 188.), without questioning the killing of Roman citizens, which, according to Th. Mommsen, put the ruler of Greater Armenia on a par with such an enemy of the Republic as Mithridates VI Eupator (Mommsen 1921, 369), king of Pontus. The inaction of the Romans in the 20s BC is traditionally explained in literature by Augustus's unwillingness to worsen relations with Parthia (Mommsen 1921, 371; Asdourian 1911, 67; Chaumont 1979, 74; Scullard 2011, 209)⁸. However, the Romans did not in fact shy away from direct intervention in Parthian affairs in the 20s BC (Debevoise 1938, 136-137). In our view, the lack of response to the murder of the Romans in Greater Armenia had other reasons.

It should be noted that this event is mentioned only in the work of Cassius Dio and once only, even though the sources repeatedly describe events directly related to Artaxias II, namely, his overthrow and the accession of Tigranes III in 20 BC. However, our sources offer no direct indication of a connection between the change of power in Greater Armenia and the killing of the Romans.

At the beginning of Augustus's journey to the eastern possessions of Rome in the late 20s BC, it became known that a conspiracy against Artaxias II had arisen in Armenia, and the conspirators turned to the Romans with a request to put on the throne of Armenia Tigranes III, who was held in Rome as a hostage. Augustus summoned his stepson Tiberius from Italy with troops and Tigranes, and sent them to Armenia. Even before the arrival of the Roman troops, the conspirators killed Artaxias II and the accession of Tigranes III was peaceful⁹. Thus, in the overthrow of the Armenian monarch, Rome was not the initiator. The Romans obviously had not planned a coup, since Augustus did not bring with him either his protégé or the necessary troops (Sherwin-White 1984, 323; Panov 2008, 116). It can still be assumed that rumors about the planned trip of the princeps provoked a conspiracy, but direct Roman participation in it seems unlikely. Under these conditions, the actions of the Romans did not need to be justified,

⁸ You can also find a statement that the overthrow of Artaxias II in 20 BC was a reaction to the murder of the Romans ten years earlier (Chaumont 1979, 74; Pani 1972, 17).

⁹ Dio LIV, 9, 4-5; Vell. Pat. II, 94, 4; Suet. Tib. 9, 1; Tac. Ann. II, 3, 4

since they answered a request from the Armenians themselves, but the lack of references to a retribution against Artaxias for the murder of Roman citizens still looks strange, especially if we recall that the voluntary issuance of Roman legion badges by the Parthians at the same time was presented by Augustus as a brilliant victory and almost as a subjugation of Parthia.

However, there are no direct references to the massacre in question in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, the official propaganda account of the reign of the Roman emperor. Augustus's assertion that he could have made Greater Armenia a province¹⁰ seems to have required some kind of argumentation, and in this case bringing up the Roman massacre by Artaxias II would be appropriate. But this event is absent from the text. Nothing is said about the murder of the Romans and a retribution by Velleius Paterculus, who twice mentions the Armenian mission of Tiberius¹¹. There is no report on the massacre in the *Annals* of Cornelius Tacitus, who at the same time relates in detail the overthrow of Artaxias II¹². Neither Flavius Josephus¹³ nor Suetonius¹⁴, who repeatedly refer to the events in Armenia, know anything about the murder of the Romans. There is no hint of the crime of Artaxias in the writings of Strabo, who left a detailed description of the position of Greater Armenia¹⁵ and knew about the mission of Tiberius¹⁶. Roman poets do not use the massacre story, including Horace, who mentions the events in Armenia¹⁷. Cassius Dio, who tells about the accession of Tigranes III, does not return to the crime of Artaxias¹⁸.

But it is not only the silence of the sources that makes it possible to doubt the reliability of the report on the massacre of Romans in Armenia.

¹⁰ RGDA. 27, 2

¹¹ Vell. Pat. II, 94, 4; 122. 1

¹² Tac. Ann. 2, 3, 4

¹³ Jos. Ant. 15, 105

¹⁴ Suet. Tib. 9, 1

¹⁵ Strabo. XI, 15

¹⁶ Strabo. XVII, 1, 54

¹⁷ Hor. Epist. I. 12. 26-28

¹⁸ Dio LIV, 9, 4-5

It is equally important to determine the real possibilities for committing such a crime.

The source clearly states that the murder of the Romans took place after the withdrawal of the Roman garrisons from Greater Armenia. Consequently, it was mainly Roman citizens of peaceful professions that could have come under attack. But how could they have ended up in the kingdom of Armenia? The occupation of Armenia lasted only three years. During this period, Roman merchants, tax-farmers, or artisans simply would not have had time to settle in the region. Roman civil administrators could not have been victims either, since formally Armenia did not become a Roman province (Smykov 2018, 114), but was ruled by a king, the son of Anthony and Cleopatra. The granting of Roman citizenship to local residents did not have time to become a widespread phenomenon. A significant presence of Romans in Armenia during this period is confirmed neither by material sources nor by numismatic evidence. More rational may be the hypothesis about Roman merchants who fell victim to the Armenian sword (Reinhold 1988, 82; Levick 1999, 13; Patterson 2015, 93), but their presence in Greater Armenia is just an assumption. In our view, there were simply not enough Roman citizens for a massacre in Armenia. Most likely, if there were victims (and this cannot be denied, since it was Artaxias who captured his father's kingdom), then they were Roman soldiers who might not have had time to leave the kingdom to help Antony (Timpe 1975, 163). Given the means of communication available in this era, this would not be surprising. But the king of Armenia simply did not have the opportunity to carry out a massacre similar to that by Mithridates in Asia.

How then can one explain the passage in Cassius Dio? Most likely, we are dealing with preparatory work by Roman propaganda, which did not prove useful and therefore did not pass on into later sources. If we assume that the overthrow of Artaxias was on the agenda in the early years of Octavian's reign, then strong reasons were needed to justify active actions by the Romans. The same Roman propaganda presented Artaxias as a victim of Anthony's policy, as shown by Tacitus¹⁹. The overthrow

¹⁹ Tac. Ann. II, 3, 3

of a murderer of Romans, a «new Mithridates», would have been quite justifiable. Within the framework of this hypothesis, it is possible to consider the transfer of control over Lesser Armenia to Artavasdes of Media Atropatene, the exiled king of Greater Armenia²⁰, as a constant tangible threat to the new king of Armenia (Syme 1939, 301; Magie 1950, 443; Timpe 1975, 168, n. 59; Sherwin-White 1984, 325; Gruen 2005, 159). However, the overthrow of Artaxias II did not take place, and the story of the murder of the Romans remained unused. In the end, the method of accession of Tigranes III did not require justification for the Roman actions.

However, in our view, an echo of the story of the «massacre in Armenia» is nevertheless, albeit indirectly, reflected in the *Res Gestae*, where much of Chapter 27²¹ is devoted to Greater Armenia. The most interesting to us is the beginning of paragraph two: «Armeniam maiorem interfecto rege eius Artaxe, c[u]m possem facere prouinciam malui maiorum nostrorum exemplo regn[u]m id Tigrani, régis Artauasdis filio, nepoti autem Tigranis regis, per T[i](berium) Ne[ronem] trade[r]e, qui tum mihi priv[ig]nus erat». ((2) Greater Armenia I might have made a province after its king, Artaxes had been killed, but I preferred, following the model set by our ancestors, to hand over that kingdom to Tigranes, son of King Artavasdes and grandson of King Tigranes; Tiberius Nero, who was then my stepson, carried this out²²).

It seems to us that the key point in this passage is the bringing up of a possibility of creating a Roman province (c[u]m possem facere prouinciam) in place of the kingdom of Greater Armenia. It is obvious that this passage about a province that did not happen carries some weight, because the *Res Gestae* does not always mention even the actual creation of a new Roman province (Makhlayuk 2019, 660), and the transformation of the Ptolemaic kingdom into a Roman province takes up one line of text²³.

²⁰ Dio LIV, 9, 2

²¹ RGDA. 27, 2

²² Translation quoted after P.A. Brunt and J.M. Moore (*Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 1967).

²³ Probably, in the case of Egypt, Augustus deliberately refrained from a detailed description, as he tried to avoid mentioning his enemy in the civil war (see Makhlayuk 2017, 179), and no less so the last queen of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

In modern studies, the argumentation known to us that is put forward to explain the phrase about the possibility of creating a province is connected exclusively with the explanation of Augustus's refusal to annex Armenia²⁴ or with peculiarities in the use of terminology (Richardson 2008, 142). However, as far as we know, no one has tried to explain the key message of the phrase, that it was after the death of Artaxias II that Augustus could make Armenia a province²⁵. The reference to the assassination of the ruler of Greater Armenia clearly indicates that this possibility is directly related to the figure of the king of Armenia, and not to the kingdom as a whole.

However, directly linking the death of Artaxias with the possible provincial future of Greater Armenia is not consistent with the known circumstances of the crisis in the kingdom in 20 BC. The Roman troops, as already mentioned, did not overthrow or kill the king of Armenia; they only supported the request of the Armenian nobility to pass the Armenian throne to the Roman hostage Tigranes III. Artaxias was deposed and killed by his own relatives. Even if the actions of the Armenian opposition were agreed with the Romans or their allies, such as Archelaus (Pani 1972, 20-22), the king of Cappadocia, the Romans obviously had not planned the coup itself and, most likely, had not expected it, since Augustus arrived in the East without sufficient troops and without Tigranes III, who had to be sent to Rome for (Sherwin-White 1984, 323; Levick 1999, 13.). As a result, Tiberius with the legions came to Greater Armenia not to seize the kingdom, but to crown Tigranes III, the legitimate claimant to the throne of Artaxias. The actions of Tiberius could not have been anything but a show of strength and support

²⁴ As reasons, researchers cite the peacefulness of the princeps and his unwillingness to expand the borders of the state (Gagé 1935, 132; Syme 1939, 301; Malavolta 2009, 114); some speak of a veiled establishment of control over Armenia (Brunt 1963, 174; Brunt, Moore 1967, 72; Brunt 1990, 299; 435; Zugravu 2004, 263); some accuse the author of distorting the facts, since he had no real opportunity to create a province (Sullivan 1990, 291; Ridley 2003, 205; Cooley 2009, 230-231); others indicate that Augustus behaved differently than described in the *Res Gestae* (Pani 1972, 61), or that it was physically impossible to create a province (Panov 2008, 117).

²⁵ M.L. Chaumont argued that it was the campaign of Tiberius that could become the basis for turning Armenia into a province (Chaumont 1979, 187-188). However, this contradicts the text of the *Res Gestae*, in which the description of the campaign of Tiberius comes after the reference to the possibility of creating a new province.

to the Roman protégé (Levick 1999, 14; Ridley 2003, 206). Under these circumstances, when a pretender to the throne of Armenia, specially brought from Rome, was in tow, the liquidation of Greater Armenia would hardly have been logical. In other words, the circumstances of the overthrow and death of Artaxias II gave Rome no reason to turn the kingdom into a province²⁶.

It can be presumed that, since the time of Pompey's Syrian venture, the transformation of a kingdom into a province did not require detailed argumentation, and Augustus, following the already noted pattern in the *Res Gestae* in talking about provinces, did not have to mention at all the reasons for the possibility of creating a Roman possession in place of Greater Armenia. However, on the one hand, the Armenian question was not as unambiguous as the Egyptian one, which really did not need any explanation, and on the other hand, Greater Armenia had been too much of a headache for Rome for decades (Rich 2009, 158), as confirmed by the detailed description of the Armenian affairs in the *Res Gestae*, to not mention the reasons for a possible creation of a province in these lands if Augustus himself brought up such a scenario.

In our view, the expression «...after its king, Artaxes had been killed» should be taken not as an indication of the time of the event, but as a justification for the possibility of turning the kingdom into a province. Consequently, it was the figure of the king of Armenia²⁷ that could be the basis for the creation of a province. In other words, some criminal actions of this particular ruler of Greater Armenia must have made it possible to absorb it into the Roman state. Artaxias II was indeed seen in Rome as a protégé of the Parthians, but for Asian kingdoms balancing between the two powers was not uncommon, without becoming the reason for a loss of statehood. In addition, Artaxias did not demonstrate his pro-Parthian orientation in any way, and his accession could have aroused sympathy in Rome, since his father was presented as a victim of Antony's adventurous

²⁶ P. Brunt probably thinks otherwise (Brunt 1990, 461-462).

²⁷ The fact that Augustus calls the king of Armenia by his first name cannot be only part of the technique, when plenty of exotic proper names are used in the *Res Gestae* to enhance the propaganda effect (see Ramage 1987, 57).

policy condemned by Augustus²⁸. And Augustus himself, who maintained contacts with Artavasdes II²⁹, did not accuse Artaxias of using Parthian aid in his accession and did not deny his right to the throne. Obviously, the crime of the king of Greater Armenia known to the Roman reader lay not only in his «pro-Parthian» position. In our sources, one can find only one direct explanation for the negative image of Artaxias II in the Roman eyes — the killing of Romans attributed to him. By referring specifically to Artaxias, Augustus showed that a king on whose orders Roman citizens were killed could be enough of a reason for turning a kingdom into a Roman province.

There is no doubt about the compositional unity of the first two paragraphs of Chapter 27. The first paragraph talks about the creation of the province of Egypt, the second — about the possibility of creating a province in Greater Armenia. In the first case, the reader of the *Res Gestae* did not need an explanation, since the abolition of the kingdom of Cleopatra was a direct consequence of the confrontation between Octavian and Anthony. However, in the second case, it was necessary not only to explain the refusal to create a province in Armenia, which Augustus did referring to tradition, but also to site the facts that would explain the possibility of annexation. Otherwise, undesirable associations with Anthony could arise, who, if one were to accept Octavian's propaganda, virtually abolished the kingdom of Armenia based on personal rather than state interests. Simply stating the death of a local monarch was obviously not enough, since there was (or could be) no will to pass the kingdom to Rome; so, a different explanation was required. Such an explanation was the bringing up of King Artaxias, whose image, as already mentioned, was supposed to elicit a negative reaction from Romans.

If our assumption is correct, then what prevented Augustus from directly stating the reason for the negative attitude towards Artaxias II — that is, publicly calling the king a murderer of Romans? Most likely, the answer lies in the circumstances of the death of Artaxias, who died not at the hands of the Romans, but as a result of a domestic conspiracy. The king in fact

²⁸ Tac. Ann. II, 3, 3; Dio L, 1, 4

²⁹ Dio XLIX, 41, 5

escaped Roman retribution; hence, mentioning the death of Romans whose killer was not punished would have obviously reduced the propaganda effect of this chapter of the *Res Gestae*.

Certainly, we do not know how justified were Augustus's expectations for the existence of a negative attitude towards the king of Armenia in Rome. They most likely were not so, given the silence of the vast majority of our sources. However, this should not surprise us — very often propagandists end up seeing less the real state of affairs than the ideal model they have built through their own propaganda.

The peculiarities of the Greek translation of the *Res Gestae*, at first glance, create an opportunity for even more radical conclusions, but it should be admitted that the specifics of the document allow only for cautious assumptions to be made. This is due to the fact that we cannot say with certainty that all the differences between the Latin and Greek texts can be explained solely by the original intent of the translator, rather than by the technical circumstances of the inscription's creation³⁰.

The Greek version offers an almost accurate translation of paragraph 27.2, but does not mention the name of Artaxias. Despite the poor state of preservation of this part of the Greek version of the *Res Gestae*, it is obvious that the name of the king of Armenia cannot be fit in the lacunae (Botteri 2018, 56.). This was already recognized by Th. Mommsen, who noted in his edition that the name of the king is absent in the Greek version³¹. If we are not dealing with the inattention of the carver or the technical details of how the inscription was made, then the disappearance of the name of the king

³⁰ Although literature tends to claim that differences in translation are carefully considered (see Vanotti 1975, 325; Wigtill 1982, 636; Rochette 1997, 11; Badami 2013, 9, 14; Centanni 2013, 348; Cornwell 2017, 89; Cooley 2019, 270; Makhlayuk 2019, 658).

³¹ In studies devoted to the Greek translation of the *Res Gestae*, almost no attention has been paid to the absence of the name of the king of Armenia. While Th. Mommsen pointed out the absence of the name in the analysis of the Greek text but did not note this fact in the enumeration of the differences between the Latin and Greek versions (Mommsen 1883, 109), in the recent edition of the *Res Gestae* by J. Scheid the absence of the name of Artaxias does not come up at all (Scheid 2007, xxxii). In the latest translation from Greek into Dutch, the name of the king of Armenia appears in the text without any explanation (Hunink 2019, 258), although in the commentary the translator states the wish to show the differences between the Greek and Latin versions (Hunink 2019, 261).

from the text for the Hellenized population may indicate that mentioning him seemed unnecessary³². Consequently, for a resident of Asia Minor, the name of the Armenian ruler was not supposed to be associated with crimes that would have given grounds for the transformation of an independent kingdom into a Roman province. This suggests that the story of the massacre of the Romans did not spread in the East and remained exclusively a feature of Roman propaganda in Italy.

It is important to note that the disappearance of the name of Artaxias led to a change in the meaning of this section of the *Res Gestae*, to the effect that the kingdom could be turned into a province not because of any anti-Roman actions of Artaxias II, but simply because of the king's death. Obviously, the text thus became more confusing, but this did not stop the translator. In addition, this, oddly enough, corresponded with the peculiarities of the Greek translation, which presented the power of Augustus as virtually monarchical (Vanotti 1975, 324; Wigtil 1982, 636; Rochette 1997, 12-14; Makhlayuk 2019, 658), in contrast to the Latin original. The Greeks probably expected explanations for foreign policy actions of the Roman princeps even less than did the Romans³³.

Thus, the story of the murder of Romans by the order of Artaxias II, which, for objective reasons, could not have been large-scale, can be attributed to Roman propaganda, which was preparing the ground for a possible forceful removal of the king of Armenia. However, the refusal of Augustus to take active steps in the East in the 20s BC apparently weakened the intensity of the spread of rumors about the alleged crime. The method of overthrowing Artaxias II no longer required the popularization of stories about the murder of Roman citizens, which probably did not go beyond Italy and found virtually no reflection in the sources. At the same time, Augustus

³² There are many examples where omissions in translation served to simplify and adapt the text for the inhabitants of Asia Minor (see Wigtil 1982, 634).

³³ The absence of Artaxias's name can hardly be connected with the translator's desire to deliberately hide from the Greek-speaking reader this particular king of Greater Armenia. Although there is no doubt about the existence of links between the rulers of Galatia and the Artaxiad dynasty, it is unlikely that for the inhabitants of the already Roman province of Galatia these links were of such importance that this led to a distortion of Augustus's text.

himself probably believed that propaganda had formed such a negative image of Artaxias II in the Roman eyes that the possibility of turning Greater Armenia into a Roman province could be openly discussed.

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Վարդանյան Ռ. Դրամաթոդարվումը Հայաստանում հեղինիստական եւ հռոմեական ժամանակաշրջաններում. Հայաստանի դրամաշրջանառության պատմությունը / ed. Ռ. Վարդանյան. Երևան: ՀՀ կենտրոնական բանկ, 2018. PP. 32–60.

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Список сокращень

ВДИ — Вестник древней истории

AC — L'antiquité classique

ANRW — Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt

GIF — Giornale Italiano di Filologia

JRS — The Journal of Roman Studies

RhM — Rheinisches Museum für Philologie

RHT — Revue d'Histoire des Textes

TAPhA — Transactions of the American Philological Association

WJA — Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft

Сергій Литовченко

кандидат історичних наук, доцент

Харківський національний університет імені В. Н. Каразіна

Майдан Свободи, 4, 61022, Харків, Україна

Email: litovchenkosd@gmail.com

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7602-9534>

АРТАКСІЙ II ТА ВБИВСТВО РИМЛЯН У ВЕЛИКІЙ ВІРМЕНІЇ

У 30 р. до н. е. за наказом вірменського царя Артаксія II всі римляни в царстві були вбиті. Однак цей злочин практично не вплинув на правління нового царя Вірменії

та не спричинив відповідної реакції з боку римлян. При цьому значна присутність римлян у Вірменії в цей період не підтверджується ані матеріальними джерелами, ані нумізматичними даними. Більш раціональною може бути гіпотеза про римських купців, які стали жертвами вірменського меча, але їхня присутність у Великій Вірменії є лише припущенням. На думку автора, можна сказати, що римських громадян для розправ у Вірменії просто не вистачало. Очевидно, якщо жертви і були (а це не можна заперечувати, оскільки Артаксій саме силою захопив царство свого батька), то серед римських воїнів, які могли не встигнути залишити царство, коли були відкликані на допомогу Антонію. З тодішніми засобами зв'язку це не було б дивним. Тому можна стверджувати, що в царя Вірменії просто не було можливості влаштувати різанину, подібну тій, що була за часів Мітрідата в Азії. Автор вважає, що розповідь про вбивство римлян за наказом Артаксія II, яке з об'єктивних причин не могло бути масовим, можливо віднести до сфери римської пропаганди, яка готувала ґрунт для можливого силового усунення царя Вірменії, однак відмова Августа від активних дій на Сході в 20-х рр. I ст. до н. е., очевидно, послабила інтенсивність поширення чуток про вбивство римлян. Спосіб повалення Артаксія II вже не вимагав популяризації розповідей про вбивства римських громадян, які, ймовірно, не виходили за межі Італії і практично не відображалися в джерелах. При цьому сам Август, імовірно, вважав, що пропаганда сформувала настільки негативне ставлення римлян до Артаксія II, що це дозволяло говорити про можливість перетворення Великої Вірменії на римську провінцію.

Ключові слова: Артаксій II, Тигран III, Велика Вірменія, Рим, Август, Кассій Діон, *Res gestae divi Augusti*, пропаганда.

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