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THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY THREE CASES IN THE HOUSE OF PTOLEMY

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SUMMARY: The article focuses on the image of the three rulers of the Lagid Dynasty: Ptolemy IV, Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VIII, which was included in the sources, *The Histories* by Polybius in particular the ancient tradition is especially hostile towards Ptolemy IV and Ptolemy VIII, who are presented as the rulers neglecting state matters, concentrated on their own pleasures and, particularly in the case of Ptolemy VIII, cruel. Polybius' most serious charge leveled against Ptolemy IV concerns his idleness as well as leading an inept foreign policy. In the light of the assessment of Ptolemy IV's reign, Polybius' opinion is not completely justified. One can judge that Ptolemy IV's lifestyle decidedly influenced the opinion concerning his reign. It cannot be ruled out, however, that what we have to deal with in this case is the Ptolemies' and the antique authors' different understanding of the concept of *tryphé* (τρυφή). Affluence as a means of the possibilities of acting and the manifestation of splendour of the monarchy's power was the idea that formed the basis of the concept of *tryphé* in the Ptolemies' propaganda and ideology. *Tryphé* was the sign of the dynasty's power, prosperity and constituted a complement of one of the most important elements of the Hellenistic kings' propaganda, that is euergetism. The concept of *tryphé* was, nevertheless, ambiguous. In the light of the antique accounts, the understanding of the above concept was dominated by the pejorative aspects, such as a passion for luxury and a riotous lifestyle, which led to debauchery and effeminacy. At least a part of the opinions included in the antique sources can be explained just by the differences

in the perception of the concept of *tryphé* on the part of the Ptolemies and Greek intellectuals. It does not concern only Ptolemy IV and Ptolemy VIII, but also Ptolemy VI, who was very positively presented in the antique tradition. Despite all his real liking for him, Polybius points out his tendency to live life to the full in an excessive manner. *Tryphé* constituted, however, a significant element of the Lagids' ideology and it is difficult to suppose that the members of the dynasty consistently used the means which fell on barren ground. Even if the Ptolemies could not reach the intellectual elites in this way, the manifestation of *tryphé* brought results in the case of the other recipients, such as the ordinary subjects who were supposed to admire the splendour and affluence of the dynasty. When it comes to the representatives of culture and science, the Ptolemies successfully managed to get through to them in different ways, for instance by the acts of euergetism or by providing patronage for culture and science. Nonetheless, *tryphé* in a considerable way influenced the way in which the Ptolemies were perceived by ancient authors.

In the 4th century BC¹, in the course of the discussion that was conducted at the time over the good and bad aspects of the particular political systems, the representatives of the Greek political thought created the principal foundations of the royal ideology. According to the works of such writers as Isocrates, Aristotle, Plato or Xenophon, the attention of philosophers, politicians and historians was focused on delineating characteristics of a good ruler. To put it shortly, there appeared the concept of βασιλεία, that is the group of virtues that should be displayed by a king in order to have the right to reign². It is the direction in which the Greek thought was heading in the sphere of the ideology of the royal power in the period after Alexander the Great's death. Although no treatise, created during the Hellenistic period, dealing with the subject in question, has survived, there exists a rich epigraphic material, particularly, the inscriptions including the resolutions issued in the honour of the rulers which enumerated the attributes of an

¹ All dates in this paper are BC. I would like to thank Marek Kucharski for the translation of the text.

² Cf. e.g. Plat., *Leg.* 4, 711-712a; *Rep.* 499b-c; *Plt.* 294a; Arist., *Pol.* (book III), or works by Xenophon, (*Cyropaideia*), Isocrates (*Euagoras*, *Pros Nikoklea*, *Nikokles e Kypriou* etc.).

ideal monarch. The traces of royal ideology and the perception of the concept of monarchy can be found also in the surviving up to our times fragments of the historiographic works of the epoch. It is not the right place here to enumerate all the royal virtues that should be displayed by a ruler³. Generally speaking, Greek historians had no problem with distinguishing between good and bad rulers, which was aptly and concisely expressed by Polybius:

τυράννου μὲν γὰρ ἔργον ἐστὶ τὸ κακῶς ποιῶντα τῷ φόβῳ δεσπόζειν ἀκουσίῳν, μισοῦμενον καὶ μισοῦντα τοὺς ὑποταττομένους: βασιλέως δὲ τὸ πάντα εὖ ποιῶντα, διὰ τὴν εὐεργεσίαν καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν ἀγαπῶμενον, ἐκόντων ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ προστατεῖν⁴.

For obvious reasons, the most essential historiographic work casting some light on the Greek political thought is just *The Histories* by Polybius, the only preserved until this day work from the rich oeuvre of the historians of the Hellenistic epoch. We find a number of remarks concerning the problem in the works of this Achaean historiographer, who very often expresses his opinions concerning the matter in question through the characteristic of particular Hellenistic rulers. It is in *The Histories* that we find, among other things, the characteristics of the three rulers of the Lagid dynasty, who ruled Egypt at the time. The picture that emerges from Polybius' account evoked in me some associations with the well-known film by Sergio Leone *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*, hence the title of this paper. So, we have *The Good One* – Ptolemy VI Philometor, *The Bad One* – Ptolemy IV Philopator and *The Ugly One* – Ptolemy VIII Euergetes. However the last of the three could easily combine the characteristics of both: *The Ugly One* and *The Bad One*.

When evaluating their attributes and the properties of the politics that they conducted, Polybius does not only pay attention to their efficiency, real achievements and failures, but he assesses them from the angle of βασιλεία and the contemporary expectations towards the rulers. *The Histories* are obviously not the only narrative source to learn

³ On those aspects of royal ideology see Schubart 1936: 1-26; Walbank 1984: 75-84; Gehrke 1982; Gauthier 1985: 39-65; Bringmann 1993; Bringmann 2000; H.H. Schmitt, „Herrscherideal”, *LH*: 436-443.

⁴ Plb. 5, 11, 6.

and assess the rule of the above three Ptolemies (a lot of precious information is contained even in the works of Justin and Athenaeus), but as Polybius was contemporary with Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VIII, and there was not a big time gap between him and the reign of Ptolemy IV, his account is the most essential one. So, what is the image of these rulers that we find in Polybius' works? What might have influenced his opinion and is this opinion justified?

The ancient tradition is hostile towards Ptolemy IV, which, to a great extent, is due to Polybius' account. It is just him that Athenaeus refers to when giving some information about his debauched lifestyle as well as about the destructive influence that hetaeras exerted on the ruler⁵. A similar, or even more filled with saucy details, image of the king can be found in Justin's works⁶. Ptolemy IV is thought to have neglected state matters due to love affairs and continuous drinking sessions. He could be characterized as inefficient, indolent and lecherous. Apparently disgusted Justin (30, 1, 8-9) writes that

atque ita ommissa magnitudine nominis ac maiestatis oblitus noctes in stupris, dies in conuiuibus consumit. Adduntur instrumenta luxuriae, tympana et crepundia; nec iam spectator rex, sed magister nequitiae neruorum oblectamenta modulatur.

An endless festival of orgies was said to last until Philopator's death. To make matters worse, the rule was, in fact, taken over by the women, the king's favourite hetaera, Agathokleia and her mother, Oinante, both supported by the latter one's son, Agathokles. Plutarch (*Cleom.* 33, 1) openly concludes that Ptolemy IV's reign brought tremendous debauchery and that women wielded the power.

On top of all that, the circle of people around him was said to consist of equally depraved individuals and his closest associates, Sosibios and Agathokles in particular, apart from accompanying their ruler in having fun, put all their effort in getting rid of the rivals in winning the king's favours⁷. In their case such an opinion is, by all means, unjust⁸.

⁵ Ath. 13, 576f.

⁶ Just. 30, 1-2.

⁷ P. Haun 6, fr 1, 11, 19; 1, 31; Plb. 5, 34, 1; 36, 1; 15, 25, 1-12; 20-23; 26, 1-2; 27, 1-7; 34, 1-5; Plut., *Cleom.* 33, 3; Just. 30, 2, 1-2.

⁸ On Sosibios and Agathocles see also U. Wilcken, "Agathokles" nr 19, RE I, 1897, col. 757-758; Geyer, „Sosibios" nr 3, RE III A 1, 1927, col. 1149-1152; Olshausen

The most important charge levelled by Polybius concerns Philopator's bungling foreign policy, which is clearly shown by comparing his actions with the achievements of his predecessors. The fragment of *The Histories* by Polybius (5, 34) in which he characterizes the first Lagids' foreign policy, takes, in fact, the key position in the discussion over the purposes of the Ptolemies' foreign policy. The Achaean historian writes that by possessing South Syria and Cyprus, the rulers of Egypt constituted a constant threat for the Seleucids. Having the supporters on the coast of Asia Minor, from Hellespont to Pamphilia, they could influence the course of the events in the region, and ruling over such cities as Ainos and Maroneia, they could also hold in check Macedonia. Polybius concludes about the policy of the former Ptolemies: καὶ τῷ τοιοῦτῳ τρόπῳ μακρὰν ἐκτετακότες τὰς χεῖρας, καὶ προβεβλημένοι πρὸ αὐτῶν ἐκ πολλοῦ τὰς δυναστείας, οὐδέποτε περὶ τῆς κατ' Αἴγυπτον ἡγωνίων ἀρχῆς. διὸ καὶ τὴν σπουδὴν εἰκότως μεγάλην ἐποιούοντο περὶ τῶν ἔξω πραγμάτων. Being supported by such an opinion of the ancient historiographer, one used to consider the Ptolemaic actions on the outside arena, in my opinion wrongly, to be motivated only by defensive purposes⁹. The whole activity of the Lagids was, inclusively, supposed to secure the safety of the country on the Nile. However, in fact, the first Lagids' activity over the whole territory, which constituted the arena of the struggles of the contemporary world's powers, indicates that they were striving to gain hegemony in the Hellenistic world.

This, obviously, could be achieved by using Egypt's natural resources, so taking particular care when it comes to securing their interests in this country was self-evident, as only perfectly safe control over the country on the Nile could open the gates for the large scale politics. The Ptolemies' foreign policy could be rather defined as an amalgam of offensive and defensive actions, built on great ambitions as well as rational premises. None of the rulers of Egypt, also before the Lagids, could feel safe without creating the internal defense line. Ruling over South Syria was considerably important from the military point of view. The key resources for creating the sea power could be found in Cyprus as well as in South Syria and Asia Minor. The Ptolemies could perfectly

1974: 43-45, nr 45; Schmitt 1964: 189-261; Huss 1976: 242-259; Hölbl 2001: 127-128.

⁹ Cf. Rostovtzeff 1941, I: 29-30, 332-334; Will 1979-1982, I: 153-168; Errington 2008: 157-158.

realize that maintaining a powerful fleet was of critical importance for their position in the world.

Also the above fragment of Polybius' work does not have to speak in favour of the thesis concerning the character of the first Lagids' foreign policy, which is all the worse for Ptolemy IV's achievements in this field. Polybius' intentions can also be interpreted as a way of merely emphasizing that it was thanks to their active policy the first Ptolemies managed to ensure security of the most important part of their state, which undoubtedly was Egypt. The above mentioned passage appears together with the characteristic of Ptolemy IV and through displaying stark oppositions is expected to be the evidence of neglecting the outside problems by the ruler. A historian from Megalopolis writes that that his predecessors had paid much more attention to the foreign affairs than to the government of Egypt itself, whereas Ptolemy IV treated all this carelessly and tardily. We need to remember that Polybius was not contemporary with the first Ptolemaic rulers and wrote all this from a long time perspective. After Ptolemy IV's death, grave danger loomed over the Lagids' monarchy in the form of the secret partition treaty which was made between Antioch II and the Macedonian king Philip V, the problem constituting an important part of Polybius' work. We don't know the whole contents of the treaty and the ancient authors dealing with the information from it are not unanimous not only in terms of the scope of the planned annexations, but also the division of the particular territories between the participants¹⁰. All in all, according to Polybius (3, 2, 8), it was planned to divide the whole of the Ptolemies' state. Antioch is said to have guaranteed himself South Syria and Phoenicia, while Philip – Egypt, Karia and Samos. The Achaen historian might have only wanted in that passage to draw the readers' attention to the achievements and services of the predecessors of the lazy and inefficient, in his opinion, Ptolemy IV to emphasise that under his rule even the central part of the state ceased to be safe.

¹⁰ Liv. 31, 14, 4-5; App., *Mac.* 4, 1; Just. 30, 2, 8; *FGH* 260, Porph. F 45 [= Hieronim, in Dan. 11, 13]. Zob. Holleaux 1921: 312-315; McDonald, Walbank 1937: 182-184, 205-207; Schmitt 1964: 237-261; Will 1979-1982, II: 114-117. D. Magie (1939) acknowledged that the treaty had never existed, and that the information given by the ancient authors is only their invention. Yet, his argumentation is not convincing, comp. Schmitt 1964: 239-248.

The most important challenge for Ptolemy IV was the Fourth Syrian War (221-217)¹¹. Polybius' account in the part concerning the preparations of the Egyptian side for the war and the steps taken by Philopator and Sosibios is full of contradictions. In one part of it he writes about the preparations for the war undertaken by Ptolemy, while in the other part devoted to a constant account of its course, he presents a typical image of Philopator and his courtiers' rule, implying that Alexandria did not undertake any preparations and the country stood open before Antiochos¹². Other, scattered, parenthetically made remarks by the Achaean chronicler, complicate the whole picture. The accusations of passivity on the part of the rulers of Egypt are also contradicted by the facts. First of all, Sosibios tried to pose threat to the rear of Antiochos' army and through the agreement with Achaïos, who made claims to the Seleucid throne, managed to reach the goal¹³. The main points of the defensive lines were also taken care of. Seleucia Pieria was rightly regarded as a fortress that could not be captured, and the king and his notables cannot be blamed for the treason of the part of its defenders¹⁴. The fortresses of Gerrha and Brochoi proved their value long time before¹⁵. It is hard to say about Egypt's defencelessness, as some contingents must have been stationed there. As a matter of fact, even from Polybius' account one can conclude that there must have been some units of mercenaries stationed in Alexandria¹⁶. As it can be seen, Philopator and his advisers were aware of the danger and undertook the necessary preparations. However, the whole defence plan must have fallen through as a result of the treason committed by Theodotos, who commanded the Ptolemaic forces in the provinces of Syria and

¹¹ On the Fourth Syrian War cf. Bar-Kochva 1976: 124-141; Huss 1976: 20-83, Galili 1976/1977; Winnicki 1989: 88-112; Grainger 2010: 195-218; Grabowski 2010a: 181-274.

¹² Plb. 4, 37, 5; 5, 62, 7.

¹³ Grabowski 2011: 117-122, cf. also Schmitt 1964: 164-175; Huss 1976: 27-31.

¹⁴ Plb. 5, 59, 3 – 61, 1; Strab. 16, 2, 4; 2, 8.

¹⁵ Plb. 5, 46, 1-4.

¹⁶ Plb. 4, 36, 4-5: apart from the unknown number of soldiers from Caria and Syria, in Egypt, there were also 3000 soldiers from Peloponnese and 1000 Cretans. Hus (1976: 39) associates with the war preparations also a scathing remark made by Cleomenes on seeing the military horses disembarked in the port (Plut., *Cleom.* 33, 6).

Phoenicia¹⁷. Additionally, one cannot fail to appreciate the energy, scale and diplomatic dexterity of the king of Egypt and Sosibios during the time of the truce made after the campaign of 219, which occurred to be fatal for Egypt by leading to the loss of almost all the strongholds in Coele-Syria¹⁸. The effort taken then brought its fruits in 217 during the battle of Raphia. It is probably the only moment when in Polybius' work its author paints a brighter picture of Ptolemy, who in a critical moment spurs the soldiers of his phalanx to action¹⁹.

After the victory, according to Polybius (5, 87, 4), Philopator dreaming of returning to his ordinary lifestyle, that is fun and debauchery, easily accepted the proposal of truce and peace negotiations, which was made by Antiochos III, and came back to Alexandria, where until the end of his life he indulged himself by pursuing his favourite pastimes. Fortunately, thanks to the stele of Pithom, we know that Ptolemy decided, however, to exert some pressure on Antioch and even during the negotiations he took some action on Seleucids' territory²⁰. The demonstration of power occurred to be successful. The negotiations in Antioch resulted in signing a peace treaty²¹. The conditions on which it was concluded did not reflect the extent of Antiochos' defeat in the battle of Raphia. It is very likely that borderlines on the Eleutheros River were re-established, which meant that although Egypt regained Coele-Syria, which had been lost in the first phase of the war, but it accepted the loss of Syria Pieria²². According to the unanimous opinions provided by the sources (Plb. 5, 87, 4; Just. 30, 1, 7), it was due to Philopator's personality. Indolent by nature, lazy and dissolute, he

¹⁷ Plb. 5, 40, 1-3; 61, 3-5.

¹⁸ Plb. 5, 61-65.

¹⁹ Plb. 5, 85, 5.

²⁰ D. Raph. 23-26. There were some attempts made to explain that the inscription concerns the uprising of the inhabitants of Coele-Syria against Ptolemy, which was omitted in the source allegedly favourably inclined towards the Lagids, but the hypothesis like this did not stand the test of time. Cf. Otto 1928: 80-87; Thissen 1966: 60-62; Walbank 1967-1979, I: 611-613; Huss 1976: 74-77.

²¹ D. Raph. 25; Plb. 15, 25, 13; Just. 30, 1, 7.

²² Huss (1976: 78 and 2001: 402) suggests that the city returned to the Lagids; however, the premises are doubtful. Besides, we know that in the year 204/203, that is before the outbreak of the subsequent war, the city was in Antiochus's hands, cf. Hölbl 2001: 149, n. 20.

dreamt of resuming indulging in his favourite pastimes. One, however, cannot share the ancient authors' opinions. Raphia did not mean the entire collapse of Antiochos' power. As for Seleucia Pieria, the city was not recaptured by the Egyptian troops, and regardless of Antioch's weakness, the attempt of taking control of it meant prolonging the campaign in the very heart of the hostile monarchy. Retaining this enclave would have been too costly, and apart from this, it would have affected further relationships between both states and would have accelerated the outbreak of the subsequent war. The most important thing for Alexandria was that the dynasty's dominions in South Syria had been saved. The negotiated treaty, however, so much better clearly reflects on Sosibios' tremendous political dexterity and far-sightedness. Bearing in mind the whole geopolitical situation in the region, he rightly assessed that destroying the monarchy of the Seleucids was not only unreal but pointless. An attempt of placing on the throne in Antiochia a representative of the Lagids was unlikely to be successful as the majority of the local population remained loyal towards the rightful dynasty. It was already Ptolemy III Euergetes that became convinced of it. Dethroning Antiochos would have opened the doors to the throne for Achaios, then. The one, however, for the time being, was Alexandria's ally, but in politics nothing lasts forever. Achaios, who controlled the dynasty's dominions in Asia Minor, could have occurred to be a far more difficult opponent than Antiochos. Sosibios recognized, then that the best thing to do would be to settle the matters in such a way that Antioch and Achaios could hold each other in check, as it was the best guarantee to secure the Ptolemaic rule in South Syria. As one could think, not involving Achaios in the peace treaty was supposed to serve this purpose²³.

Generally speaking, Ptolemy IV comes out pretty well as far as the assessment of his foreign policy is concerned. The efficient defense of Coele-Syria, maintaining the dynasty's dominions in the Aegean basin and on the coast of Asia Minor as well as, despite the lesser than before activity, maintaining close contacts with the part of the states

²³ The sources do not provide any information whether Achaios was a party in the peace treaty; but, it seems most logical to assume that he was omitted as Antiochos almost instantly began the preparations for the war with him (Plb. 5, 107, 4).

in Greece²⁴. In fact, the most dangerous legacy of his rule occurred to be the gradually increasing economic and monetary crisis, that is what contemporary historiography defines as cooper inflation, which might have had a fatal influence on the political and social situation in the country. In this respect, the authorities' activities, not very clearly, in fact, presented in the sources, occurred to be inefficient²⁵. However, seeing in one's mind's eye the struggles of contemporary politicians and economists with the present economic crisis in the world, it is hard to pass explicit judgments against Philopator. Coming back to the assessment of his foreign policy, in this matter, however, the opinion of Polybius and other antique authors is unambiguous and unfavourable for Ptolemy IV²⁶.

Polybius, as it could be concluded from reading of his work did not take a liking to kings at all, and what is more, his assessment might have been affected by the fact of leading by Philopator the policy which was too defensive from the Achaean League's point of view. Most of all, there were two factors, as it seems, that had some influence on it: the tradition which was hostile towards Philopator, and which became the basis for Polybius and other authors and their incomprehension of certain qualities of the Ptolemaic royal ideology. There is no doubt that when describing Ptolemy IV's rule, Polybius drew on the sources of different provenance. He surely based his information on Phylarchos' works, but as it is indicated by Polybius' critical attitude to the way this historian wrote²⁷, and most of all, comparing Polybius' account of Kleomenes III's dramatic experiences in Egypt with the description included in *Life of Cleomenes* of Plutarch's authorship, who, in fact, refers to Phylarchos, Polybius also made use of other sources. Without doubt, this unknown author was disapproving of Kleomenes, since, as we know from Plutarch's account (*Cleom.* 5), Phylarchos

²⁴ On the Ptolemy IV's foreign policy cf. Huss 1976: 20-238; Huss 2000: 386-443; Hölbl 2001: 127-134.

²⁵ Segre 1942; Reekmans 1949; Reekmans 1950: 69-80; Lorber 2005: 140-141; Maresch 1996: 21-29, 58-63; Cadell, Le Rider 1997; von Reden 2007: 70-78. Cf. also Maresch 1996: 181-194; Cadell, Le Rider 1997: 28-31 about the increase in prices in Egypt.

²⁶ Cf. Preaux 1965: 364-375; Marasco 1979/1980.

²⁷ Polybius devoted the whole passage (2, 56-64) to the thorough criticism of Phylarchos' manner of writing.

did not blame e.g. the Spartan king for the death of Archidamos, who together with Kleomenes made a royal couple in Sparta. The events are depicted in a totally different way by Polybius (5, 37, 1-7), according to whom Kleomenes insidiously coaxed Archidamos to Sparta to kill him. Similarly, when describing a few episodes of the Spartan's stay in Egypt, Plutarch, following Phylarchos, presents the refugee in a better light than the author of *The Histories*.

The way in which Polybius presents the events of the Fourth Syrian War indicates that his main source must have been the work of a well-informed author who was closely associated with Antiochos III's closest circle. He derived information, however, from some other, not of Seleucid origin, source whose author or authors were not too much sympathetic with the king of Egypt either. Polybius, for instance, contrasts the image of Antioch showing mercy to the inhabitants of Seleucia Pieria after taking control of it in the first phase of the war with the picture of an indolent, neglecting his country Ptolemy²⁸. As a matter of fact, one of the Ptolemaic commanders by the name of Nikolaos is presented in a particularly good light, but it may result from the fact that later on he offered his services to Antiochos²⁹. Nevertheless, one can say about drawing information from neutral sources by Polybius too. He openly defines the transition of one of the Ptolemaic commanders, Theodotos of Aitolia, to Antiochos' side as a treason, and it does not result only from the moral judgement made by the author of *The Histories*. Precise data concerning the Ptolemaic army were also available to Polybius, which indicates using the sources close to the Egyptian command. Finally, it is doubtful that the numbers of the killed and injured in the battle of Raphia, quoted by Polybius, indicating the big disproportion of losses to Antiochos' disadvantage could derive from the sources presenting only the Seleucid version of the events. Polybius' mysterious source might have been his compatriot, Ptolemy of Megalopolis, for many years being in the Lagids' service, the author of the work of Ptolemy IV Philopator's times, of which a few fragments survived. Taken from his work, by Athenaeus (13, 578a), the list of the royal mistresses, on which Ptolemy IV's name does not appear,

²⁸ Plb. 5, 61, 1-2; 62, 7-8.

²⁹ Plb. 10, 29, 6.

indicates Ptolemy of Megalopolis' guardedness when it comes to presenting social conventions observed in the times of, contemporary with him, Philopator³⁰. Comparing this list with that given by Polybius³¹ when writing about the fatal influence that was exerted on Philopator by his mistress, Agathokleia, proves that Polybius took the description of his various excesses from yet other sources. The case of these parts of Polybius' account which concern the events following the Raphian armed clash is equally complicated. Some researchers detect in this place the sources which are considerably favourable towards Ptolemy IV, and which show the progress of his troops on the territory of Coele-Syria, omitting the alleged local people's aversion to the Ptolemaic rule³². Such a standpoint is contradicted by the other accounts, from which we learn the Ptolemaic troops' actions in the heart of Seleucid Syria³³. Allegedly, Polybius did not mention those events, as they were not to be found in the source that he was using. In turn, the fact that his source remained silent about the Egyptian troops' actions on the Syrian territory, confirms, quite contrary, that the Greek historian drew from the work favourably inclined towards the Seleucids³⁴.

It can be assumed that it was just Ptolemy's lifestyle that decisively affected Ptolemy IV Philopator's negative assessment. It is possible, however, that what we have to deal with is a different interpretation of *tryphé*, made by the Ptolemies as well as ancient authors and philosophers. According to the ideology and expectations a Hellenistic king had to be rich, one of the most distinguishable features, differentiating a good king from a bad king (or as the Greeks would put it, a king from a tyrant) being generosity, φιλανθρωπία, that is eagerness to do good to the subjects as well as euergetism. Through his affluence a ruler also showed his power and abilities to act. A public display of wealth

³⁰ Huss 1976: 18-19 *contra* Préaux 1965; Walbank 1967-1979, I: 30; Fraser 1972, I: 514.

³¹ Also quoted by Athenaeus (13, 576f).

³² Cf. e.g. Momigliano 1929: 185-187.

³³ Just. 30, 1, 6.

³⁴ Cf. Otto 1928: 86-87, Walbank 1967-1979, I: 611-613; Huss 1976: 14-15. As regards the issue of the sources that Polybius might have used when describing the reign of Ptolemy IV, the first years of Antiochus' rule and the Fourth Syrian War, see Momigliano 1929: 185-189; Walbank 1967-1979, I: 29-30; 565-567; 570; Schmitt 1964: 175-185; Huss 1976: 3-20; Grabowski 2010a: 27-42.

was thus an integral part of royal ideology, and it can be even said that it was just the ideology of authority that demanded from the kings to manifest their riches. Wealth as a token of the ability to act and the sign of splendour and regal power was the ideology that laid the foundations for the concept of *tryphé* in the Hellenistic rulers' propaganda and ideology. Each dynasty used that weapon in their own characteristic way, the Ptolemies being probably the most consistent among its users³⁵.

The concept of *tryphé* is ambiguous and together with the positive content also contains a big charge of negative meanings. In the light of antique sources, the perception of this concept was dominated just by the pejorative aspects, such as love for luxury, riotous lifestyle, licentiousness, sumptuousness leading to debauchery and effeminacy³⁶. Ancient authors condemn indulging in pleasures, basking in luxury and dazzling with wealth. According to Plato and Aristotle, the concentration of riches could lead to social turmoil³⁷. Hedonism causes sloth, moral decline, corruption of authority and may result in losing touch with reality³⁸. Polybius expounds very distinctly the relationships between sumptuousness and tyranny and, in general, between bad rule and the consequences of it for the subjects in the long passage concerning various political systems (6, 7-9). The negative image of *tryphé* is rooted in the archaic and classical epoch. Love for luxury was supposed to be mostly typical of tyrants³⁹.

The development of the Stoic philosophy could only enhance such convictions⁴⁰. Zeno strictly distinguished between wealth from vir-

³⁵ On ptolemaic *tryphé* cf. Tondriau 1948a; Ager 2005: 22-26; Heinen 1983; Thompson 2000a 82-84; Grabowski 2010b.

³⁶ Ar., *Lys.* 387; Plat., *Grg* 492c; Plat., *Rep.* 590b; Plut., *Agis* 3, 1; Plut., *Reg. et imp. apophth.* 200e.

³⁷ Plat., *Rep.* 421d-423a; Arist., *Pol.* 2, 4, 1. Aristotle attributes the precedence of formulating such a theory to Phaleas of Chalcedon.

³⁸ Plat., *Rep.* 555b-556c; Isocr., *Philipp* 107c; Plut., *Agis* 3, 1.

³⁹ Hdt. 5, 92; 6, 107; Polyb. 6, 7. A lot of examples, on the basis of the accounts by, inter alia, Theopompus, were also placed by Athenaeus (12, 531 e-532a), cf. Cozzoli 1980; Ager 2005: 26. Decadence and effeminacy, to a great extent, defined the image of Persian kings, which was juxtaposed with the Greeks' equality and simplicity as presented in the comedies of V century. As regards the relationships between tyranny, *tryphé* and *hybris*, see Fisher 1992: 111-117, 329-342, 350-352.

⁴⁰ As regards the changes in the interpretation of the concept of *tryphé* in the Greek writing, see Passerini 1934: 35-56; Tondriau 1948a: 49-50.

tue and happiness⁴¹. After all, *tryphé* is the antithesis of *sophrosyne* σωφροσύνη, that is moderation, self-restraint and reason. The same refers to the Romans who juxtaposed *luxuria* with the virtue of *simplicitas* and *mores maiorum*, the severe customs of their ancestors, once they familiarized themselves with the issue in question when tightening their contacts with the Hellenistic world. Such an attitude towards the problem also dominated later when the Hellenistic monarchs were only a reminiscence. It was the fatal influence of wealth that Plutarch devoted one of his treatises, *De cupiditate divitiarum* to. *Tryphé* together with all its negative connotations was also the centre of Athenaeus' interest. He often simply characterizes particular sovereigns by means of the degree of their love for luxury.

Despite a negative image of *tryphé* which dominated in ancient literature, one cannot forget that the concept also possessed positive aspects, and it was just them that the Ptolemies referred to⁴². The relationship between prosperity and power is obvious, and splendour, magnificence, grandeur, that is just *tryphé*, was the manifestation of one's power. A king's wealth was the material foundation of his successes and as such, it should be publicly displayed. *Tryphé* was not only the measure of a dynasty's prosperity⁴³. It also constituted, somehow, the complement of euergetism, one of the chief elements of propaganda of all the Hellenistic sovereigns. Bearing this in mind, one should not see only lust for debauchery and excesses in various kinds of Ptolemy IV's activity.

Organised by Ptolemy IV, the feast of *Lagynophoria*, described by ancient authors with such disgust, was, similarly to other celebrations of this kind, a convenient opportunity to show the sovereign's affluence⁴⁴. The huge and lavishly equipped ships: *thalamegos* and *tessarakontera*, commonly regarded as the most spectacular examples

⁴¹ Diog. Laert. 7, 89.

⁴² As regards the diversity in the meaning of *tryphé* In Antiquity see Passerini 1934; Tondriau 1948a: 49-50.

⁴³ Hölbl 2001: 92.

⁴⁴ Ath. 13, 577a. A similar role was played by other festivals taking place in Alexandria: in honor of Adonis (Theokr., *Id.* 15) *pompé* of Ptolemy II (Ath. 196a-203b = Kallixeinos of Rhodes, *FGH* 627 F2) or *Ptolemaia*. As regard these festivals cf. Fraser 1972, I: 193, 231-232, 309-310; Rice 1983: 45-115; Walbank 1996; Hazzard 2000: 66-75; Thompson 2000; Bell 2004: 120-138.

of Philopators' eccentricity, clearly showed the king's financial potential as well⁴⁵. Yet, almost the whole picture of his reign, bequeathed to us by ancient authors, constitutes a real embodiment of negative opinions of *tryphé*⁴⁶. The judgments concerning him are crushing – plunged in having sophisticated fun games, debauchery and luxury, he was considered, to a great extent, to be responsible for weakening Egypt. In the case of Ptolemy IV, one more fact also seems to be of considerable importance. Namely, if we assume that Plinius' account of accepting by Philopator the cognomen of *Tryphon* is a true one⁴⁷ – and its rejection appears to be too hasty – we can suppose that this very king paid particular attention to this element of his autopresentation. As a matter of fact, in general, it is significant that the members of the dynasty accepted the cognomen of *Tryphon*. It was Philopator's father, Ptolemy III Euergetes that accepted the cognomen of *Tryphon* in the Lagids' family as the first one⁴⁸. In so doing, he introduced *tryphé* to the official image of the sovereign as a symbol of various kinds of goods that the country was bestowed with under the rule of the dynasty. Ptolemy VIII was also accompanied by the above cognomen, and so were, in its female form, his daughter and granddaughter⁴⁹. If we add to this that such a name was born by the members of the court⁵⁰, it is visible that it was in-

⁴⁵ Ath. 5, 203e-206c (= Kallixeinos of Rhodes, *FGH* 627 F1); Plut., *Dem.* 43, 4.

⁴⁶ It is not without the reason that the ancient authors, when characterizing his actions, more than often used the concept of *tryphé*: Luc., *Cal.* 16; Porph., *FGH* 260, F 44.

⁴⁷ Plin., *Hist. Nat.* 7, 208. According to Otto, Bengtson (1938: 49, n. 3), Pliny's account may refer solely to Ptolemy III. *Contra* Tondriau 1948a: 51, but without deeper justification, similarly Huss 2001: 469. Rejection of this account, however, seems too hasty if we place Ptolemy IV in the ranks of other representatives of the dynasty and with regard to the deference shown by Philopator towards Diogenes.

⁴⁸ Pomp. Trog., *Prolog.* 27, 30; Porph. *FGH* 260, F32, 8 cf. Otto, Bengtson 1938: 49, n. 3. The standpoint expressed by M.L. Strack (1897: 140) and A. Bouché-Leclercq (1903-1907, I: 283, n. 2) attributing the origin remarks to Ptolemy IV is rejected.

⁴⁹ SB 3, 6027, cf. PP 6, 14521, 14523; Elian, *Hist Var.* 14, 31; Just. 31, 13, see below.

⁵⁰ PP 6, 14710, 14711, 14734. The name *Tryphon* lost its one-sidedly negative overtone of "roisterer" and has assumed the meaning of "grand, magnificent". As regards this name in Egypt, see Preisigke 1922 s.v. Τρύφων, Τρύφαινα; in the ancient world, see W. Ensslin et al., "Tryphon", *RE* 7, 1939: 715-746; Otto, Bengtson 1938: 50, n. 2. It was also Diodotos, the usurper in the Seleucid state, that appeared under the name of *Tryphon* (Diod. 33, 4a; Jos. Fl., *Ant Jud.* 13, 131). The leader of the uprising of the slaves in Sicily in 104-101 proclaimed himself the king under the name of *Tryphon* (Diod. 36, 5). He did so, obviously, not only to refer to the Seleucid dynasty, which might have

scribed in the whole propaganda concept and accepting the cognomen *Tryphon* among the official titles can be regarded as the culmination of the Ptolemaic ideology of *tryphé*.

Philopator's case is all the more interesting if one pays attention to his attitude towards Dionysos, whose cult the cognomen *Tryphon* is associated with. Right from the very beginning the deity was treated with particular deference by the Lagids⁵¹, but none of the members of the Lagid family was so much fascinated with Dionysos as Philopator. He tattooed on his body the leaf of ivy that symbolized him, established several holidays in his honour, Alexandrian demes were given Dionysian names and at the court there was established the community of Dionysos' followers (*thiasos*). The ruler himself, appearing as the "New Dionysos", led the performed mysteries⁵². The character of Dionysos was extremely complex, he was, among other things, the deity of abundance, delight (*tryphé*) and joy. It was to this very aspect that the Ptolemies referred to. Excesses of various kind were not thus only frivolous frolics, but also a conscious building of the image. Nevertheless, for ancient authors Philopator ideally symbolized fatal results of basking in luxury. We should remember that Polybius, who is the most reliable source as far as his rule is concerned, undoubtedly, obtained his information from the source which was unfavourable towards Philopator.

resulted from the fact that a large group of slaves came from Syria. His objective must have been exerting a suitable impression on his new subjects.

⁵¹ Dionysos was treated, inter alia, as one of the ancestors of the dynasty: *OGIS* 54, 6; *SEG* XXXVIII, 1476: Theocr., *Id.* 17, 27; Satyros, *FGH* 631, F 1. As regards Dionysos' place in the ideology and politics of the Ptolemaic dynasty, see Tondriau 1946; 1948b; 1950; 1952; Fraser 1972, I: 202-205; Hazzard 2000: 66, 68-70; Lunsingh Scheurleer 1978; Heinen 1978; Heinen 1983: 122-124; Queryel 1984; Hölbl 2001: 93-97, 170-171, 289, 309; Grabowski 2010b: 101-103. The Dionysian motifs were also present on the Ptolemaic coins: von Reden 2007: 37-38, 53-54.

⁵² Erathosthenes, *FGH* 241, F 16; Euphr., fr. 1; Luc., *Cal.* 16; cf. Tondriau 1946: 149-156; Fraser 1972, I: 203-207; II: 344-348 and n. 107-119; Hölbl 2001: 170-171. Euphronios seems to connect Ptolemy IV also with Dionysos' son, Priapus (Huss 2001: 468). Philopator's particular interest in the cult of Dionysos can be also confirmed by his attempt to subject the Dionysian Mysteries to the government control (C. Ord. Ptol. 29, cf. Hölbl 2001: 171, 176, n. 85; Huss 2001: 454-456). I cannot be ruled out that similar mystery rites with the reference to the kings of Egypt were held in Delos, Thera and Setis (*OGIS* 130, 367; *IG* XII, 3, 443, cf. Harland 2003: 100).

By contrast, Justin as well as Pompeius Trogus, summarized by him, loved moralizing and giving salutary examples.

As a matter of fact, we do not possess the original account by Pompeius Trogus, but we know that Justin, as a rule, in his epitome emphasized excesses so as to even more clearly give the reader a moral lesson. Similarly, Plutarch, who wrote much later, must have relied on other sources, which he used all the more willingly as he could easily contrast Kleomenes' severe, spartan customs with the king of Egypt's immorality.

Of the members of the Lagid dynasty Ptolemy VI Philometor is one of the most difficult rulers to judge. On the one hand, the period of his reign, almost entirely filled with rivalry for power with his brother, Ptolemy VIII, brought considerable weakening of Egypt, on the other hand, during this difficult period Philometor gave evidence of respectable political dexterity. The beginning of his reign is marked by the Sixth Syrian War, which was catastrophic for Egypt. It was during it that young then Ptolemy VI became for a certain period of time a puppet in the hands of Antiochos IV. It is common knowledge that the Ptolemies then were saved by the Roman intervention at Eleusis, which, however, opened the door for the Roman interference in the internal matters of the Lagid monarchy⁵³. Ptolemy VI could, nevertheless, lead largely independent foreign policy, at least as much as it was possible in the new geopolitical situation in the eastern part in the basin of the Mediterranean Sea after 168⁵⁴. A skilful policy in the relationships with Rome made it possible for him to defend effectively Ptolemy VIII Euergetes' demands, who ruled Cyrenaica at the time. Philometor did not hesitate to act against the senate's recommendations and military repulse his younger brother who, being supported by the Romans, made an attempt to conquer Cyprus. The king sustained close contact with the Cretan League, the cities of Peloponnese, where his garrison was stationed in Arsinoe/Methana. He still maintained very good

⁵³ On the subject of Roman intervention in 168 and its effects cf. Otto 1934: 88-133; Manni 1950: 228-229; Heinen 1972: 657-658; Gruen 1984: 685-715; Lampela 1998: 124-138; Grabowski 2005: 127-164; Mittag 2006: 209-224.

⁵⁴ Cf. Lampela 1998: 148-195; Huss 2001: 571-589; Grabowski 2005: 164-200.

relationships with Athens⁵⁵. He was also very close to achieve success in Syrian policy. Using dynastic struggles within the Seleucid monarchy, Philometor made a successful attempt of regaining Coele-Syria. At the same time he succeeded in placing his son-in-law on Antiochos' throne. If it had not been for the ruler's death, which was caused by the wounds sustained in the battle on the Oinoparas river, his actions might have resulted in regaining Coele-Syria by the Lagids⁵⁶.

Even Polybius had some problems in forming his opinion about him, although in the king's epitaph, which he placed in his work, he extremely positively assessed his character⁵⁷. His assessment must have been influenced by his friendship with Menyllos of Alabanda, one of Ptolemy's φίλοι, who on behalf of the ruler, fulfilled various diplomatic missions, including those most difficult ones, such as representing his king before the Roman senate⁵⁸. It cannot be ruled out, however, that Polybius was given an opportunity to meet Ptolemy VI in person during the king's stay in Rome. Moreover, in Polybius' eyes, he was supposed to be the opposite of his brother, Ptolemy VIII. An explicitly negative, or even marked with contempt, image of the latter was probably introduced to Polybius not only by Menyllos, but also by another friend of his, Scipio Aemilianus⁵⁹. He might have, however, formed his opinion of Ptolemy VIII individually during his visit in Al-

⁵⁵ Ptolemy VI also participated in the Panathenaic Games in 162/161 and in 158/157, and the opportunity of sustaining close relationships were also provided by *Ptolemaia* in Athens. Cf. Bevan 1927: 302; Holleaux 1942: 77-97; Habicht 1992: 78-83; Huss 2001: 578-580.

⁵⁶ I *Macc* 10, 51-89; 11, 1-19; Diod. 31, 32a; 32, 9c-d; 33, 3; Jos. Fl., *Ant. Jud.* 13, 80-119; App., *Syr.* 67; Just. 35, 1, 6-7. Cf. Otto 1934: 123-130; Will 1979-1982, II: 365-379; Hölbl 2001: 192-194; Grainger 2010: 337-351.

⁵⁷ Plb. 39, 7, 1-7.

⁵⁸ Polibius (31, 12, 8) described his relationships with Menyllos ἰσχυροσυνήθεια και πιστία. We do not know in what circumstances the above mentioned friendship was established. It might have taken place during Menyllos' stay in Rome. It cannot be ruled out either that Menyllos took some missions to the Achaean Union in 180 and in 169/168 in the service of the kings of Egypt (Plb. 24, 6, 1; 29, 23, 7) and it was then that he met Polybius, cf. Walbank 1967-1979, III: 479; Walbank 1979: 181. The strength of their friendship can be best justified by their organizing jointly the escape of Demetrius, the pretender to the Seleucid throne who was detained in Rome (Plb. 31, 11, 1 – 15,3).

⁵⁹ Diod. 33, 28b; Ath. 12, 549d-550a; Plut., *Reg. et imp. apophth.* 200e-201a.

exandria⁶⁰. In spite of this, Polybius is far from making a one-sided image of Ptolemy VI. Polybius explains his decision of the escape during the critical days of the Sixth Syrian War by the negative influence of his advisor, eunuch Eulaios. Since subsequently Philometor gave evidence of his energy, determination and bravery, his cowardice at that moment must have been the result of maintaining a relationship with effeminate Eulaios⁶¹. Nevertheless, the echo of a different understanding of *tryphé* recurs. When summing up the reign of Ptolemy VI, Polybius, despite his liking to him, points out his inclination to live life to the full in an excessive manner⁶². The above aspect was also noticed by Diodoros, who attributes his decision of escaping from Egypt to Samothrace during the war with Antiochos IV to his growing up in luxury, which must have negatively influenced his personality.

In the case of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes both Greek and Latin traditions are unanimous and explicitly hostile towards the king⁶³. When describing Ptolemy VIII's appearance, ancient authors used such phrases as for example *δωμα ἀγεννές, γυναικώδης, ridiculus, vultus deformis, statura brevis, sagina ventris*, or most often – φύσκων⁶⁴. Most of all, Ptolemy VIII was supposed to be evil and his reign catastrophic for the state. *Κακεργέτης, τυραννικός, ἄδικος, ἄσεβης, παρανομος,*

⁶⁰ Strab. 17, 1, 12 = Plb. 34, 14, 6. We do not know the date of Polybius' visit in Alexandria, but for sure it took place during the reign of Ptolemy VIII, most probably during the second period of his rule in Egypt in years 145-116; cf. K. Ziegler, „Polybios“, RE XLII, 1952, col. 1461; Pédech 1964: 561; Walbank 1967-1979, I: 5, n. 10-11; Lehmann 1974: 191, n. 1; Walbank 1979: 181

⁶¹ Plb. 18, 21, 4-5; Walbank 1979: 184.

⁶² Plb. 39, 19.

⁶³ Ptolemy VIII is sometimes associated with Cato's words which come from his speech *De Ptolemaeo minore contra L. Thermum (ORF, fr. 180): rex optimus et beneficissimus*, see Günther 1990: 125, n. 8, Nadig 2007: 152. On account of the fragmentary character of its state, there is still no certainty firstly, whether Cato meant Ptolemy VIII, but not his brother; secondly, whether such a phrase did not have an ironic tone. Even rejecting these objections, Cato's assessment could have been based on Ptolemy VIII's loyalty towards Rome and his assuming the position of the republic's faithful client in opposition to unruly Philometor, but it did not have to reflect the actual speaker's opinion. As regards Ptolemy VIII's image in ancient literature, see Nadig 2007: 138-199.

⁶⁴ Plb. 34, 14, 6; Diod. 33, 22-23; Strab. 17, 1, 11; Pomp. Trog. *Prolog* 38-39; Val. Max. 9, 2 ext. 5; Jos. Fl., *Ant. Jud.* 12, 235; 13, 267; Just. 38, 8, 9. Over the years the occurrence of epithets in the sources started to escalate, and finally in Justin's description Ptolemy VIII became a grotesque and caricatural character: Nadig 2007: 205.

ᾠμος, χειριστᾶ, *crudelitas*, *timor*, *iniustus* are only some of the rude epithets that he was bestowed with by ancient writers⁶⁵. He was accused of brutality, murdering his subjects, ruthlessness and passion for luxury, which was supposed to deform not only his body but character as well, which resulted in his being characteristically nicknamed *Kakergetes* (“Villain”) instead of being officially referred to as *Euergetes* (“Benefactor”)⁶⁶. Creating such an explicitly hostile opinion towards Ptolemy VIII must have been affected by the expulsion from Alexandria of the scholars associated with Museion, who in the civil war supported his rival, Cleopatra II⁶⁷. Those opinion-forming, displaying hostile attitude towards the king scholars exerted a considerable influence on shaping Ptolemy VIII’s tradition. Nevertheless, even in his case we can see a consistent development of the realization of the Ptolemaic idea of *tryphé* as well as a different approach towards its realization shown by ancient intellectuals.

The term *tryphé* with reference to Ptolemy VIII was used by Poseidonios of Apameia and Plutarch. They both in this way point out to his indolence, avocation for luxury resulting in his body deformation⁶⁸. The same reaction could be observed among Roman emissaries, among whom there were such personages as the vanquisher of Carthage, Scipio Aemilianus, Spurius Mummius, the brother of the vanquisher of Corinth and Lucius Metellus, whose brother in 148 quenched the uprising of Andriskos in Macedonia during their famous visit in Alexandria in 140/139⁶⁹. The king tried to make an appropriate impression and dazzled them with the riches and the magnificence of his court. There came, however, to the clash between the Ptolemaic idea of *tryphé* and

⁶⁵ Plb. 31, 18, 14; Diod. 31, 20; 33, 6; Strab 17, 1, 11; Liv. Per. 59; Val. Max. 9, 2, ext. 5; Jos. Fl., *Ap.* 2, 52; Ath. 4, 184b-c = Menekles, *FGH* 270, F9; Andron *FGH* 246, F1; Ath. 12, 549 = Poseidonios *FGH* 87, F6. Other epithets: see Nadig 2007: 200-207.

⁶⁶ Ath. 4, 184b-c = Menekles, *FGH* 270, F9; Andron *FGH* 246, F1; Ath. 12, 549 = Poseidonios *FGH* 87, F6.

⁶⁷ Ath. 4, 184c = Menekles, *FGH* 270, F9.

⁶⁸ Poseidonios *FGH* 87, F6 = Ath. 12, 549d-e; Plut., *Reg. et imp. apophth.* 200f.

⁶⁹ Diod. 33, 28b, 1-3; Just. 38, 8, 8; Plut., *Reg. et imp. apophth.* 200e-201a; Ath. 12, 549e = Poseidonios, *FGH* 87, F6. On the date of his visit cf. Astin 1959: 221-227; Knibbe 1960: 37-38. Athenaios’ information that Poseidonios witnessed those events is false. It is very probable that he mistook him for Panaitios, Poseidonios’ teacher, see Heinen 1983: 117, n. 4.

the strict principles of *mores maiorum* and the guests recognized the court etiquette as effeminate and unnecessarily sumptuous. Pervaded with the Stoic ideals, the Romans looked upon the ruler with disgust and contempt⁷⁰. Thus, the account of those events is particularly malicious and merciless for the king. Ptolemy referred, however, to the already long tradition of the dynasty self-presentation and in his subjects' eyes did not necessarily have to be perceived in the same way. Ptolemy proved mastering the art of self-presentation when already being the king only of Cyrene, where he was based during the conflict with his elder brother. Assuming there the post of Apollon's priest, he organized magnificent and opulent celebrations, demonstrating the truly Ptolemaic *tryphé*. The display of personal splendour was complemented by a large-scale building programme in Cyrene⁷¹. The official images of the dynasty's representatives emphasised their abundant shapes⁷². In this sense Ptolemy VIII's obesity, who, not without reason, was remembered by history as *Fyskon* ("The Pot-Belly") was apparently the result of his lifestyle; but, in the light of the dynastic propaganda it constituted the embodiment of the royal *tryphé*. Ptolemy VIII assumed, as a matter of fact, the appellation of *Tryphon*⁷³; in so doing, referring, similarly as in the case of the appellation of Euergetes, to his famous predecessor, Ptolemy III. The titles of both of the rulers thus emphasized the two essential elements of an ideal sovereign. The combination of the two appellations highlighted the connections between euergetism and *tryphé*. Splendour and magnificence which secures prosperity

⁷⁰ Cf. Heinen 1983: 118-121.

⁷¹ It cannot be ruled out that the huge mausoleum to the west of the city of Ptolemais was meant for him as at the time his chances of returning to Egypt were slim; cf. Laronde 1987: 442-444; Hölbl 2001: 188-189.

⁷² Heinen 1978; Ager 2005: 13 and n. 71.

⁷³ Elian., *Hist. var.* 14, 31; Just. 39, 1, 3; Ampelius, *Lib. Mem.* 35, 5. Some scholars referred an anecdote passed down by Elian to Ptolemy IV (Bouché-Leclercq 1903-1907, I: 283, n. 2). Yet Otto, Bengtson (1938: 49, n. 1) convincingly pointed out that appearing there, without a more precise phrasing, the word *adelphe*, ideally suits Cleopatra II, Ptolemy VIII's sister. Vagueness of Justin's account can be attributed to his frequent distortions of Pompeius Trogus' original text; by contrast, the word *trefon*, which had appeared in Ampelius' works, was already corrected by Salmasius into *Tryphon*. Cf. Otto, Bengtson 1938: 49, n. 1; Tondriau 1948a: 52. On the date cf. Otto, Bengtson 1938: 48; Heinen 1983: 120, n. 14.

and which is shared by the ruler with the subjects. Ptolemy VIII additionally emphasized the continuity of the tradition of euergetism and *tryphé* in the royal family by naming his eldest daughter *Tryphaina*⁷⁴. Similarly to his ancestors, Ptolemy VIII also cultivated the dynasty's connections with the Dionysian cults. During the above mentioned visit of the Roman legates on the Nile in 140/139 the king appeared in the ivy wreath on his head and probably in the robes worn during the festivals held in honour of Dionysos⁷⁵.

Tryphé constituted a vital element of the Lagids' ideology, despite the fact that, as the preserved accounts have it, the sense which they related to it was to a considerable extent different from that displayed by the Greek intellectuals (at least a considerable part of them). However, it is hard to suppose that the dynasty members did not realize it and consistently used the means which missed the target. Even if the Ptolemies did not reach the intellectual elites in this way, the manifestation of *tryphé* occurred successful towards the other recipients – the ordinary subjects who were supposed to admire the splendour and the riches of the dynasty. In this sense the simple and easily adopted by the recipients means were opulent festivals or a frequent element of the mint iconography – the *cornucopia*⁷⁶. The men of culture and science were successfully reached by the Ptolemies in different ways, such as acts of euergetism or cultural and scientific patronage. *Tryphé*, however, considerably influenced the way in which the Ptolemies were perceived by the antique authors.

⁷⁴ Apart from his daughter, the name *Tryphaina* was also borne by Ptolemy VIII's granddaughter: *SB* III 6027; cf. *PP* VI 14523; 14521.

⁷⁵ A description of the Dionysian robe, similar to Ptolemy's outfit, can be also found in Diodoros' work (4, 4, 4.); see Heinen 1983: 125-127. The ruler's robes are interpreted differently by Whitehorne 1994: 108; Ogden 1999: 98.

⁷⁶ The cornucopia also appeared on the ritual vases. Another significant example is that of the altar connected with the Ptolemies' dynastic cult, which was discovered on the island of Rhodes. It is there that the double *cornucopia* symbolizing the royal couple is to be found, cf. Picard 1959.

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