

## Financing Urbanism

R. P. Duncan-Jones (1990) Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy, Cambridge, chapters 10 and 11

A. H. M. Jones (1940) The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian (Oxford) chs. 13-17

S. Mitchell (1993) Anatolia. Land, men and gods in Asia Minor. Volume I (Oxford) chs. 12 & 14

### 1. Constraints and Problems

#### URBANISM AND MEDITERRANEAN ECOLOGY

micro regions and inter-annual variability  
population concentration and its problems  
variation of non-agricultural sources of wealth

#### OLIGARCHY AND THE VERY VERY RICH

- republics (municipia, coloniae, poleis etc) ruled by councils and magistrates drawn from a broadly defined propertied class. Property qualifications in east and west
- wealth distribution within the élite e.g. Magnesia on Maeander C4th incomplete land register. Largest estate = 21.6 % total, 5 wealthiest owners (of 67) owned 49.7% total.
- variations from city to city

#### CITY AND EMPIRE

- competition for resources
- cities as collectors of imperial taxes (especially the land tax)
- remission of taxes e.g. Asian cities for 5 years in Tiberius' reign
- imperial supervision.
  1. **Rome's interest** in general prosperity (for imperial taxes) and civic solvency (because the empire needed cities) and perhaps also in the preventing of riots or acrimonious court cases, and in the beautifying of cities.
  2. **Control** by having veto on new local taxes, while the governor had to approve big loans to cities (lex Irnitana)
  3. **Monitoring and intervention** through governors, curators and modification to civic constitutions.

2. Urban expenditure and responsibilities

BUILDING

construction of roads, amenities, walls  
maintenance of buildings

POLICE

in territories as well as in cities

FESTIVALS, GYMNASIA, ETC.

34,000 den./year for oil in Phrygian Apamea

GRAIN FUNDS

to subsidize grain price in crises

SALARIES ETC.

purchase and upkeep of public slaves  
salaries of public doctors, teachers, scribes etc.  
expenses of ambassadors

CIVIC COINAGES ("GREEK IMPERIALS")

bronze issues. minting and countermarking  
trade connections between neighbouring cities

3. Urban revenues

SUMMA HONORARIA

on Bouleutai/Decuriones, on magistrates, on Augustales  
Roman innovation e.g. in Bithynia  
range 800 HS - 38,000 HS (African figures)  
set low enough for all curiales to pay them  
pressure to add more councillors (Bithynia)  
also fees for priesthoods, ephebes  
pollicitationes (election promises of money or benefactions) actionable

MUNERA

obligatory labour on public works  
convict labour

FINES

for violations of *city* laws

INHERITANCES

Johnston, D. (1985) 'Munificence and Municipia: bequests to towns in classical Roman law', JRS 75: 105-125

some property was left to cities, but it was often ringed around with provisions as in Pliny's alimentary scheme where the donated estates were to be let out for a rent that provided a hypothecated income to support the scheme

## LOCAL TAXES

M. Corbier (1991) 'City, territory and taxation,' in J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill eds. City and country in the Roman world pp. 211-39

- typically a very large number of local taxes in each city
- some collected by local tax farmers
- usually indirect (ie: aimed at creaming off a proportion of the money generated by economic transactions such as sale, export, hire etc.)

J.F. Matthews (1984) The Tax Law of Palmyra: evidence for economic history in a city of the Roman East. JRS 74 pp.157-180

a list of **local taxes** and **local transit taxes**, bilingual in Syriac and Greek, with a basic law and additions agreed by various Roman authorities to 137 AD for instance

3 denarii each camel load dry goods exported  
22 denarii/slave imported  
1 denarius/month on prostitutes  
800 den. /year for use of 2 water sources  
13 den. for 4 goatskins (1 camel load) of olive oil  
1 den./month from leather workers' shop

## INCOME FROM PROPERTY

urban property e.g. Sardis shops  
landed estates within or outside the territory.

## LOCAL MONOPOLIES.

Athens gains right to buy a proportion of Attic oil  
Palmyra and salt production  
Money changing (e.g. Pergamum) local bronze for denarii)  
Fishing rights at Byzantium

local authorities let these out to contractors for a guaranteed income.

>>>>>>

1. income regular but limited
2. difficult to raise money for extraordinary expenses
3. the wealth of the richest was difficult to touch

4. Euergetism

P. Veyne (1990) Bread and Circuses, Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism, London (French original 1976) with review in JRS 1991 (81) by Garnsey

G. M. Rogers (1991) Demosthenes of Oenoanda and models of euergetism, JRS 81, 91-100

EXAMPLES

- Megakles at Sillyon 300,000 den. for education of male children
- Salutaris at Ephesus 21,500 den for distributions to the people, plus over 120 lbs silver for cult statues
- Aelius Onesimus (lib.Caesaris) to Nacolea 30,000 den.

Other examples include bearing the cost of building - and more rarely repairing - various **monuments** (e.g. the Holconiii and the amphitheatre of Pompeii; Pliny and Celsus' libraries; Herodes' odeia, aqueduct, nymphaea); athletic and dramatic **festivals** e.g that of Vibius Salutaris at Ephesos or , **grain funds, feasts , alimentary schemes** and other public distributions; taking on **embassies** at one's own expense.

INTERPRETATION

- the Veyne thesis: social distance and voluntary giving
- social pressure (from other members of the élite and / or from demos)
- move by Rogers et al. to focus on tensions involved in and created by euergetism (rather than seeing it as a solution to pre-existing tensions)

In any case the main necessary condition for euergetism to be attractive, necessary or conventional was the existence of some very rich individuals whose wealth and status could not otherwise be accommodated within the polis. There are some signs that this more common under Rome.