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Gnaeus Sicinius and the Third Macedonian War: new approach to Livy's information

Abstract: The first Roman troops in the Third Macedonian War to cross the Adriatic were those in the army of propraetor Gnaeus Sicinius. His task was to secure the coastal area around Apollonia, about which Livy writes on several occasions. However, other than Polybius, Livy used various sources, due to which there are contradictions in the information about the size of the army that Sicinius transferred and whether or not he secured a much larger area. The purpose of this article is to examine in detail the available information and provide new insight into how many troops he actually transferred, and whether his securing of the forts of the Dassareti, the Illyrians and the coastal area around Apollonia was done with a significantly larger force than previously believed.

Keywords: Third Macedonian War, Gnaeus Sicinius, Apollonia, Second Legion

There is no doubt that source analysis has always been of paramount importance in historical research of the circumstances, the course and consequences of various Roman interventions across the Adriatic. Our acquaintance with the broader context of the Republican period in question and the interrelationship between Rome and the communities across the Adriatic really depended on the acerbic approach to the contradictory information from ancient authors (mainly because of their fragmented state). One such information is addressed in this article and its importance is considerable for researching the course of Roman interventions on the Eastern shores of the Adriatic.

Namely, although it is widely known that the Third Illyrian War was the result of a much larger Third Macedonian War (and represented one of the most important Roman-Illyrian military conflicts), the scientific community is less

informed on the man whose activities launched a chain reaction that eventually resulted in the destruction of the great Macedonian and Illyrian kingdoms. Specifically, Gnaeus Sicinius, a Roman praetor who was the first commander to cross the Adriatic with an army in the context of the war with Perseus, thus effectively starting the military operations of the Third Macedonian and consequently the Third Illyrian War. However, albeit the historical context of his mission is clear,¹ some of Livy's information on Sicinius' crossing of the Adriatic are contradictory and need to be addressed.

First of all, it is quite clear that the command in the Third Macedonian War was given to the consuls of the year 171 B.C.² However, from the same passage where Livy mentions Rome's declaration of war, we learn that, considering the preparations for war against Perseus had started, the Senate decided that praetor Gnaeus Sicinius should (as soon as possible) transfer troops from Brundisium to Apollonia in Epirus. Upon arrival, he was to distribute troops as garrisons in coastal cities where the consul, to whom Macedonia was to be allotted, would soon disembark with his own army.³ The report ends here with no further information, but at an entirely different place in Livy, we discover that Sicinius indeed safely transferred his army. As stated, at the moment when Perseus' envoys were in Rome (171 B.C.), Sicinius had already transferred 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry and raised a camp in the vicinity of Apollonia, specifically at Nymphaeum. Further on, he sent tribunes with 2,000 troops to occupy the forts of the Dassareti and Illyrians, the peoples who asked for garrisons so they could be better protected from their Macedonian neighbours.⁴

These two pieces of information are separated by the span of one year and despite the fact that much is known about Sicinius' activities before departing to Epirus,⁵ it

¹ Milivojević, 2017, 48 ff.

² *Liv.* XLII, XVIII, 2.

³ *Liv.* XLII, XVIII, 4.

⁴ *Liv.* XLII, XXXVI, VIII, 9; *Zon.* IX, XXII = *Dio* XX. In the meantime, as soon as Sicinius found out about the Macedonian envoys in Rome, he sent Spurius Carvilius to inform the Senate about Perseus' activities. Carvilius reported that Perrhaeaea was taken, along with several other cities in Thessaly. *Liv.* XLII, XXXV, 4.

⁵ Sicinius was elected praetor in 173 B.C. and took office in 172 B.C. There are several other pieces of information: in 186 B.C., he was an aedile along with L. Pupius, and in the following year he contested the position of suffect praetor after the death of G. Decimius. *Liv.* XXXIX, XXXIX, 2-3; in 183 B.C., he was elected as praetor and was in charge of the administration of Sardinia (his second time as praetor in 172 B.C.). *Liv.* XXXIX, XLV, 2-5; in 177 B.C., along with P. Elius and M. Aemilius Lepidus, he oversaw the settlement of 2,000 Roman colonists in Luna, on the land which was first taken from the Etruscans and then from the Ligurians. *Liv.* XLI, XIII, 4-5; in 173 B.C., Sicinius was in charge of solving the invasion of locusts in Apulia. He spent a lot of time organizing the people who were supposed to gather them. *Liv.* XLII, X, 8. Additionally, Livy mentions that in 172 B.C. the Senate charged Sicinius with finding an equipped house in which the son of the king, Ariarathes, and his entourage will live. *Liv.* XLII, XIX, 3-8; in the same year he was in charge with C. Licinius to return freedom to all Ligurians who did not wage war against Rome from the time of

seems that virtually nothing more can be ascertained about his involvement in the Third Macedonian War. Yet it may not be so. Several other pieces of information from Livy could be associated with Sicinius, but the problem is even bigger. Modern historiography has debated for a long time on the nature of his task and more importantly – how many troops did Sicinius actually transfer to Epirus. Therefore, this article intends to address these theories on the amount of Sicinius' troops (based on Livy's contradictions) and propose a new solution to the problem.⁶

* * *

As already slightly indicated, information concerning the number of troops that Sicinius transferred vary in different places in Livy. Seemingly, the information regarding the safe disembarkation indicates that the number was 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry. However, during extensive preparations for departure, almost double the number of troops were being gathered in Brundisium. Sicinius was not involved in those preparations because his presence was necessary at a different place.⁷ Yet as Livy writes, in order for Gnaeus Sicinius to have an army ready to cross over the Adriatic, praetor Gaius Licinius, authorized by the Senate, wrote to Gaius Popilius, the consul to order both the Second Legion, which was the longest in service in the Ligurian country, and 4,000 infantry and 200 cavalry of the allies of the Latin Name to be at Brundisium on the Ides of February (*idibus Februariis* A.U.C. 583. = 28 October 172 B.C.). The instructions from the Senate were carried out with great speed. Lucius Porcius Licinius brought 38 quinquiremes to Brundisium (twelve of which were sent from Sicily), while provisions for the fleet were collected by Sextus Digitus, Titus Iuventinus and Marcus Caecilius in Apulia and Calabria. After everything was completed, Livy explicitly writes that Sicinius wore his bloody red *paludamentum*, left Rome and arrived in Brundisium – *Ad omnia praeparata Cn. Sicinius praetor, paludatus ex urbe profectus, Brundisium venit*.⁸

the consulship of Q. Fulvius and L. Manlius. *Liv.* XLII, XXII, 4-5. On the confusing narration in Livy about the accurate time when Sicinius received his order see Gruen, 1984, 413-414.

⁶ It would have been convenient to start this article with a discussion about the authors who have contributed to this topic. However, none of those authors have dealt specifically with this topic, but rather marginally within works of a much larger context. That is why I have decided to cite each author exactly at the point when the discussion will require it in the following text.

⁷ See n. 16.

⁸ *Liv.* XLII, XXVII. For the dating of *idibus Februariis* at 28th October 172 B.C. see Walbank, 1979, 294; in Kahrstedt, 1911, 428; De Sanctis, 1923, 398 and Walbank, 1941, 82 the date is in November. However, the revised opinion is based upon Derow's analysis of intercalations in the Roman calendar between 190 and 168 B.C. See Derow, 1973, 348. Considering Sicinius has already been to Liguria and charged to return freedom to all Ligurians, the decision to assign to Sicinius a legion which served the longest there is quite justifiable. See *Liv.* XLII, XXII, 4-5.

The discrepancy between these two pieces of information from Livy is quite clear and has, understandably, produced several scholarly opinions whose information we should trust. However, rather than partaking in a thorough discussion about the historicity of both pieces of information, since Walbank's article about the embassy of Q. Marcius in Greece (which, in part, raised some questions about Sicinius' task),⁹ it seems almost every subsequent piece of work partially dealing with this problem has specifically advocated the opinion that Sicinius' crossing the Adriatic involved only 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry. Some are well argued while others simply follow previous conclusions. Without delving into the veracity of their statements at this point, it also seems that the authors of those opinions have not been taking into consideration some other pieces of Livy's information, which undoubtedly have value for the problem at hand. Consequently, it is my opinion that they are in need of revision, an excuse for which is briefly recapitulating their arguments before pointing out the fallacy of some conclusions.

First and foremost, it must be said that some of those opinions are merely assumptions without any convincing arguments, because of which we cannot, in all manner of scientific study, accept them as probable solutions to the problem at hand. Namely, those which argue that, by specifying the exact date of Sicinius' departure towards Apollonia, we can also find the answer to the question of how many troops actually crossed the Adriatic. Most likely the best example is Hammond's opinion that Sicinius departed from Brundisium before October with only a vanguard of his army.¹⁰ Apart from Livy's information about the safe disembarkation, his main arguments are based upon Perseus' letter to Roman envoys at Corcyra in which the Macedonian king referred to Roman troops crossing to Greece and fortifying cities.¹¹ Apparently Sicinius' activities in Epirus were the main reason for Perseus' complaint, while the time needed for the Roman envoys in Greece to complete their mission by January/February 171 B.C. had prompted him to conclude that there was simply no time between the Ides of February and the envoys' return to Rome for Sicinius to cross over the Adriatic and fortify certain cities. Therefore, Hammond believes Sicinius must have departed towards Epirus before his army was supposed to assemble, specifically no later than September 172 B.C. transferring what he had in that moment – only 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry, while a larger force, along with the Second Legion, was ready in Brundisium as reinforcement if necessary; an opinion further substantiated by Hammond's trust in Livy's information that the

⁹ Walbank, *JRS*, 13, 1941, 82-93, 'A Note on the Embassy of Q. Marcius Philippus, 172 B.C.' (*Op. cit.*)

¹⁰ Hammond in Hammond and Walbank, 1988, 506.

¹¹ *Liv.* XLII, XL, 1-2. Livy does not mention any commander of the troops.

Second Legion was subsequently assigned to Gaius Cassius, one of the consuls of 171 B.C. and generally never left Italy.¹²

Apart from a bit confusing dating of the Roman embassy in Greece,¹³ it must be noted that Hammond's suggestion can in principle make sense to the untrained eye in the analytics of Livy's text. Conceptually, we can argue whether or not the available amount of time (from October 172 B.C. to January/February 171 B.C.) was enough for Sicinius to transfer his army to the vicinity of Apollonia. There are several factors which could lead us to a conclusion similar to Hammond's. For example, Livy does not clarify whether Sicinius set sail before, after, or even exactly on the Ides of February. The only information we have is that the army was supposed to arrive in Brundisium at the designated date, leaving the question of departure quite open to interpretation. Perhaps the original plan was to leave around 28th October but a sudden change of events forced him to speed up his plan of crossing the Adriatic. The reason for this early departure does not necessarily have to be Perseus' activities; during 172 B.C. the Macedonian king consistently tried to find a peaceful conclusion to ongoing verbal hostilities with Rome.¹⁴ Rather, the reason could be the movement of Perseus' allies. The Bastarnae were ready to wage war against Rome, the Achaean League almost allied with Macedonia, while the Aetolians sought Perseus' help in dealing with internal strife.¹⁵ Hypothetically, whether those reports were accurate or not, the immediate reaction would have been necessary if Sicinius' designated disembarkation area became unstable due to hostilities or lack of allied support. In such circumstances, Sicinius could have departed before the Ides of February, with only a vanguard of his army secured the coastal area while the rest of his forces were expected to follow.

Indeed, it seems that only because Livy does not give any other information on Sicinius' departure that Hammond's opinion can be as feasible as any other.

¹² *Liv.* XLII, XXXII, 5. The consuls of 171 B.C. each received two legions – Publius Licinius was supposed to leave for Macedonia with the First and Third, while Caius Cassius was to stay in Italy with the Second and Fourth.

¹³ Hammond does not mention when did the Roman embassy cross the Adriatic in regard to the mobilization of Sicinius' army.

¹⁴ As he consistently said during the conference between him and Marcius. *Liv.* XLII, XLI-XLII. It seems there is no proof to the statement that Perseus was preparing for war. Harris, 1979, 230.

¹⁵ Those accusations against Perseus were brought by Eumenes. *Liv.* XLII, XI-XIII. The same accusations which Marcius mentions in a conference with Perseus. *Liv.* XLII, XL. Cf. *App., Mac.* XI, I; *Polyb.* XXIV, III, 5 and *Diod.* XXIX, 22 mention another Eumenes' embassy in Rome (181/180 B.C.). On the relations between Aetolians and Rome see Derow, 1979, 11-12. The position of Rome in Greece was not great. Perseus changed the policy of his father towards Greek city-states, renewing relations with those communities which were previously engaged in wars against Philip. Basically, rather than gravitating to Rome, Perseus offered an alternative to the policy of the Greek states. Even Polybius writes positively about Perseus. *Polyb.* XXV, II, 3. For a detailed analysis of those relations see Oost, 1954, 69-71; Gruen, 1984, 403-19; Eckstein, 2009 and 2008.

However, the problems of Hammond's arguments can be summarized into three points.

(1) Perseus' concern about fortifying cities does not have to be explicitly associated with Sicinius' activities. In the same paragraph where he writes about Sicinius' preparations for war, Livy refers to another army which was also being assembled in Brundisium. Not much is known, only that, while his army was still being levied, Sicinius was directly in charge of gathering 8,000 infantry, 400 cavalry and fifty ships for Aulus Atilius Serranus, the praetor of the preceding year (173 B.C.). His task was similar to Sicinius' – as a result of a declaration of war, Serranus was charged with receiving this soldiery at Brundisium and sending it to Macedonia. Unfortunately, we are not certain whether Serranus was supposed to transfer this army himself. Livy uses the verb *mitteret*, which in this context means 'to send' and does not imply his further military involvement in Macedonia.¹⁶ It is probably more constructive to assume that he remained in Brundisium, considering that in the same year he went to Greece as a part of Quintus Marcius' embassy which brought 1,000 infantry to Corcyra before dividing the districts they were to approach (the same embassy to which Perseus wrote).¹⁷ Still, it is not possible at this point to confirm without doubt whether or not Serranus personally transferred the army to Macedonia, but the fact remains: there was another army ready to cross the Adriatic, because of which Hammond's argument about Sicinius' activities as a direct and sole reason for Perseus' concern cannot stand beyond a reasonable doubt.

(2) In all probability, Perseus' concern was not caused by Sicinius or even Serranus, but specifically the previously mentioned embassy and 1,000 troops at Corcyra. It was the same embassy which received Perseus' letter of complaint and later (specifically Q. Marcius) held a conference with the Macedonian king on the bank of the Peneus River.¹⁸ As Walbank convincingly stressed,¹⁹ Polybius' narrative in Livy about the progression of the embassy contradicts the idea that there were any Roman troops on the Eastern shores of the Adriatic. At the time of Marcius' conference with Perseus, following the commissioners' visit to Epirus, Aetolia and the conference at Larisa, the Romans said they had nothing thoroughly ready for war at this time, neither army nor leader – which would have been untrue if Sicinius was already in Epirus. Indeed, the silence about any Roman troops in the area is a

¹⁶ *Liv.* XLII, XXVII, 3-4. The army consisted mainly of *socii nominis Latini* and 50 ships (25 of them had crews of Roman citizens – freedmen). On the other hand, Atilius was a praetor in 173 B.C., and if he went to Macedonia, he did it as propraeor. Broughton, 1951, 408 and 412.

¹⁷ *Liv.* XLII, XXXVII, 1-2. He was elected consul in 170 B.C. but remained in Italy. *Liv.* XLIII, IX, 1-3 and XI, 3.

¹⁸ *Liv.* XLII, XXXVIII, 8 – XLII, XLIII, 3.

¹⁹ *Op. cit.* 83-85 basically confirming the arguments in Kahrstedt, 1911, 415-30. Also Münzer, *PWRE*, s.v. 'Cn. Sicinius' (8), col. 2197-8. Gruen, 1984, 413 n. 85. Different opinion in Geyer, *PWRE*, s.v. 'Perseus', col. 1011; Luce, 1977, 123-9; Warrior, 1981, 8-14, 23.

good argument that Perseus' concern was caused exactly by the embassy's arrival at Corcyra, even more so if we know that the conference between him and Marcius started with the Roman saying: *What is awaited, I suppose, is a reply from us to your letter which you sent to Corcyra, in which you ask why we have come in this fashion as envoys with soldiers and are sending garrisons to the several cities.*²⁰ Undoubtedly Perseus had every right to be concerned; not just because 1,000 troops were fortifying cities, but because the Roman embassy was initially sent with a task which was in accordance with the Senate's policy of sending propaganda missions to Greece before the actual fighting, just as they did in situations preceding the wars with Philip V. and Antiochus.²¹ From his point of view, something had to be done, and the Macedonian king sent a complaint expressing his concern about the intentions of the commissioners and the mobilization in Italy.

(3) Lastly, the final problem of Hammond's opinion is the fact that it is based on Livy's information that the Second Legion remained in Italy as a part of Gaius Cassius' army. There is no doubt that Livy mentions a certain Second Legion, but it is not the same one which was assigned to Sicinius. After a careful reading of the preceding Livy's passages, the following is clear: the information about the distribution of consular legions for 171. B.C. is not connected to the narrative of Sicinius' activities and the awarded veteran legion, but rather to the Senate's decision to raise four new legions because of the war in Macedonia.²² The consuls were to draw lots for the districts of Italy and Macedonia, and after special arrangements were made for the legions which were to engage Perseus,²³ Macedonia fell to Publius Licinius who was to cross with the First and Third, while Gaius Cassius was to remain in Italy with the Second and Fourth.²⁴ Therefore, the Second Legion of Cassius' recruits that remained in Italy has nothing to do with Sicinius' Second Legion of veterans from the Ligurian war.²⁵

Therefore, other than Livy's information on the successful disembarkation in Nymphaeum, there is no argument which Hammond gives that could give credibility to the opinion on Sicinius' transferring 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry. Neither did the Second Legion explicitly remain in Italy, nor did Sicinius leave before October. As Walbank more convincingly concluded, based upon available information, it is more probable that the embassy crossed the Adriatic sometime in the middle of September, had a conference with Perseus at the bank of Peneus River, while Sicinius

²⁰ *Liv.* XLII, XL, 1-2. Translation by Sage and Schlesinger, 1938, 409.

²¹ Walbank, 1941, 85.

²² *Liv.* XLII, XXXI, 1-2.

²³ *Liv.* XLII, XXXI, 2-5.

²⁴ *Liv.* XLII, XXXII, 4-5. The occurrence of several legions with the same number was nothing unusual in the Roman Republic and Early Principate.

²⁵ Cassius did not stand idle in Italy. Starting from Aquileia, he attempted to reach Macedonia through Illyricum, but he failed. *Liv.* XLIII, I, 4-12 and XLIII, I, 5.

must have departed from Brundisium in November.²⁶ However, such a conclusion does not change the fact – Walbank does not contradict the opinion on Sicinius' crossing with only a vanguard. It only excludes any possibility that Sicinius departed from Brundisium before the designated date. Moreover, just as the majority of the scientific community, Walbank believes Sicinius transferred only 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry, argumentation of which is quite different than Hammond's.²⁷

Namely, since any attempt to prove Sicinius' crossing with a vanguard provides no additional information which would indicate its validity, further attempts to prove it have been focused on finding inconsistencies in Livy's passages caused by his use of different sources. Basically, by pointing out the truthfulness of the information about the preparations for war and the Second Legion, the only conclusion left would be to trust the information about the safe disembarkation. For example, Brunt believes the solution to the problem lies in Livy's information on special arrangements for the legions which were to cross over to Macedonia.²⁸ Other than 16,000 infantry and 800 cavalry, the consul was also supposed to command Sicinius' 600 cavalry – the combined force which would comprise fewer cavalry than would have been the case had Sicinius been able to muster all the troops allotted to him in Brundisium (about 800-900). That is why he believes Sicinius transferred only a vanguard, while the string of decisions that the Senate made up to that point was not fully implemented and Livy wrote them because he used different sources.²⁹ The decisions are precisely from Sicinius' task to transfer his troops as soon as possible, the preparations for war that included the Second Legion (a passage he believes is not Livy's), and the aforementioned 600 cavalry under the consul's command.

Tab. 1. Chronologically listed Livy's information

Quote	Description	Number of soldiers
<i>Liv.</i> XLII, XVIII, 1.	Senate's decision on Sicinius' task	/
<i>Liv.</i> XLII, XXVII.	Sicinius' preparations for war	Second Legion, 4,000 infantry, 200 cavalry of the allies of the Latin Name

²⁶ Walbank, 1941, 85.

²⁷ Walbank only advocated the theory, while the argumentation of other authors, which Walbank indirectly accepts, is presented in the following text.

²⁸ Brunt, 1971, 659. Also Brennan, 2000, 122-123.

²⁹ As Gelzer, 1935, 299.

<i>Liv.</i> XLII, XXVII, 3-4.	The army of A. Atilius Serranus	8,000 infantry, 400 cavalry
<i>Liv.</i> XLII, XXXI, 3.	Consul in charge of the war with Macedonia was supposed to command Sicinius' 600 cavalry	600 cavalry
<i>Liv.</i> XLII, XXXVI, 8-9.	Sicinius successfully transferred his army to the vicinity of Apollonia	5,000 infantry, 300 cavalry

Further on, just as Brunt, Erdkamp believes the passage about the Second Legion and the preparations for war is not at all Livy's and states that it provides false information because other passages containing numbered legions are also highly suspect. Referring to the legions in number, Erdkamp believes Livy pretended to have access to more precise information than the other sources, but it turns out to be a false claim. Thus passages XLII, XVIII and XXXVI (the safe disembarkation in Apollonia), stem from Polybius and give true information about Sicinius' task and the number of troops.³⁰ Additionally, Erdkamp claims that the duties assigned to Sicinius and Atilius Serranus are mutually exclusive and inconsistent, because in XLII, XXVII, 3-4 Atilius was ordered to operate against Macedonia with the 8,000 infantry and 500 cavalry mobilised by Sicinius, but in XLII, XXXVII, 1-4 we find him on a diplomatic mission throughout Greece, while Sicinius had landed with thousands of troops.³¹

Yet, these arguments are rather complicated and not quite clear. Firstly, if Sicinius was able to muster all his allotted troops, the number of cavalry would not amount to 800-900, but almost exactly to the 600 that Livy mentions in XLII, XXXI, 3.³² Brunt possibly: a) combined the 500 supposed to appear in Brundisium (XLII, XXVII) with 300 which allegedly disembarked in Apollonia (XLII, XXXVI), but those 300 cavalry would have been the part of the original 500 supposed to appear in Brundisium, not the amount added; or b) he combined the overall number of cavalry Livy mentions in Brundisium (XLII, XXVII, 1-4), which indeed is 900, but only 500 were Sicinius', while 400 were a part of Atilius' army. Secondly, it is not constructive to conclude that some of the Senate's decisions were not implemented

³⁰ Erdkamp, 2006, 555-6. Just as Luce, 1977, 124. Cf. Nissen, 1863, 246.

³¹ Erdkamp, 2006, 556.

³² That is, if he assumes the legion had 300 cavalry + 200 allied = 500 in Brundisium (Cf. Briscoe, 2012, 20 n 53.). On the other hand, Briscoe, 2012, 20 is quite right to assume that the mentioned 600 Sicinius' cavalry under the consul's command is probably a marginal comment, imported into the text by someone who wanted to explain the reference to 600 cavalry in XLII, XXVII, 3 and 5.

because Livy recorded information from two different authors. Without a doubt, Livy used different sources, but it is farfetched to assume that two authors would quote two different stages of the decision-making process and that it would not be easy to explain how it worked in practice.³³ After all, we do know that special arrangements for the legions were indeed carried out because the amount of the consuls' Italian infantry in the expanded legions was exactly the same before leaving Brundisium as it were in the moments before the battle of Callicinus.³⁴

Indeed, possibly the only clear argument is that the passage about the Second Legion and the preparations for war is not Livy's and that we have to trust the information which is based on Polybius. But here Erdkamp only further complicates the matter at hand. It is false to assume Sicinius' and Atilius' duties are mutually exclusive because, in all probability, Atilius was not even supposed to lead his army to Macedonia. As previously said, Livy is not clear about this, Atilius had the task of sending the army which Sicinius was mobilizing, while considering his duties as a part of Marcius' embassy it would be more probable to conclude that Atilius did exactly what Livy said – just sent the army which, as Briscoe adds, could be led by a *praefectus socium*.³⁵ As for the passages with numbered legions, I agree that Livy's use of different sources produced inconsistencies throughout his work, but it is rather dubious to conclude that the passage about the preparation for war is false on account of other examples where passages with numbered legions have questionable information. To be clear, I agree with Erdkamp's conclusions about Livy's use of several sources and the disparity it causes in comparison with Polybius' narrative, yet it seems to me that it is not quite well argued why a piece of information about the numbered legion automatically means that we should discard the passage in question, rather than conclude it is a result of Livy's use of sources other than Polybius. There is no doubt that we could debate the authenticity of information in the majority of such passages, just as we could in the case of XLII, XXVII, but since there are passages in Livy where a numbered legion occurs and is derived from Polybius,³⁶ we cannot conclude with absolute certainty that XLII, XXVII is false. It may well be, but there is no further analysis and definitive proof. Basically, the only information which can put the veracity of the passage in question is one about the disembarkation and, in my opinion, this is exactly where the main problem of all the aforementioned attempts to prove Sicinius disembarked with only 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry lies.

³³ Erdkamp, 2006, 555 n. 45; also rejected by Rich, 1976, 96 n. 133.

³⁴ Cf. *Liv.* XLII, XXXI, 2-4 and LII, 8; Lastly, it would be hard to explain how the 600 cavalry under the consuls' command can be used as an argument that Sicinius did not muster all of his troops, since Brunt believes that it was a decision which was not implemented.

³⁵ Briscoe, 2012, 20.

³⁶ For example, Livy's description of the battle of Pydna and the Second Legion. There are differences in the narrative, but there is no doubt Livy used Polybius as his main source, no matter how questionable he understood his terminology. Briscoe, 2013, 117-124.

Namely, it seems to me that, other than the information on the safe disembarkation, the only other argument in case of fewer troops is Livy's use of Polybius as a source. That is why there are conclusions that XLII, XVIII and XXXVI are of Polybian origin and true, while XLII, XXVII comes from a Roman source and contains false information. Without going into the question of Polybius' accuracy when writing about the number of troops, whether in battle or the preparations preceding one, it must be said that attempting to solve the problem by finding Polybius' narrative in Livy's text is indeed justified. Polybius was an eye-witness to Rome's expansion in the second century B.C. and wrote about the events in question only decades after they occurred. However, if the initial premise is that his information is accurate then the biggest problem, in this case, is not the discrepancy between Livy's information from a Roman source and Polybius, but exactly the discrepancy between the information we have that is of only Polybian origin. Precisely, if we accept that Sicinius transferred only 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry it would indeed be hard to believe he could have successfully carried his orders when, not long after the disembarkation, almost half of his Italian army (2,000 troops) was sent to occupy the forts of the Dassareti and Illyrians.³⁷ Even more, shortly thereafter he had to send 2,000 more troops to Thessaly for the defense of Larisa.³⁸ Both of these are pieces of information that Livy found in Polybius and there is no need to question their validity. The information about the Dassareti and Illyrians is a part of the same passage as Sicinius' disembarkation (XLII, XXXVI), while we do know that Larisa was indeed secured by the Romans before Callicinus.³⁹ Thus the question arises – how was it possible that Sicinius proceeded to secure the coastal area around Apollonia with only 1,000 troops left after the actions to secure the forts of the Dassareti and Illyrians, and Larisa?

From a logical point of view, we can argue that the troops Sicinius sent to Lychnidus were not of Roman origin (or Italian) and that he used allied forces just as he could in the case of protecting Larisa. Yet, we know this to be false. The forces sent to Lychnidus were later seized by Perseus who specifically mentions *Roman prisoners* and Sicinius' actions were directly connected to the later activities of Appius Claudius Centho in 170 B.C. (sent to Lychnidus) and later on Lucius Anicius Gallus.⁴⁰

³⁷ *Liv.* XLII, XXXVI, 9.

³⁸ *Liv.* XLII, XLVII, 10-12. After a concluded peace with Perseus, in January/February 171 B.C., the Senate charged Atilius Serranus to place a garrison in Larisa, Thessaly. For such an undertaking, he asked Sicinius to send 2,000 troops from his army. In principle, Perseus arranged this peace with Roman envoys Quintus Marcius Philippus and Aulus Atilius at the end of 172 B.C. However, obviously it was a pretense because Marcius informed the Senate that such peace was necessary because Perseus was ready for war while Rome was not.

³⁹ But it seems it was lost due to the Roman defeat. On this see Hammond in Hammond and Walbank, 1988, 571.

⁴⁰ Milivojević, 2017, 48 ff.

Further on, by allocating 2000 troops (with tribunes) from his original army, Sicinius would have at his disposal half the size (even less) of his Italian army than in the moment he left Brundisium.⁴¹ In that case, he would have had to rely largely on allied troops, which is not uncommon in Roman warfare but far from the Senate's original idea. There is no doubt Sicinius could have efficiently secured the coastal area with only allied army, or even a part of it, but this problem has to be observed from a Roman perspective. The Third Macedonian War was no minor conflict, and the Senate had to make sure that, before actually waging a war, all the preparations for upcoming conflicts were completed. Such was the nature of Sicinius' task. If there was a certain number of allied soldiers to join Sicinius to be found, even better, but the original idea is clear. The Italian army was transferred with only one assignment: to additionally secure the coastal area around Apollonia. Further operations could have been carried out only if Sicinius had not compromised the fulfilment of his main order by such actions. Accordingly, it is my opinion that the number of troops initially transferred from Italy had to be bigger. Otherwise, the consul's designated disembarkation area would have been much less protected by Italian soldiers than it was originally conceived.

Further on, there is a rather visible problem in comparing Livy's information on the number of troops that safely disembarked and the number that was supposed to assemble in Brundisium. Namely, on one hand, we have the information on safely disembarked 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry; on the other, the information about the Second Legion and most importantly – 4000 allies of the Latin name. The question is what was the composition of the mentioned 5,000 safely disembarked infantry? The numbers do not match. Did Sicinius cross the Adriatic with largely allied forces and a part of the Second Legion? This option is not suitable because it would mean Sicinius decided to break apart a veteran legion, an action no experienced commander would do (or even a novice with experienced seconds). Or did Sicinius do exactly the following – crossed the Adriatic with the Second Legion (which would amount up to the mentioned 5000 infantry and exactly 300 cavalry) and soon enough transferred the remains of his army in Brundisium?

Lastly, it must be said that Erdkamp's arguments, to some extent, cast probable doubt on the veracity of the whole passage about the preparations for war and the Second Legion. Yet, in all probability, as Briscoe stated, there is a possibility that the army which Sicinius mobilised for Atilius actually went to Macedonia and constituted a part of Sicinius' forces. Thus, the allocation of 2,000 troops to Larisa would not have been such a large proportion of his army, as it would have been if Sicinius transferred 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry.⁴² In any case, Sicinius must have crossed the Adriatic with a much larger army. It seems he stayed there at least until the spring

⁴¹ Even if the number was relatively larger than 5,000 infantry, it would still cause him problems.

⁴² Briscoe, 201, 21. He also believes it is possible that the 1,000 troops taken by the commissioners in Greece had been incorporated into Sicinius' forces.

of 171 B.C., when the consul Licinus disembarked in Nymphaeum, and proceeded to Macedonia and the war with Perseus.⁴³ Within such time, Sicinius could have efficiently secured the coastal area around Apollonia and still have had enough troops to secure Larisa and the forts of the Dassareti and Illyrians. After completing his task, the sources are silent on his activities. That is, up until the next year when he again appeared on the Eastern shores of the Adriatic, tasked for solving yet another problem, with the Carnians, the Histrians and the Iapodians.⁴⁴

⁴³ *Liv.* XLII, XLIX, 10.

⁴⁴ *Liv.* XLIII, V, 10. In Livy the cognomen is Gaius, but in all probability, it should be Gnaeus. Broughton, 1951, 423. n. 7; Gruen 1984, 227

**Sažetak: Gnej Sicinije i Treći makedonski rat:
novi pristup Livijevim informacijama**

U kontekstu Trećeg makedonskog rata prve rimske trupe koje su prešle Jadran bile su one propretora Gneja Sicinija. Njegov zadatak bio je zaštititi priobalni pojas oko Apolonije o čemu Tit Livije piše na nekoliko mjesta u njegovom djelu *Ab Urbe Condita*. No, osim Polibija, Livije je koristio razne izvore zbog čega postoje kontradikcije u informacijama oko veličine vojske koju je Sicinije prebacio preko Jadrana, te je li osigurao mnogo veću zonu. Cilj ovog članka je detaljno preispitati dostupne Livijeve informacije i pružiti nova mišljenja o tome koliko je vojnika Sicinije zapravo prebacio preko Jadrana, te je li njegovo utvrđivanje utvrda Dasareta, Ilira i priobalnog pojasa oko Apolonije urađeno sa znatno većom silom nego što se to prethodno mislilo.

Ključne riječi: Treći makedonski rat, Gnaeus Sicinius, Apolonija, Druga legija

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