

**Coordonatoare/Coordinator**  
**Mădălina STRECHIE**



**SUB SEMNUL MUZELOR**  
**UNDER THE SIGN OF THE MUSES**

*IN HONOREM*  
**PANAGIOTIS ASIMOPOULOS**

**Coordonatoare/Coordinator**  
**Mădălina STRECHIE**



**EDITURA UNIVERSITARIA**  
**Craiova, 2023**

Copyright ©2023 Editura Universitaria  
Toate drepturile sunt rezervate Editurii Universitaria

**Descrierea CIP a Bibliotecii Naționale a României**  
**Sub semnul muzelor : in onorem Panagiotis Asimopoulos : lucrările**  
**colocviului internațional "Receptarea Antichității greco-latine în**  
*culturile europene" : ediția a XIV-a = Under the sign of the muses /*

coord.: Mădălina Strehie. - Craiova : Universitaria, 2023

Conține bibliografie

ISBN 978-606-14-1983-8

I. Strehie, Mădălina (coord.)

94

**Note:**

**I. Autorii își asumă în totalitate paternitatea și calitatea lucrărilor proprii.**

**II. Fotografiile copertelor fac parte din arhiva personală a coordonatoarei și sunt instantanee ale celor nouă muze care decorează incinta Teatrului din Caracal.**

© 2023 by Editura Universitaria

Această carte este protejată prin copyright. Reproducerea integrală sau parțială, multiplicarea prin orice mijloace și sub orice formă, cum ar fi xeroxarea, scanarea, transpunerea în format electronic sau audio, punerea la dispoziția publică, inclusiv prin internet sau prin rețelele de calculatoare, stocarea permanentă sau temporară pe dispozitive sau sisteme cu posibilitatea recuperării informațiilor, cu scop comercial sau gratuit, precum și alte fapte similare săvârșite fără permisiunea scrisă a deținătorului copyrightului reprezintă o încălcare a legislației cu privire la protecția proprietății intelectuale și se pedepsesc penal și/sau civil în conformitate cu legile în vigoare.

***CARISSIMO AMICO ET FIDELISSIMO SOCIO  
PANAGIOTIS ASIMOPOULOS  
ET GRAECIAE, MUSARUM PATRIAE,  
HOC VOLUMEN DEDICAMUS***



## PREFAȚĂ

Volumul de față reunește lucrările celei de-a XIV-a ediții a Colocviului Internațional Receptarea Antichității greco-latine în culturile europene, cu tema *Sub semnul muzelor* și îi este dedicat *In honorem* celui mai fidel colaborator extern al colocviului nostru domnul Dr. PANAGIOTIS ASIMOPOULOS, de la Academia Militară Greacă, în semn de prețuire pentru contribuțiile Domniei Sale, deosebit de interesante la colocviul nostru, dar mai ales pentru solidaritatea manifestată și susținută pentru demersul nostru de a menține și continua acest proiect de cercetare, mereu actual și mereu ofertant.

Încă de la stabilirea temei acestei ediții ne-am gândit la *Socius et Amicus* (aliat și prieten-trad. n.) Dr. Asimopoulos, Domnia Sa este din țara zeilor, a eroilor, a democrației și a muzelor, fiind alături de noi la fiecare ediție cu temele de mai sus, muzele fiind și ele creația impresionantă și nemuritoare a civilizației grecești. *Sub semnul muzelor* a fost conceput așadar ca volum omagial, o surpriză, atât pentru cel căruia îi este dedicat, dar mai ales pentru cei care au fost contributorii acestuia, de aceea el este o apariție unică atât ca tematică, dar mai ales ca abordare în peisajul academic românesc, dar nu numai.

Muzele ne-au inspirat pe toți în conceperea studiilor noastre, iar rezultatul sperăm să îl bucare pe cel mai fidel prieten al colocviului nostru, prin aceasta vrem să îi mulțumim că ne-a fost alături în vremuri dificile și ne-a încurajat să continuăm tradiția colocviului, ajungând la ediția a XIV-a, mai ales că mulți ne-au întors spatele și ne-au lăsat singuri, Dr. Asimopoulos a fost mereu alături de noi în toate proiectele noastre, nu doar în acesta. De asemenea, Domnia Sa a fost de un real folos în difuzarea internațională a lucrărilor colocviului nostru, fapt pentru care îi mulțumim prin acest volum și îl asigurăm de toată considerația și prietenia noastră.

Volumul este structurat în ordinea alfabetică a autorilor care au contribuit la această ediție a XIV-a, inclusiv vechiul nostru prieten (cap de listă), care are un studiu deosebit de interesant despre . . . *Spionajul în Grecia antică*, demonstrând că muzele inspiră nu doar oamenii de cultură, ci și oamenii de stat, în această activitate antică de culegere a informațiilor fiind nevoie de foarte multă inspirație. Studiul Domniei Sale este urmat de studii inspirate de muzele Greciei precum:

*Exprimarea cromaticului. . .*

*Muzele în marș militar. . .*

*Influența religiei grecilor asupra dacilor. . .*

*De la muza antică la muza suprarealistă. . .*

*Imperiul muzelor*

*Arlechinul. . .*

*Elemente de comunicare non-verbală. . .*

*Ielele, mit și simbolistică. . .*

*Înflorirea artelor sub patronajul lui Augustus. . .*

*De la muza Antichității la muza lui Balzac*

*. . . Urania și realitatea multiplă*

*Thalia – victimă a represiunii dreptului roman. . .*

*Muzele în antroponimie*

*Muzele – repere mitologice*

*Biblioteca din Alexandria și muzeul, sediu al muzelor*

Așadar perspective multidisciplinare în care sunt tratate muzele și arta lor. Fie că este vorba despre muze în ansamblu, fie că este vorba de muze individuale, fie că este vorba de personaje divine, similare muzelor, fie că este vorba de sectoare de artă inspirate de muze, fie de receptarea lor în cultura românească și europeană, toate studiile din prezentul volum omagial, (conceput după principiul: *non multa, sed multum*) sunt inspirate de cele nouă muze.

De asemenea, toate științele umaniste și sociale și-au găsit locul potrivit în această temă a celei de-a XIV-a ediții a colocviului nostru, fie că vorbim de: istorie, mitologie, drept, științe militare, științe politice, filologie, dramaturgie, religie, artă, comunicare, bibliologie, toate acestea sunt de fapt părți din cultură, care era de fapt manifestarea celor nouă muze, fiice a lui Zeus. Fiecare studiu prezentat este o demonstrație a importanței muzelor în cultura umanității, fiind zeitățile cele mai apropiate de oameni și oferindu-le acestora mijloacele de a fi asemenea zeilor, nemuritori, tocmai prin cultura, a cărei inspirații este insuflată oamenilor ele, muzele ghizii culturali ai omenirii, fiind prin aceasta zeități foarte importante.

Mulțumesc tuturor celor care au făcut posibilă această ediție a XIV-a a colocviului nostru, cu precădere Domnului Panagiotis Asimopoulos pentru statornicia prieteniei Domniei Sale, doamnei profesoare Dana Dinu care a învățat multe generații despre tainele civilizației grecești, tuturor participanților prezentului volum care au făcut efortul de a aduce studii potrivite temei. Mulțumesc doctorilor și doctoranzilor mei, care au susținut demersul subsemnatei și pentru traducerea numeroase în limba engleză îi datorez doamnei Mariana LĂPADAT ENE mulțumiri îndoite. Fără acestea volumul ar fi fost mai sărac și nu s-ar bucura de circulație internațională.

**Sub semnul muzelor** să te însoțească, prietenul nostru drag, Panagiotis Asimopoulos, în țara ta, țară care le-a dat pe fiicele lui Zeus, cele nouă muze. Să ne fii alături în continuare ca un *amicus certissimus* (prieten foarte sigur-trad. n.), în toate proiectele noastre.

Mădălina STRECHIE



## FOREWORD

This volume brings together the works of the XIV<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Colloquium Reception of Greco-Latin Antiquity in European Cultures, with the theme *Under the Sign of the Muses* and is dedicated *In honorem*, to the most faithful external collaborator of our colloquium Dr. PANAGIOTIS ASIMOPOULOS, from the Greek Military Academy, as a token of appreciation for his contributions, particularly interesting to our colloquium, but especially for the solidarity shown and sustained for our approach to maintain and continue this research project, always current and always offering.

Ever since establishing the theme of this edition, we have thought *of Socius et Amicus* (ally and friend-s. n.) Dr. Asimopoulos, His Lordship is from the land of gods, heroes, democracy, and muses, being with us at each edition with the above themes, the muses being also the creation of the impressive and immortal Greek civilization. *Under the sign of the Muses*, it was conceived as a homage volume, a surprise, both for the one to whom it is dedicated, but especially for those who were its contributors, so it is a unique appearance both as a theme, but especially as an approach in the Romanian academic landscape, but not only.

The Muses inspired us all in conceiving our studies, and we hope the result will please the most faithful friend of our colloquium, through this we want to thank him for being with us in difficult times and encouraging us to continue the tradition of the colloquium, reaching the XIV edition, especially since many turned their backs on us and left us alone, Dr. Asimopoulos has always been with us in all our projects, not just this one. Also, he was of real use in the international dissemination of the works of our colloquium, for which we thank him through this volume, and we assure him of all our consideration and friendship.

The volume is structured in alphabetical order of the authors who contributed to this fourteenth edition, including our old friend (head of the list), who has a particularly interesting study about . . . *Espionage in ancient Greece*, demonstrating that the Muses inspire not only men of culture, but also statesmen, in this ancient activity of gathering information a lot of inspiration was needed. His study is followed by studies inspired by the muses of Greece such as:

*Expression of chromatics. . .*

*Muses on military march. . .*

*The influence of the religion of the Greeks on the Dacians. . .*

*From the ancient muse to the surrealist muse. . .*

*Empire of the Muses*

*Harlequin. . .*

*Elements of non-verbal communication. . .*

*Ielele, myth and symbolism. . .*

*The flowering of the arts under the patronage of Augustus. . .*

*From the Muse of Antiquity to Balzac's Muse*

*. . . Urania and multiple reality*

*Thalia – victim of the repression of Roman law. . .*

*Muses in anthroponymy*

*Muses – mythological landmarks*

*The Library of Alexandria and the museum, headquarters of the Muses*, therefore multidisciplinary perspectives in which the muses and their art are treated. Whether we are talking about muses as a whole, whether they are individual muses, whether they are divine characters, similar to muses, whether we are talking about art sectors inspired by the Muses, or their reception in Romanian and European culture, all the studies in this homage volume (conceived according to the principle: *non multa, sed multum*) are inspired by the nine muses.

Also, all humanities and social sciences have found their proper place in this theme of the XIV edition of our colloquium, whether we are talking about: history, mythology, law, military sciences, political science, philology, dramaturgy, religion, art, communication, bibliology, all these are parts of culture, which was actually the manifestation of the nine muses, daughters of Zeus. Each study presented is a demonstration of the importance of the muses in the culture of humanity, being the deities closest to humans and offering them the means to be like gods, immortal, precisely through the culture, whose inspirations are instilled in people, they, the muses, the cultural guides of mankind, being through these very important deities.

I thank all those who made possible this fourteenth edition of our colloquium, especially Mr. Panagiotis Asimopoulos for the steadfastness of his friendship, Professor Dana Dinu who taught many generations about the mysteries of Greek civilization, all the participants of this volume who made the effort to bring studies appropriate to the theme. I thank my doctors and PhD students, who supported the undersigned's initiative and for the numerous translations into English, I owe Mrs. Mariana LĂPĂDAT ENE double thanks. Without them, the volume would have been poorer and would not enjoy international circulation.

*Under the sign of the muses* to accompany you, our dear friend, Panagiotis Asimopoulos, to your country, the land which gave them the daughters of Zeus, the nine Muses. Continue to join us as *anamicus certissimus* (verycertain friend-s. n.), in all our projects.

Mădălina STRECHIE

# AMBASSADORS AND PROXENOI: PROTEAN MANIFESTATIONS OF ANCIENT GREEK ESPIONAGE

Panagiotis ASIMOPOULOS  
HELLENIC MILITARY ACADEMY  
GREECE

## ABSTRACT

*As worthy descendants of the Homeric Odysseus, percipient politicians and ambitious commanders of the classical are aware of the primary value of organized espionage. Before the armed solution of their unbridgeable disputes both within the Greek territory and during their military campaigns in Magna Graecia or in Asian lands distinguished leaders proceed to the targeted search for information. So, they are informed about the real capabilities, the evolving activities and the future actions of their dangerous adversaries. The unimpeded achievement of their strategic goals is also largely based on the imaginative diversity of their elite partners. Individuals beyond all suspicion demonstrate impressive efficiency. Respected ambassadors are considered such ideal choices, since according to the existing international reciprocity they enjoy non-negotiable protection. At the same time, the inviolable parameters of the diplomatic immunity of official representatives pave their effective access to confidential information. Deterministically the immediate adoption of preventive practices is carried out and the timely implementation of repressive measures is anticipated, while the neutralization of looming risks of national defence and internal security is intensified.*

*The present paper, based on the thorough study of an ancient Greek corpus which covers the time period of four centuries (7th - 4th century BC) attempts to quote briefly: (a) the inventive approaches of ambassadors and proxenoi during regular and emergency missions; (b) the essential aspects which are inextricably intertwined with their crucial use as spies; (c) the state measures for control the solvency and the evaluation of their action.*

**KEY WORDS:** *ambassadors, proxenoi, espionage, ancient Greece.*

## 1. Ambassadors as willy-nilly spies

In the classical era in democratic governments and oligarchic regimes, the ambassadors and the consuls performed their diplomatic duties either in the context of a predetermined mission or by moving from their city to a foreign land: characteristically, in the Hellenistic period the ethnographer and explorer Megasthenes (350-290 BC) resides in Pataliputra (modern Patna, the capital city of the state of Bihar in India), in Chandragupta Maurya's court [1], while acting as a dedicated agent of the Seleucid king Seleucus I Nicator [2].

In addition to conducting secret negotiations between their homeland and its allies or open discussions with representatives of enemy forces they derive information with a military orientation. The official cover gives them the distinct advantage of making discreet investigations of a foreign power. However, their recognized office does not avoid a serious drawback: obviously the other side is fully aware that the agent in question serves a foreign state; therefore, he identifies himself and acts as a spy [3].

Thus, during the Second Messenian War (660-650 BC) the king of Arcadia, Aristocrates II, is bribed to support the interests of his enemies, the Lacedaemonians. In an allied council, the Messenian king Aristomenes lays out his plans for an invasion of Laconia, while the Spartans move against his country. Aristocrates records the information and gives it to his slave in order to inform the Spartans. When the Arcadians are informed of their king's treacherous action, they stone him to death [4].

Three centuries later the prominent Rhodian commander Memnon (380-333 BC) plans to attack Leucon I (410-349 BC), the Spartocid ruler of the Bosporan Kingdom. But he ignores the true size of enemy cities and their populations. With a fast trireme he sends Alcibiades to Byzantium as an ambassador in order to supposedly discuss the conclusion of an alliance. He is accompanied by an eminent citharode, Aristonicus of Olynthus. Based on the music-loving audience who rushes to the theatre in order to admire Aristonicus' unparalleled skills, Alcibiades watches carefully the whole coastline and manages to approximate the population [5].

A similar tactic is applied by foreign nations: the Ichthyophagi ("Fish eaters") serve the Persian king Cambyses II as spies in a "goodwill" embassy to Ethiopia, as they speak the Ethiopian language [6]. But the Thyni [7] also come down from the mountains asking Xenophon for help in a bid to make peace with Seuthes II, the ruler in the Odrysian kingdom of Thrace. However, they seek to spy on the Greek camp, as they attack at night [8].

Even the accredited diplomatic bodies of the Macedonian state in regions of Asia during their institutional contacts with high officials of neighboring countries prepare for an imminent military intervention [9]. At the same time, they ensure the friendly behaviour or in the last case the neutral attitude of the native leaders.

According to the charming story quoted by Plutarch [10], the tactic of divulging information within interstate contacts is adopted by the young Alexander: he boldly asks the Persian envoys questions about the duration and nature of the journey, the martial art and the bravery of their king, and

## AMBASSADORS AND PROXENOI: PROTEAN MANIFESTATIONS OF ANCIENT GREEK ESPIONAGE

---

the power system of the Persian empire as well.

### 2. Disclosure of information

The constant communication of diplomats with their sending city is considered a high priority, as it is dictated by the key defence of their state's geostrategic interests.

In light of their official political jurisdiction, they even informally convey useful information, as they converse with officials, consuls and foreigners or when they were entertained in official structures, such as the magistrates' hall (*πρυτανεῖον*) [11].

In order to avoid the abuse of friendly relation between a hosted person and a foreign state (*ζενία*) or the affectionate regard (*φιλία*) with citizens of other cities [12], the general and author of military works Aeneas Tacticus (4<sup>th</sup> century BC) recommends the rationalization of such contacts, so as to limit the opportunities for betrayal and information gathering [13].

Nevertheless, through their extensive or short reports many perceptive ambassadors work toward an immediate response to provide assistance [14] or form an alliance [15] :

(a) the Syracusan general Hermocrates [16] suggests the sending of envoys, so that the cities of Sicily and southern Italy will unite in time and know that the Athenians are a great threat to the whole region [17] ;

(b) the Athenian statesman and orator Demosthenes, a staunch opponent of Macedonian politics, exerts intense pressure on the assembly of the citizens (*ἐκκλησία τοῦ δήμου*), so that it reacts decisively. He urges it to coordinate diplomatic missions to the Greek cities. Thus, on the one hand it will underline the ever-growing resistance inside Athens, and on the other hand, it will encourage a dynamic, panhellenic action against ruthless Philip II of Macedon [18].

Sometimes their positive intentions are misinterpreted. The envoys of the Corcyraean oligarchs arrive in Athens with two objectives: firstly, they attempt to clarify their catalytic involvement in the overthrow of the statehood (427 BC); secondly, they want to prevent the Athenian intervention. But they are arrested and imprisoned in Aegina [19].

Reasons related to easy and constructive communication, time savings and prompt response justify why the selected senders prefer to share their information orally. In specific cases or particular situations, the ambassadors themselves act as postmen, carrying confidential messages in letter form [20].

It is necessary to underline that some unbreakable moral rules guarantee the physical integrity of ambassadors [21]. However, they are often subject to heated disputes between the ordering state and its rivals: Demosthenes accuses Philip of not only having killed the Athenian consul of Carystus, but also of refusing to hand over his body to the Athenian envoys to bury it [22].

Of course, if they are arrested for acts of espionage, they automatically lose the right to immunity [23], while they are even punished by death [24].

### **3. Selection criteria**

The exact definition of emissaries depends on fundamental conditions which vary greatly according to the dominant political status and the military situation, the time period and the surrounding atmosphere.

More precisely, when the diplomatic relations between two states are in a shaky balance, the ambassadors are chosen primarily on the basis of their good interpersonal contacts with the foreign leaders: the Athenians send philo-Spartan Callias to Susa, one of four capitals of the Achaemenid Persian empire in order to conclude the homonymous peace (449 BC), while in 335 BC the terrified Thebans choose men whom the triumphant Alexander treats with unreserved respect [25].

The necessarily selection of persons who are not friendly to the host city has a positive sign, since such representatives are expected to report only true facts:

(a) in the summer of 347 BC Aeschines is chosen as a member of the peace embassy to Philip II in order to counteract the prejudice vigorously fomented by his Macedonian opponents, but also due the fact that the remaining candidates are not suitable, as they present misleading reports about the prospects of peace [26] ;

(b) a decree of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC assigns the important consulship to Nabas honored by the Boeotian League in 360 BC. The son of Axioubos [27] is a Carthaginian merchant trading abroad [28].

For achieving the necessary objectivity and in order to prevent the ulterior interpretation of events, the diplomatic mission consists of at least three trusted ambassadors [29]. Therefore, the personal pursuits of the members of the delegation do not manipulate their diverse perspectives and generally they do not affect the intended the intended ascertainment of truth.

Undeniably in both democratic regimes and oligarchic states, envoys are chosen according to their social identity and the quality of their relations

## AMBASSADORS AND PROXENOI: PROTEAN MANIFESTATIONS OF ANCIENT GREEK ESPIONAGE

---

with prominent political figures or military leaders in foreign countries. Tyrants defer to experienced experts: the Thracian king Seuthes II employed Medosades [30] to conduct his negotiations with Xenophon, while the Spartan kings prefer those citizens who wish to serve as consuls [31].

The age identity of the emissaries plays an important role, as it crucially affects their credibility. Elderly persons are surrounded with due respect, while they are considered wise, reliable, and responsible interlocutors [32] : in the spring of 167 BC Theaetetus, the envoy of Rhodes, is above eighty years old, when he appears in the Roman Senate in order to intercede in favour of his native city and conclude a new alliance [33]. Unfortunately, he dies during the official negotiations.

Finally, the honorary position is acquired as a practical manifestation of gratitude for offered services or as a hereditary right [34]. By a decree of 411 BC, the Eretrians reward the valuable contribution of Hegelochus from Tarentum and appoint him as their consul in his birth city; the high office is bequeathed to his descendants [35].

### 4. Extraordinary diplomatic missions

The unstable political situation and the unforeseen developments often trigger the imperative establishment of diplomatic missions. This essential progress does not escape the scientific gaze of the eminent historian Thucydides who points it out at least in three cases:

(a) the alarmed Syracusans are informed that a sudden Athenian invasion is imminent. For that reason, they hastily send representatives to major Sicilian cities [36] in order to achieve an enlarged anti-Athenian coalition;

(b) some deserters or captives inform the Syracusans that the Athenian expeditionary force requests immediate reinforcements from the metropolis. Without any delay they address to their powerful allies in Corinth and Sparta [37]. But their impulsive reaction is perceived by the always on alert Athenian general Nicias [38];

(c) in 421 BC the Lacedaemonians attempt to prevent secret negotiations between Corinth and Argos. On account of this they assemble an unplanned group of diplomats, before making a formal request to Corinth [39].

Not infrequently, diplomats come face-to-face with their counterparts from rival states: in Athens, the Corinthian embassy vigorously opposes the claims of the Corcyraean envoys [40].

It is clearly assumed that the intercalary missions require rapid data

collection. Strong reflexes play a supporting role in successful decision-making and unobstructed access to unknown flow of information [41].

### **5. Proxenoï and intelligence gathering**

Throughout time, the transnational contacts constitute a formal curtain for collecting information of wide content, often with the express consent of the official state authority.

A tangible example of the participation of proxenoï in spying missions is found in a cenotaph dated to 625 and 600 BC. It belongs to a Corcyraean proxenos at Oianthea, in Ozolian (or Hesperian) Locris [42].

Later, the Macedonian king Alexander I or Philhellene (reign: 497-454 BC) is proclaimed the official proxenos of the Athenians [43]. He acts as a representative of the Persian governor Mardonius during peace negotiations after the Persian defeat at the Battle of Salamis (480 BC). But before the Battle of Plataea (479 BC) Alexander leaves the Persian camp and addresses either to Aristides [44] or to the Athenian guards [45]. He notifies them of an alternate route into Thessaly through upper Macedonia warning that the Persian troops intend to attack at dawn. In addition, he presents a detailed description of the enemy's logistical situation. He reveals his name only when they promise him that they will remember his services after the war [46].

While the Peloponnesian War is waged, more specifically in 428 BC, Mytilene tries to defect from Athens. The Athenian citizens [47] and some politically dissident Mytilenaeans transmit the current news to Athens. The soldiers are dispersed, so as to suppress the general revolt and ensure [48] the physical integrity of the proxenoï [49] who are threatened by the vengeful rebels [50].

But even during the painful Sicilian Expedition (415-413 BC), the leadership of Athens assigns envoys to certify whether the Eggestaeans keep the sums of money they claim to have [51].

In addition, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Achaean Lycon proposes to the Ten Thousand to send representatives in order to sound out the intentions of the Heracleots [52] regarding food supply [53]. Correspondingly, in 346 BC in Athens Phocian ambassadors act as political observers [54].

However, in addition to being collectors, the members of diplomatic groups become transmitters of information data. In 387 BC, the Achaemenid satrap of Western Armenia, Tiribazus (440-370 BC) reads the humiliating conditions and the unbearable demands of King Artaxerxes II (445-359 BC)