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APPIAN AND DIO ON THE ILLYRIAN
WARS OF OCTAVIAN

Abstract: The article presents a comparison of the accounts of Appian and Cassius Dio concerning the Illyrian wars of Octavian (35-33 B.C.) and comments on the differences between the two. The main discrepancies include a partial defeat of Octavian's soldiers at Metulum, not referred to by Appian, who based his narrative on Augustus' *Commentarii*. Octavian, who probably regarded the incident as damaging to his reputation as a successful military commander, may have intentionally suppressed the report about it. Further discrepancies of greater significance are the death of Menodorus, the former admiral of Sextus Pompey, and the victory of Fufius Geminus over the rebellious Segestani, both mentioned only by Dio. These could be interpreted in light of Augustus' skillful mastery of political propaganda.

Appian devoted twelve out of thirty chapters (16-28) of his *Illyrike*, i.e. slightly less than half of this narrative, to Octavian's Illyrian wars of 35-33 B.C. These wars, which were fought in several campaigns in different regions of Illyricum, were described by him in great detail, his main and possibly only source having been Augustus' *Commentarii*. Appian himself expressly claimed that his description was based almost exclusively on Augustus' own account of the wars, which has been accepted in general by modern critics¹. Octavian's wars against the Iapodes, Pannonians, and Delmatae have also been described by Cassius Dio, who, however, gave a much shorter account of the events than Appian. It should be emphasized that Dio's description of the wars is proportional to the rest of his *History* (49.34.2 [Boissevain II 315] - 49.38 [Boiss. II 319]), while Appian's is disproportionate, particularly in terms of the *Illyrike* but also in relation to his entire historical work. It is not entirely clear which historical accounts were used by Dio as his sources, as similarities in both

¹ A. Migheli, Le memorie di Augusto in Appiano Illyr. 14-28., *Annali delle Facoltà di Lettere Filosofia e Magistero dell'Università di Cagliari* 21 (Studi offerti al Prof. B. R. Motzo per il suo LXX genetliaco, I Storia), 1953, 199-217; M. Šašel Kos, Octavian's Campaigns (35-33 BC) in Southern Illyricum, in: *L'Illyrie méridionale et l'Épire dans l'antiquité (IIIe colloque intern., Chantilly 1996)*, in press, where further references are cited.

narratives indicate that he may have read Augustus' *Commentarii*², but he must also have utilized a source at least slightly hostile to Augustus, since Dio mentioned certain facts that may be considered damaging to Octavian's reputation. It can be postulated that these more or less objective accounts could have been taken from the *Histories* of Asinius Pollio or Cremutius Cordus, or both³. These differences have until now only been outlined, but not yet analyzed in detail⁴.

In view of the different sources that Appian and Dio made use of for their narratives of Octavian's Illyrian wars, it is of special interest to establish the nature of the differences in their accounts. Since Appian's is exhaustive and detailed, it may be presumed that the omissions in it are due to the fact that certain events could have been intentionally suppressed by Augustus himself. These omissions should therefore be analyzed so as to understand why Augustus would have preferred not to mention certain events and facts in his *Commentarii* (presumably those, that do not appear in Appian's much longer description) – or to seek some other explanation for their omission in Appian.

Introducing the wars

Appian began his narrative in the 16th chapter by stating that Octavian – in contrast to Antony's inactivity – efficiently protected Italy from the frequent raids of the savage tribes threatening its borders. He named them all, having divided them into three categories according to the lesser or greater resistance they had offered Octavian. In the 16th chapter, Appian listed the peoples and tribes of the first category (the Oxyaei, Pertheenatae, Bathiatae, Taulantii, Cambaei, Cinambri, Merromeni, and Pyrrisaei), those pacified with little effort, none of which were mentioned by Dio. In the same chapter, Appian also made mention of the peoples of the second group, who were overcome in several more prolonged military actions (the Docleatae, Carni, Interphurini, Naresii, Glintidiones, and Taurisci, as well as the

² J. Dobiáš, *Studie k Appianově knize illyrské* (*Études sur le livre illyrien d'Appien*), Prague 1930, 182 ff. and 287 ff.

³ Cf. W. Schmitthenner, *Octavians militärische Unternehmungen in den Jahren 35–33 v. Chr.*, *Historia* 7, 1958, 195–198; M. Šašel Kos, *Zgodovinska podoba prostora med Akvilejo, Jadranom in Sirmijem pri Kasiju Dionu in Herodijanu / A Historical Outline of the Region between Aquileia, the Adriatic, and Sirmium in Cassius Dio and Herodian*, Ljubljana 1986, 142–144; B. Manuwald, *Cassius Dio und Augustus. Philologische Untersuchungen zu den Büchern 45–56 des dionischen Geschichtswerkes* (Palingenesia 14), Wiesbaden 1979, 273 ff.; M. Reinhold, *From Republic to Principate. An Historical Commentary on Cassius Dio's Roman History Books 49–52 (36–29 B.C.)* (American Philological Association 34), Atlanta 1988, 19; 68 ff.; A. M. Gowing, *The Triumviral Narratives of Appian and Cassius Dio* (Michigan Monographs in Classical Antiquity), Ann Arbor 1992, 39–50.

Hippasini and Bessi, the Meliteni and Corcyreni, the Liburni, and the Alpine Iapodes); of these, Dio only noted the Taurisci and Liburni. Dio also cited the Iapodes, but from his subsequent narrative it is clear that he meant the transalpine Iapodes, mentioned by Appian in the 17th chapter, in the third group of peoples, whom Octavian could only conquer by means of a proper war. Dio, like Appian, noted the causes of Octavian's wars in his introduction – that the Salassi, Taurisci, Liburni, and Iapodes no longer paid tribute, had devastated the neighbouring Roman territories, and openly revolted upon hearing that Octavian had made preparations to leave for Africa (49.34.2). So far no differences in content could be observed in the two accounts, merely that Dio's is much shorter, and that he referred to Octavian's planned departure to Africa, which Appian could well have mentioned elsewhere in his narrative of the civil wars.

In the 17th chapter, Appian listed those peoples who offered Octavian the greatest resistance (the Salassi, the transalpine Iapodes, and the Segestani, the Dalmatae, the Daesii, and Paeones, i.e. the Pannonians). Dio named all of these except the problematic Daesii – these may or may not be identical with the Daesitiae⁵ – and did not distinguish between the Segestani and the Pannonians. In the rest of the chapter, Appian described the campaign against the Salassi, entrusted to Antistius Vetus and M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, which does not appear in Dio. Instead, Dio only noted that the conquest of several tribes (in Appian's first and second categories, and probably also the Salassi) had been delegated to Octavian's legates, while Octavian himself advanced with his army against the Iapodes. Dio only mentioned the Salassi at the very end of his narrative (49.38), when he observed that they had been conquered by Valerius Messalla.

The war against the Iapodes

The war against the transalpine Iapodes is described in four chapters by Appian, while Dio summarized it in only one paragraph (49.35). In the 18th chapter, Appian narrated the fall of Terponus, which had not been destroyed by Octavian, and in the next three chapters, the gradual fall and destruction of Metulum. Among many other details he specifically mentioned the presence of Agrippa and an unknown general of Octavian, Hiero, possibly a corrupted name for Tiberius' father, Ti. Claudius Nero⁶. Dio, however, did not note any

⁴ Šašel Kos (n. 3), 142–144.

⁵ Šašel Kos (n. 1).

⁶ Suggested already by Schweighäuser in his 1785 edition of Appian, p. 856; cf. J. Fitz, *Die Verwaltung Pannoniens in der Römerzeit I*, Budapest 1993, 27; Ti. Claudius Nero, Tiberius' father, allegedly died in 33 BC (cf. *RE* III [1899], 2777–2778 no. 254 [Münzer]).

names. Although both mention that Octavian had been wounded in one of the battles, Dio omitted most of the details. However, he noted that the inhabitants of Metulum had deceived Octavian: having offered to discuss the terms of surrender, they admitted a corps of his soldiers into their hill-fort, and killed them to the last man in the course of the night. Dio concluded that none of the Metulians fell alive into the hands of Octavian, since even those who were captured by him alive took their own lives. Appian gave a different report of the events: on the second day, Octavian received messengers from Metulum, as well as fifty hostages of his own choice. The Metulians, according to Appian, received a Roman garrison, to whom they assigned the higher hill within their hill-fort, while they themselves occupied the lower. When the garrison entered the town, the natives attacked them, but were overpowered by the Romans; the entire town and all its inhabitants, including the women and children, were destroyed in the fire. It is interesting that both Appian and Dio, when noting the unit of Roman soldiers who entered Metulum, had used the same expression: φρουρά, φρουροί, a guard, garrison (*Illyr.* 21.59: ... καὶ φρουρὰν ὑποσχόμενοι δέξεσθαι τὸν ὑψηλότερον λόφον τοῖς φρουροῖς ἀπέλιπον...; Dio, 49.35: ...καὶ φρουροὺς ἐς τὴν ἄκραν ἐσδεξάμενοι ἐκείνους τε τῆς νυκτὸς ἅπαντας ἐφθειραν ...). It is clear that both were referring to the same event. It seems very probable that in this case the real facts were intentionally modified by Augustus and as such taken over by Appian. It is clear that Octavian did not wish the Senate and posterity to learn of a disaster which he might have avoided had he been more experienced in military matters.

The war against the Segestani/Pannonians

Appian's and Dio's accounts of the war against the Segestani (thus Appian) or Pannonians (thus Dio) differ significantly from each other. Appian described it in three chapters (22–24), and Dio in two long paragraphs (49.36–37), which makes their narratives almost equally long. Appian introduced his account by stating that the Romans had twice previously attacked the country of the Segestani, but had received no hostages, nor any other sign of submission. Dio, however, observed that although the Pannonians gave Octavian no reason for violence, he invaded their country because he wanted to exercise his soldiers and maintain them at the cost of a weaker people. Octavian's arrogant action would have been, according to many modern interpretations, a cause for his Illyrian wars in general⁷; this,

⁷ Schmitthenner (n. 3), 189 ff.; see, for example, E. S. Gruen, *The Imperial Policy of Augustus*, in: *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate* (ed. K. A. Raafaub, M. Toher), Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford 1990, 401.

however, is an incorrect interpretation of Dio's text, as he clearly and expressly refers here only to Octavian's military campaign against the Pannonians. This tribe actually inhabited a region too distant from Italy to have ever threatened it seriously; also, they had never paid tribute to the Romans, thus in their case there was no just reason for war, as was noted in the very beginning of the accounts of both historians. The Pannonians, as opposed to the Taurisci and Iapodes, were in fact guilty of no offences against the Romans, and Dio's statement is perfectly correct in so far as it refers merely to the Pannonians. It is also understandable that a statement concerning Octavian's mishandling of the Pannonii would not have figured in Augustus' *Commentarii*, and thus neither in Appian.

Appian continued by describing Pannonia as a wooded country, whose inhabitants were living in villages organized by clan (κατὰ συγγένειαν), and who had 100,000 fighting men but no common government or ruler. Octavian devastated their country for eight days and came to the city of Segesta, which he wanted to conquer and use as a base against the Dacians and Bastarnae. He had ships built on the Sava River, so he could bring provisions to the Danube. In chapter 23, Appian described how Octavian took a hundred hostages from the notables of Segesta and wanted to install a garrison in the city. When his soldiers approached the city, the Segestani attacked them and Octavian had to besiege it; he also destroyed part of the army of the Pannonian allies who came to bring aid to the Segestani. Octavian's capture of Segesta on the thirtieth day is described in the 24th chapter. He stationed twenty-five cohorts in the city and returned to Rome, but had to come back untimely, in winter, because of the revolt of the Segestani, and in spring he proceeded against the Delmatae.

Dio continued his account by adding an excursus about the Pannonians of his own time, claiming that he knew Pannonia well because he governed it after Africa and Dalmatia. Nonetheless, his description of the Pannonians is partly stereotyped, closely resembling a literary *topos*, in part adding a few original data, such as the explanation of the name of the Pannonii (49.36). In paragraph 37, he proceeded to describe Octavian's campaign, and he, too, noted that Octavian destroyed the country of the Pannonii with fire and plundered everything, because they had hindered his march against Siscia. He never used the Celtic name of the emporium, Segesta, nor the name of the people of that region, the Segestani, as he probably did not want to create an equivocal impression on the readers of his time, when these names seem to have no longer had any meaning; on the other hand, he probably did not find it worthwhile to explain the usage of two different names. Thus he might himself have changed the name Segesta, which he must have found in his source or sources, into the modern Siscia. Possibly, however, he found the explanation in the

source he used; in Appian's and Dio's time Siscia was one of the most important and prosperous Pannonian cities. In the late Republican period, when it was first mentioned in the Roman literary sources (in 119 B.C., App., *Illyr.* 10.30), the city was known under the name of Segesta, an economically powerful Celtic settlement on a peninsular site presently called Pogorelec, well protected by the last meander of the river Colapis (Kupa), before its confluence with the Savus (Sava)⁸. Siscia, on the other hand, may have been an early Iron Age period settlement located closer to the banks of the Sava River (cf. Pliny, *N. h.* III 148: ... *Colapis in Savum influens iuxta Sisciam gemino alveo insulam ibi efficit quae Segestica appellatur* ...). A prosperous city developed during the Principate from the union of the two settlements, the pre-Celtic name having prevailed over Segesta, which may have been considerably weakened during Octavian's war against the Segestani. Contrary to Dio, Appian does not seem to have been well informed about „Illyrian“ affairs or personally acquainted with the country, and may have not even realized that Segesta was the Siscia of his own day. Thus he copied the names Segesta and Segestani directly from his source, not giving second thoughts to the matter. Otherwise, it would be difficult to explain why he did not see any necessity to comment on the history of the toponyms for the sake of his readers, who were familiar with the name of Siscia but not with that of Segesta.

In the 37th paragraph, Dio described the strategic situation of the fortified town, the actual siege and the battles, emphasizing the importance of the river battles. According to Dio, Octavian acquired boats from nearby allies and had them transported along the Ister and Savus Rivers to the Colapis; he attacked the barbarians simultaneously with his infantry and navy. The Pannonians, too, constructed canoe-like boats with which they attacked the Romans, killing many Roman soldiers in several river battles, including Menas, the former admiral of Sextus Pompey. After the fall of Siscia, Octavian left Fufius Geminus there with a military force, and returned to Rome, whence he set out for Britain. Dio concluded his account of the Siscian war by stating that soon a new revolt broke out; some recently conquered tribes had revolted, as well as the Delmatae. Among the former, Fufius Geminus again subdued the Pannonians, although they had already succeeded in chasing him out of Siscia.

Almost everything Dio wrote in this short passage seems to be more or less contradictory to the data in Appian. While Appian noted

⁸ J. Šašel, Siscia, in: *RE Suppl.* XIV (1974), 702-741 (= *Opera selecta*, 600-620); A. Durman, O geostrateškom položaju Siscije (On Geostrategic Location of Siscia), *Opuscula archaeologica* 16, 1992, 117-131; cf. also M. Buzov, Segestika i Siscija - topografija i povijesni razvoj (Segestika und Siscia - Topographie und geschichtliche Entwicklung), *Prilozi Instituta za arheologiju u Zagrebu* 10, 1993, Zagreb 1996, 47-68.

that Octavian had ships constructed on the Savus River in order to bring provisions to the Danube for his intended Dacian campaign, Dio claimed that the boats were provided by nearby allies and transported along the Danube to the Savus and hence to the Colapis River, from where Octavian attacked the Pannonians. Appian's statement alone causes no difficulties and sounds very logical, whereas Dio's mention of the boats and Octavian's allies is in itself slightly contradictory, since at the same time he claimed both that the allies were located nearby (παρὰ τῶν ταύτῃ συμμάχων), and that their boats were transported along the relatively distant Danube to the Savus and the Colapis. This passage has been interpreted in various ways. Zippel, for example, proposed that these allies would have been the Noricans, since the Norican kingdom was an old Roman ally⁹. G. Veith suggested that the boats might have been built by the Taurisci of the Emona basin and transported down the Nauportus/Emona River (= Ljubljana) and the Savus to Segesta¹⁰. The Taurisci had a major emporium at Nauportus, mentioned by Strabo, who also noted that they traded in goods from Aquileia which were transferred onto boats at Nauportus, continuing along the Nauportus/Emona River and the Savus down to Segesta and even further. Since Octavian had subdued the Taurisci and (re?)conquered the Emona basin prior to his campaign against the Iapodes – this having been a strategic necessity – these were incontestably his nearest allies, and their boats the most obvious source for Octavian's naval equipment. Arguments for this interpretation have double value; they take into account both Dio's statement that the allies were located close to Siscia, as well as the general strategic situation. Both the Taurisci and Siscia were located along the Savus River and it would have been easy to send ships downstream to the scene of the war. Furthermore, interpreted in such a way, the two arguments are perfectly compatible with Appian's statement that the ships were constructed on the Savus River.

Several scholars have given precedence to Dio's claim that the ships came to Siscia via the Danubius and Savus Rivers to the Colapis. Patsch suggested that the allies who had sent Octavian the ships might have been the Dacians of Cotiso, with whom Octavian had friendly contacts¹¹. Allegedly he promised their king his daughter

⁹ G. Zippel, *Die römische Herrschaft in Illyrien bis auf Augustus*, Leipzig 1877, 229–231. This was also accepted by J. J. Wilkes, *Dalmatia*, 53, who, however, nonetheless postulated that the boats came to Segesta via the Danube.

¹⁰ G. Veith, *Die Feldzüge des C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus in Illyrien in den Jahren 35–33 v. Chr.* (Schriften der Balkankommission, Ant. Abt. 7), Wien 1914, 56–58.

¹¹ C. Patsch, *Beiträge zur Völkerkunde von Südosteuropa, V: Aus 500 Jahren vorrömischer und römischer Geschichte Südosteuropas*, 1. Teil: *Bis zur Festsetzung der Römer in Transdanuvien* (Sitzungsber. Akad. Wien, phil.-hist. Kl. 214, 1) 1932, 59 f

Julia in marriage, and there were even rumours that he suggested marrying Cotiso's daughter himself (Suet., *Aug.* 63.4). However, the Dacians could by no means be considered nearby allies and it seems totally impossible to me that in the course of merely half a month the ships could come all the way from Dacia upstream along the Danubius and upstream along the Savus River. The siege of Siscia altogether lasted thirty days, but the allies had first to be informed that Octavian was requesting fully equipped and manned war ships, and would have needed some time to conscript the sufficient number of soldiers and sailors. F. Papazoglu hypothesized that the allies in question could have been the Scordisci, situated between the Dacians and the Pannonians, who were certainly interested in the war between the latter and the Romans¹². Yet only the region of Siscia was involved in the conflict, and although no doubt the Scordisci could have indirectly been affected by this war, they were sufficiently removed from the field of operations; in addition, by that period they were politically much less important than earlier¹³. In their case, too, it would be a problem to provide Octavian with ships in a short time. Thus the Taurisci may well be considered the nearby allies. By writing in one passage about the nearby allies and the Danube, Dio clearly contradicted himself; it may perhaps be assumed that the order of the rivers as given in Dio should actually be inverted, and that Dio intended to refer to Octavian reaching the Danube after the fall of Siscia, in a reconnaissance expedition (cf. Dio, 50.24.4). However, he clearly did not mention the Danube in the same context as Appian, as he nowhere noted the planned Dacian campaign; his mention of the Danube remains a problem that cannot be explained in an entirely satisfactory manner. The Dacian campaign had propagandistic intentions, no less so than the proclaimed conquest of Britain, referred to by Dio. Britain was foremost in Octavian's plans mainly for the sake of propaganda, since the conquest of the island was one of Caesar's major military projects. Strangely, it is omitted by Appian, who, however (as I have noted above), emphasized Octavian's planned conquest of the Dacian kingdom, another unfulfilled project of Caesar.

The Death of Menodorus and the Victory of Fufius Geminus

Dio further introduced in his narrative the entirely new topic of the river battles — he mentioned several of them — and even referred to the death of the famous admiral Menas (= Menodorus), a former

¹² F. Papazoglu, *The Central Balkan Tribes in Pre-Roman Times. Triballi, Autariatae, Dardanians, Scordisci and Moesians*, Amsterdam 1978, 337-339; cf. also 415 n. 80.

¹³ On the history of the Scordisci in general, see Papazoglu, *op. cit.*, 271 ff., especially 284 ff.

freedman of Pompey the Great, and after Pompey's death in the service of his son Sextus Pompey¹⁴, who twice in the course of the last years of the civil wars deserted to Octavian. He changed sides for the first time in the spring or summer of 38 B.C., returning to his former master the next year. He then definitely went over to Octavian's party in the summer of 36 B.C., a year before Octavian's Illyrian wars. In 35 B.C., the presumed year of the death of Sextus Pompey, Octavian obviously took him along with the army to Illyricum. Why is there no mention in Appian of either his presence or his death, or of the naval battles at Segesta, which must have been a major military event in the course of the war against the Segestani? In view of Appian's detailed narrative, it could hardly be assumed that these events would have been consciously omitted by him. Clearly, he did not find them in Augustus' *Commentarii*, and it may be hypothesized that Augustus had some reason not to mention them. A hypothetical explanation may be offered for his presumed intentional omission of Menodorus' death. One of Octavian's best friends and best military commanders and collaborators was Marcus Agrippa whom, it seems, Octavian had also placed at the head of his navy during the Illyrian wars¹⁵, and who accompanied Octavian in the campaign against the Iapodes, and hence most probably also against the Segestani, since this was a continuation of the Iapodian war. Menodorus, a notorious navy commander of Sextus Pompey and, after his desertion, of Octavian, was actually a traitor, and moreover, he may have been regarded as Agrippa's rival. Possibly Agrippa advised Octavian to get rid of Menodorus, as sometime in the future he could again change sides and go over to Antony. In any case, Menodorus proved to be an utterly unreliable person. To have him killed somewhere in Illyricum may have seemed a discreet solution, the best in view of Octavian's future interests and his imminent rupture with Antony. If this reconstruction were correct, it would be natural that Octavian would not wish to provoke any unnecessary suspicion by mentioning his name in his writings, preferring to pass over these events in silence.

In Appian there is also no mention of Fufius Geminus, the commander in charge of the twenty-five cohorts (which equalled two and a half legions), that had remained at Segesta after Octavian's departure to Rome. Appian noted the exact number of the cohorts without the name of the commander, while Dio merely mentioned that Octavian left Fufius Geminus in Siscia with „some force“ (σὺν δυνάμει τινί). Dio's statement is imprecise and consequently no conclusions can be based on it. As with Menodorus, it may be

¹⁴ RE XV.1 (1931), 896–900 no. 1 (Münzer); T. R. S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*. II, New York 1952, 410; see also Gowing (n. 3), 192 ff.

¹⁵ J.-M. Roddaz, *Marcus Agrippa* (Bibl. des Éc. fr. d'Athènes et de Rome 253), Rome 1984 143.

concluded that the name of Fufius Geminus also did not appear in Augustus' *Commentarii*. Octavian's omission of one of his generals may be viewed in the light of what Appian observed about Augustus' *Commentarii* in general: „Augustus did not describe the actions of others, but rather his own“ (*Illyr.* 15.45: οὐ γὰρ ἄλλοτρίας πράξεις ὁ Σεβαστός, ἀλλὰ τὰς ἑαυτοῦ συνέγραψεν ...). It could well be postulated that personal dislike and/or jealousy of his military abilities may have played a certain role in Octavian's decision to „remove his name from history“ and cover his deeds with anonymity. Cases of Octavian's jealousy, especially in terms of military success, are notorious: one need only think of M. Licinius Crassus (consul 30 B.C.), a former partisan of Sextus Pompey and later an Antonian who, after having gone over to Octavian and become the proconsul of Macedonia, conducted highly successful campaigns in 29 and 28 B.C., personally killing the king of the Bastarnae – or of C. Cornelius Gallus who, as a first prefect of Egypt, suppressed a rebellion in the Thebaid and negotiated the reception of the King of Ethiopia into Roman protection¹⁶.

The War against the Delmatae

Dio's account of the last phase of the Illyrian wars, the war against the Delmatae, is too short (second half of the 37th paragraph) to allow for a comparison with Appian's much longer and detailed description¹⁷. He merely mentioned that the Delmatae were fought by Agrippa and Octavian, and in the last phase by Statilius Taurus. Appian's account is contained in four chapters of *Illyrike* (25–28). It is clear from it that Octavian wished to emphasize specifically the recovery of the military standards lost by Gabinius in his unsuccessful campaign of 48 B.C. Appian first described Octavian's march against Promona, which had been occupied by Versus, the commander of united Delmataean army (ch. 25). In chapter 26, the fall of Promona is narrated, and in the 27th chapter the fall of Synodium, at the outskirts of the forest from which the Dalmatae had once ambushed Gabinius' army in a deep and lengthy gorge between two mountains. Octavian had Synodium burnt and besieged Setovia; in the course of the siege he was struck on the knee with a stone. After he recovered, he returned to Rome to enter the consulship together with Volcatius Tullus, having left Statilius Taurus to end the siege. Octavian's immediate return to Dalmatia is narrated in the 28th chapter, and the capitulation of the Delmatae who had to deliver seven hundred children to

¹⁶ J. A. Crook, *Political History, 30 B.C. to A.D. 14*, in: *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. X²: *The Augustan Empire, 43 B.C.-A.D. 69*, Cambridge 1996, 80–81.

¹⁷ See for the Dalmatian part of Octavian's wars M. Mirković, *Die südillyrischen Stämme im illyrischen Kriege Octavians in den Jahren 35–33 v. u. Z.*, *Živa antika* 18, 1968, 113–127.

Octavian as hostages, as well as the Roman standards taken from Gabinus. Octavian further advanced to the Derbani and some other tribes. Thus he subdued the whole of Illyria¹⁸, for which he was awarded an Illyrian triumph by the Senate.

Both Appian and Dio mentioned, however, that the war was brought to an end by Statilius Taurus. T. Statilius Taurus was one of Octavian's best generals, consul 37 B.C. together with Agrippa, who conducted the siege of Setovia and held command in the Dalmatian part of Illyricum in 34–33 B.C.¹⁹. Octavian must have greatly relied upon Statilius Taurus, which is certainly also reflected in the fact that in 31 B.C. he was placed in charge of Octavian's continental army at Actium (Vell. Pat. II 85.2; Plut., *Ant.* 65.3).

The differences in Appian's and Dio's accounts show in an interesting manner how any historical narrative is evidently, understandably, and unavoidably subjective (while it could even be more or less manipulated), and how differently the same events could be described by different historians. Historians who are not contemporary to the events about which they write, are entirely dependent on their choice of sources; this is often dictated by factors on which they could have had no influence. The real „makers of history“, however, are the protagonists of the events and political happenings. The course of events is often complex and unpredictable, not always taking the „right“ turn; hence the ever present wish to more or less alter the facts and thus falsify history. Propaganda in its various manifestations has always played an enormous role in creating public opinion and dictating history, and it is an undisputable truth that the versions of events presented by the victors usually prevail over those of the vanquished. Not always, however. Augustus was a master of propaganda, knew well its various aspects and means, and skillfully exploited all of them, consciously creating his own image²⁰. As can be argued on the basis of the analysis of the *Res gestae*, much may have been done by him in his pursuit of higher goals, for the benefit of the *res publica*²¹. Everything seems to have been at his service, from art to literature, he acted as the greatest benefactor, and was undoubtedly one of the greatest and most successful politicians of all times²². He had early

¹⁸ For the significance of this phrase see Šašel Kos (n. 1).

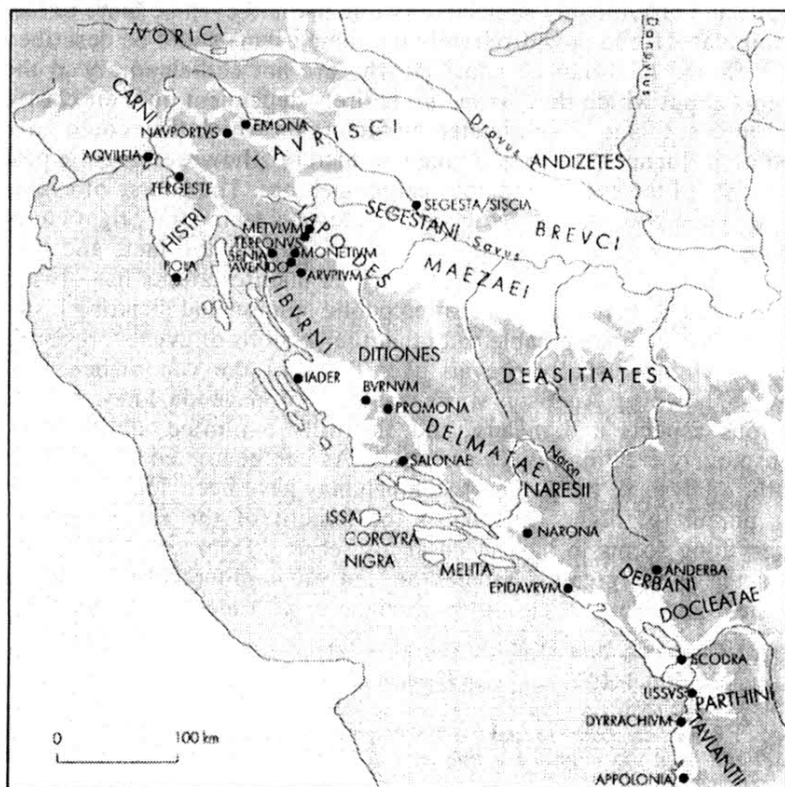
¹⁹ *RE* III A 2 (1929), 2195–2197 no. 33 ff. (Nagl). See also Fitz (n. 6), 27–28, with citations.

²⁰ P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder*, München 1987; G. Alföldy, *Studi sull'epigrafia augustea e tiberiana di Roma* (Vetera 8), Roma 1992, with further citations.

²¹ E. S. Ramage, *The nature and purpose of Augustus' „Res gestae“* (Hist. Einzelschr. 54), Stuttgart 1987.

²² See the articles in *Caesar Augustus – Seven Aspects* (ed. F. Millar, E. Segal), Oxford 1984, and in *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate* (ed. K. A. Raaflaub, M. Toher), Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford 1990.

recognized the impact of propaganda. Thus it is not in the least surprising to note that his presentation of the Illyrian wars, as preserved in Appian, was intended by Octavian to be exploited as a means of propaganda²³; he was intent to create for himself an image of a conqueror, wishing to follow closely in the footsteps of Caesar. It does not always occur that several versions of the same events survive from antiquity. If Augustus' account alone were preserved, we would *a priori* know that it is biased, but we would not know to what extent and in what sense. Dio's version helps modern historiography to unmask a little the solid facade, carefully constructed by the *princeps*.



²³ See also P. Wallmann, *Triumviri Rei Publicae Constituendae. Untersuchungen zur Politischen Propaganda im Zweiten Triumvirat (43-30 v.Chr.)* (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe III vol. 383), Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris 1989, 281-284.