

# ARCTOS

ACTA PHILOLOGICA FENNICA

VOL. XXVI

HELSINKI 1992 HELSINGFORS

## INDEX

Neil Adkin: "Filthy Manichees"	5
Jaakko Aronen: Notes on Athenian Drama as Ritual Myth-Telling within the Cult of Dionysos	19
Kai Heikkilä: Sappho Fragment 2 L.-P.: Some Homeric Readings	39
Siegfried Jäkel: Die ästhetische Funktion der lyrischen und epischen Elemente in der griechischen Tragödie	55
Iiro Kajanto: A Rhetorical Analysis of Ezechiel Spanheim's <i>Panegyricus</i> of Queen Christina	63
Bengt Löfstedt: Lateinische Quellen einiger mexikanischer Predigtsammlungen	79
Sari Mattero: The gluttonous <i>genius</i> : yearning for vitality and fertility	85
Leena Pietilä-Castrén: A Copy of the Praxitelian <i>Anapauomenos</i> in Finland	97
Olli Salomies: Zur Namengebung der Konsuln in den handschriftlich überlieferten Konsulverzeichnissen für die Zeit 15-284 n.Chr.	105
Heikki Solin: <i>Analecta epigraphica</i> CXLV-CXLIX	117
Veikko Väänänen: <i>DE EBRIETATE</i> , Poèmes bachiques connus en Finlande au XVIIe siècle	129
G. Michael Woloch: Ammianus' Route to Cologne	137
<i>De novis libris iudicia</i>	141
<i>Index librorum in hoc volumine recensorum</i>	165

## Ammianus' Route to Cologne

G. Michael Woloch

In A.D. 355, Ammianus accompanied his commander Ursicinus from Milan to Cologne (15.5.24), where they successfully countered the revolt of Silvanus. When he left Gaul in A.D. 357 (16.10.21) Ammianus accompanied Ursicinus to Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica, Vojvodina, Serbia). The main aim of this article is to discuss how exactly we may reconstruct Ammianus' route on this campaign. In order to do this the present writer must mention some of our author's sources, both autopsy and literature.

The detailed description of the pass at Mont Genève in the Cottian Alps (15.10) is generally held to indicate autopsy in the late winter or early spring.<sup>1</sup> As our author tells us, the Mont Genève Pass route went through "Segusione" (Susa), past the "*stationem nomine Martis*" (Oulx) and by the "*Matronae ... uerticem*" (Mt. Genève). Looking at a map, the Cottian Pass does not seem to be the most direct route from Milan to Cologne, but Ammianus described it in 15.10 as the "*[uia] media ... et compendiaris magisque celebris*" ("the middle one, the short-cut and more frequented").<sup>2</sup> The forces of Silvanus in Cologne were mentioned as wanting to rush out of Germany by the Cottian Alps, where this pass lies (15.5.29). The present writer agrees with the general opinion that our author used this pass then. The fact that it was the quickest route at the time is a better proof than the accuracy of the description.

Where did Ursicinus' forces go after that? It would be tempting to

---

<sup>1</sup> On Ammianus' autopsy of Mt. Genève, see E.H. Bunbury, *A History of Ancient Geography*, II, London, 1879, repr. Amsterdam, 1979, p. 680 and T. Mommsen, "Ammians Geographica," *Hermes* 16 (1881), cited as "Geographica," p. 622. E. Galletier and J. Fontaine call Ammianus' description of the route over the Mt. Genève Pass a "description très exacte," (eds. and transl.), Ammien Marcellin, *Histoire*, I, Paris, 1968, p. 261, n. 256.

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus, transl. by J.C. Rolfe, I, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass., 1935. This translation is also used below. On the Mt. Genève Pass see W.W. Hyde, *Roman Alpine Routes*, Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society, II (1935), pp. 50-55.

say that the route went through Switzerland because of the dramatic descriptions of Aventicum (Avenches), the Lake of Geneva and the Lake of Constance. Using roads marked on the maps in H. Bengtson and others, *Grosser historischer Weltatlas*,<sup>3</sup> one could construct a route back from Vienna to Lausanne on the Lake of Geneva and then to Avenches and Augst, before following the west bank of the Rhine to Cologne. The return route would have gone from Augst to Zurich and then the south shore of the Lake of Constance before heading south by the Julier pass.

The dramatic descriptions, however, do not necessarily mean that Ammianus passed through these places. With regard to Avenches, Ammianus said in 15.11.12: "*Alpes Graiae et Poeninae exceptis obscurioribus ... habent et Auenticum, desertam quidem ciuitatem, sed non ignobilem quondam, ut aedificia semirutata nunc quoque demonstrant*" (The Graian and Pennine Alps, not counting towns of lesser note, have Avenches, a city now abandoned to be sure, but once of no slight importance, as is even yet evident from its half-ruined buildings)." T. Mommsen thought that Ammianus' vivid mention of the destroyed town of Avenches, using the word "[de]monstrant (is ... evident)" was a proof of autopsy,<sup>4</sup> but W. Sontheimer pointed out the similarity of the words Sallust used to describe Saguntum (Spain), with the word "*ostentabant* (showed)."<sup>5</sup> Thus, the description is only a literary formula.

About the Lake of Constance Ammianus said in 15.4.2-6, "*quodque est impendio mirum, nec stagnum aquarum rapido transcursu mouetur nec limosa subluuie tardatur properans flumen et confusum misceri non potest corpus; quod ni ita agi ipse doceret aspectus, nulla ui credebatur posse discerni*" ("If one's sight did not prove it to be so, one would not believe possible" the lack of mixing of the lake's waters with those of the Rhine). Ammianus also assigned the same phenomenon to the Lake of Geneva and the Rhone in 15.11.16. On the basis of these descriptions E.A. Thompson believed that our author actually saw the Lake of Constance and P. de

<sup>3</sup> H. Bengtson and others, *Grosser historischer Weltatlas*, 6th ed., Munich, 1978, maps on pp. 40-41 and 45.

<sup>4</sup> Mommsen, "Geographica," p. 611.

<sup>5</sup> W. Sontheimer, "Der Exkurs über Gallien bei Ammianus Marcellinus (XV,9-12)," *Klio* 20 (1926), p. 21; Sallust, *Histories*, frag. ii.64 (Maurenbrecher).

Jonge thought the same about the Lake of Geneva.<sup>6</sup>

These descriptions about the lakes are not really correct. If one observes the lakes just at the entrance of the Rhine or Rhone, one might have that impression, but such a route cannot be postulated on the basis of Bengtson's maps or Sheet L32 of the *Tabula Imperii Romani*.<sup>7</sup> In actual fact similar descriptions of the Lake of Geneva are found in the writings of the ancient geographers Strabo (4.1.11 p. 186) and Pomponius Mela (2.74.79),<sup>8</sup> and thus it is another literary formula. About the Lake of Constance, Ammianus wrote that the Rhine "*lacum invadit rotundum et vastum ... perque quadringenta et sexaginta stadia longum, parique paene spatio late diffusum* (enters a vast round lake ... four hundred and sixty stades long and in breadth spreads over almost an equal space)." Of course this lake is not at round, and to have that impression one would have to sit in a boat in the middle, while ignoring inlets on the east and west sides. The use of stades indicates that Ammianus was using a Greek source, probably a geographer but not Strabo.

One could argue that Ammianus actually saw these lakes but he described them incorrectly because he preferred the literary description over autopsy, as F. Lasserre implied in general terms in his critique of Pomponius Mela.<sup>9</sup> This is a judgment that one must make, and although Ammianus was not as accurate as Thompson thought,<sup>10</sup> still he was such a conscientious historian that he would not have done such a thing. Even though it was written long ago, Mommsen's assessment of Ammianus is correct: "ein ehrenhafter frei und hoch denkender Mann und ein scharfer und dennoch liebevoller Kündiger des menschlichen Herzens, ... aber mit allen seinen nicht geringen Unzulänglichkeiten und Fehlern dennoch weitaus der beste Geschichtschreiber ... [seiner] Epoche."<sup>11</sup> A proof that

---

<sup>6</sup> E.A. Thompson, *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcellinus*, Cambridge, 1947, cited as *Historical Work*, p. 4; P. de Jonge, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XV 6-13*, Groningen/Djakarta, 1953, p. 71.

<sup>7</sup> Union academique internationale, *Tabula Imperii Romani*, Sheet L32 (Milano), Rome, 1966.

<sup>8</sup> The mixing of the river waters with the waters of the Lakes of Geneva and Constance is quite a complicated affair. For the most part, no mixing is evident. See P. Guichonnet, *Le guide de Lemane*, Lyons, 1988, pp. 34-44.

<sup>9</sup> F. Lasserre, *KP IV* (Munich, 1972) cols. 1039-1040.

<sup>10</sup> Thompson *Historical Work*, p. 40.

<sup>11</sup> Mommsen "Geographica," pp. 635-636; in agreement is G. Sabbah, *La Méthode d'Ammien Marcellin*, Paris, 1978.

our author did not pass by the Lake of Constance on this expedition is that Sheet L32 of the *Tabula Imperii Romani* shows the road on the south side as a minor road, and it would have been unsuitable for an army.

Since we cannot construct a route through Switzerland for our author and still we accept that he went out through Mt. Genève, his most likely route would have been on from Vienne to Lyons, the hub of Roman roads in Gaul, and then along the Saone and Moselle to Trier before reaching Cologne. Since we do not know which Alpine pass he used for his return trip and have a clue like Mt. Genève, his route back must remain more uncertain.