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CORPUS TRAIECTUS MARMORARIORUM AT OSTIA*

RISTO VALJUS

At Ostia we have knowledge of at least four professional corporations which have the word *traiectus* in their name: *corpus traiectus Luculli*, *corpus traiectus marmorariorum*, *corpus traiectus Rusticelii*, *corpus traiectus togatensium*.¹ Two of these, those named after Lucullus and Rusticelius, were probably formed by ferrymen who carried passengers and goods across the Tiber. To allow ships to travel up the river to Rome there was no bridge across the river at Ostia. To get to the other side of the river and to the imperial harbours one had to use a ferry. The two other corporations, *corpus traiectus marmorariorum* and *corpus traiectus togatensium*, also have been thought to have some connection with the ferrymen who provided transport across the Tiber.²

* Drafts of this article have been read by Dr. Anne Helttula whom I would like to thank for her many helpful comments. I wish to thank Mrs. Margot Whiting for correcting my English.

¹ CIL XIV 403, ... *corp(or)is traiect(us) togatensium* ...; 409, ... *corpor(atorum) scapharior(um) et lenuncularior(um) traiect(us) Luculli* ...; 425, ... *corporis traie[ct]us marmorariorum* ...; 4553, ... *corpori traiect(us) Ru[stic(eli)]* ...; 4554, ... [*corp(ori) t]raiectus [Rusti]celi* ... *corpor[i tr]aiect[us Rusticeli]* ...; 4555, ... [*co]rp. traie[ct(us) Rustic(eli)]* ...; 4556, ... [*corp. tr]aiect(us) Rustic(eli)* ...; 5320, ... [*co]rpus lenunclariorum traiectus Luculli* ...; 5327, ... *c]orpori [scaph]ariorum [traiectus] Rusticeli* ...; 5328, ... *corpori s[caphariorum] traie[ctus Rust.]* ...; AE 1987, 176a, ... *corp(or)is traie]ctus L[uculli ---]* ... *corp[oris ? ---] lenu]ncul[ariorum traie]ctus [Luculli]* ...; 176b, ... *co]rporis [lenuncular(iorum) tr]aiectus [Luculli].*; 194, ... *corp(us) tr(aiectus) Lucul(li)* ...; 195, ... *corp]ori lenun[culario]rum traiect(us) Lucul(li)* ...; 196, ... *corp(or)um lenunc(ulariorum) t]raiect(us) Luculli* ...; 197, ... *corporis traiectus Luculli* ...; AE 1989, 125, ... *corp(ori) traie(ctus) R[ustic(eli)]* ...

² R. Meiggs, *Roman Ostia*, Oxford 1973², 297; L. Casson, *Harbour and River Boats of Ancient Rome*, JRS 55 (1965) 34; A. Licordari, *I lenuncularii traiectus Luculli ad Ostia*, *Miscellanea greca e romana* 12, Roma 1987, 149-150; H. L. Royden, *The Magistrates of the Roman Professional Collegia in Italy from the First to the Third Century A.D.*, Pisa 1988, 51, 104.

The *corpus traiectus marmorariorum* has been given other interpretations, as well. Le Gall thinks that it was named after the docks on the Tiber bank where marble cargos were handled.³ Licordari speaks of the transport of marble but does not clarify his opinion more precisely.⁴ The name of the corporation has made scholars think about the marble blocks which have been found in the northern part of the Isola Sacra and in Trajan's canal. It has been thought that in that area there was an imperial marble yard, *statio marmorum*, to which marble was brought from different quarries around the Mediterranean to be shipped on to Rome.⁵ In Baccini Leotardi's opinion, with whom Pavolini and Fant agree, the name *corpus traiectus marmorariorum* refers to the transport of marble. They think that the members of the corporation carried marble from the yard at Portus to Rome.⁶ In my opinion this view can not be accepted.

We know very little about the *corpus traiectus marmorariorum*. So far only one inscription has been found.⁷ Like often the names of the other corporations mentioned above,⁸ it does not have any word indicating any kind of boat, raft or ship. But there is no reason for thinking that the members of this corporation used vessels larger than a *lenunculus* or a *scapha*.⁹ It has been thought that the *corpus traiectus marmorariorum* and

³ J. Le Gall, *Le Tibre, fleuve de Rome dans l'antiquité*, Paris 1952, 224-225. Meiggs rejected this view and the argument that only one ferry service across the river would have sufficed at Ostia (Meiggs 297 note 3).

⁴ Licordari 150.

⁵ Meiggs 168; P. Baccini Leotardi, *Marmi di cava rinvenuti ad Ostia e considerazioni sul commercio dei marmi in età romana*, Scavi di Ostia X, Roma 1979, 42; C. Pavolini, *La vita quotidiana ad Ostia*, Roma-Bari 1986, 124-125; J. Clayton Fant, *The Roman imperial marble yard at Portus*, *Ancient stones. Quarrying, trade and provenance*, *Acta archaeologica Lovaniensia, Monographie 4*, Louvain 1992, 115.

⁶ Baccini Leotardi, *Marmi di cava*, 43; id., *Nuove testimonianze sul commercio dei marmi in età imperiale*, Roma 1989, 117; Pavolini 125; Fant 115.

⁷ CIL XIV 425 (= CIL X 542), *T. Testio Helpidiano sevir Aug. idem qq. item patrono et qq. corporis treie[ct]us marmorariorum ...*

⁸ CIL XIV 403, ... *corp(or)is treie[ct]us togatensium ...*; 4553, ... *corpori traie[ct]us Ru[stic]eli] ...*; 4554, ... *[corp(ori) t]raie[ct]us [Rusti]celi ... corpor[i tr]aie[ct]us Rusticeli] ...*; 4555, ... *[co]rp. traie[ct]us Rustic(eli)] ...*; 4556, ... *[corp. tr]aie[ct]us Rustic(eli) ...*; AE 1987, 176a, ... *corp(or)is traie[ct]us L[uculli] ---*; 194, ... *corp(us) tr(aie[ct]us) Lucul(li) ...*; 197, ... *corporis traie[ct]us Luculli ...*; AE 1989, 125, ... *corp(ori) traie[ct]us R[ustic]eli] ...*

⁹ A *lenunculus* was a harbour barge or a large rowing boat, a *scapha* was a small rowing

the *corpus traiectus togatensium* were two of the group of corporations called *quinque corpora lenunculariorum*.¹⁰

Although we cannot know exactly what kind of boat the members of this corporation used, we can deduce the nature of the vessel from the word *traiectus*. It means a passage across a river or a sea¹¹ and, accordingly, a place where one could cross a river.¹² At Ostia *traiectus* no doubt meant the crossing of the Tiber. This is the way it has been interpreted in the names of the other corporations mentioned above.¹³ The journey from Portus to Rome, some thirty kilometers along the winding river, was not a *traiectus*.

I am not convinced that *corpus traiectus marmorariorum* even had anything to do with the transport of marble, although I agree that it was in some way connected with the marble yard at Portus. *Marmorarius* was a marble worker. The transport of marble would have been called *traiectus marmorum* and not *traiectus marmorariorum*.¹⁴ *Marmorariorum* refers to those persons who were transported, as probably *togatensium* in the name of an other corporation, *corpus traiectus togatensium*.¹⁵

Casson has given a good outline of the vessels that were used at the mouth of the Tiber, in the harbours of Portus and on the Tiber up to Rome. Big ships came from the sea to the harbour, smaller vessels, rafts and boats moved in the harbour basins, canals and on the river around Ostia and Portus. Goods were shipped to Rome usually in special riverboats (*naves codicariae*).¹⁶ Probably they also carried marble from Portus to Rome. In

boat, a ship's boat or a harbour barge (Meiggs 297; L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*, Princeton 1973³, 329-330, 335-336).

¹⁰ CIL XIV 352, ... *V corpor. lenunculariorum Ost. ...*; 4144, ... *V corporum lenuncularior. Ostiens. universi navigarii corpor. quinque ...*; The three others are *corpus lenunculariorum tabulariorum auxiliariorum Ostiensium* (CIL XIV 250, 251, 341), *corpus lenunculariorum pleromariorum auxiliariorum Ostiensium* (CIL XIV 252) and *corpus lenunculariorum traiectus Luculli* (see note 1 above). Meiggs 296-297; Casson, *Harbour and River Boats*, 34; Licordari 152-153.

¹¹ See for example Caes. Gall. 5,2,3; id. civ. 2,20,1; Liv. 1,3,8; 35,51,1.

¹² See for example Bell. Alex. 56,5; Tac. ann. 15,34,1.

¹³ Meiggs 297; Licordari 150.

¹⁴ For comparison see CIL VI 30760 (... *stationis marmorum ...*) and CIL III 25 (... *operi ma[r]morum ...*).

¹⁵ CIL XIV 403; Licordari 150 note 3.

¹⁶ Casson, *Harbour and River Boats*, 36. The word *codicarius* also appears in the names of professional corporations (CIL XIV 106, ... *codica]ri navicula]ri ...*; 131, ... *codicari*

my opinion *corpus traiectus marmorariorum* was a professional corporation formed by those who operated a ferry service, which was especially used by the marble workers to cross the Tiber. The marble workers probably favoured this ferry service because it operated close to the imperial marble yard or it was otherwise convenient for their trip from Ostia to the yard.

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nabulari infernates ...; 170, ... codicarii navicularii ...; 185, ... codicari nav[iculari] infra pontem S[ublicium] ...; 4144, ... corporis splendeditissimi codicar. ...).