
Silvia Panichi, *La Cappadocia ellenistica sotto gli Ariaratidi ca. 250–100 a.C.*, Florenz (Leo S. Olschki) 2018 (Biblioteca di Geographia Antiqua 5), XIV, 134 S., ISBN 978-88-222-6580-7 (brosch.), € 25,–

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In 2018, Silvia P(anichi), a scholar from Perugia, published a monograph on Hellenistic Kappadokia that builds on her PhD dissertation, which she defended in Pisa in 2003. This book is divided into two parts. In the first (“Profilo Storico e Geografico”), P. focuses on the political history of Persian and Hellenistic Kappadokia. She comments on the main sources, passages from Polybios, Diodoros and Strabo, in detail, providing the basis for the reconstruction of Kappadokia’s history. The second part covers selected aspects of state organization and culture (“Istituzioni, Insediamenti, Ellenizzazione”).

The introductory section summarizes the state of the available evidence, with an appendix on the genealogy of the Ariarathids, the interpretation of which is the indispensable premise for a coherent reconstruction of history. The most abundant source on the history of Kappadokia is the “Geography” of Strabo, especially the books dedicated to Asia Minor (XII–XIII–XIV). Strabo provides glimpses into many aspects of history, economy, cities, cults, and culture. In fact, Strabo rises to the role of a historical source, as in the case of many other regions, such as Armenia or Mesopotamia.

Diodoros (31.19.1–8) links the lineage of the kings of Kappadokia with the Persian King Cyrus II (550–530 BC) and Anaphas, one of “The Seven” Persians who had eliminated the Magus. P. emphasizes the fictional elements in the genealogy provided by Diodoros. In general, however, the origin of the Ariarathids from Achaemenid satraps should not be in doubt. Satraps of the Achaemenids, including the Orontids and the Hekatomnids, were building their dominions over generations. It would be desirable to discuss the characters of Datames and Ariarathes I,

so important to Achaemenid Kappadokia, in more detail. One of interesting points is that Nepos (Dat. 1.1) calls Datames' mother Scythissa, which is probably a Greek nickname for a woman descended from the Scythians or Sakas. It is possible that Scythissa came from Central Asia. Under Datames Kappadokia reached a major expansion as the satrap took control of Paphlagonia and Kataonia (Nep. Dat. 2; 4).

In the Hellenistic age, the history of the Ariarathids splits into two periods, one in the shadow of the Seleukids, up to the Battle of Magnesia of 189 BC, and the other already more in connection with Pergamon and Roman history, but also facing the growing power of Pontos. At certain points, P. relies on older research. Thus, resorting to U. Mago's insights she assumes that the legitimacy of all three sons of Ariarathes IV was valid, contrary to the prevailing hypothesis, according to which Orophernes was not a legitimate son (p. IX).

Hellenistic Kappadokia provides six inscriptions from the 2nd–1st centuries BC coming from the most important centers of Anisa, Ariaramneia, Komana and Tyana. They are in Greek, except for the bilingual Greek-Aramaic inscription found in Ariaramneia (2nd century BC). Kappadokian is not attested in the epigraphic evidence, although it was spoken by the majority of the inhabitants (Strab. 12.1.2). P. is right to point out this aspect (p. X), stressing that Strabo (12.4.6) should not be trusted in that in Anatolia the local dialects had been lost during the reigns of the Persians, Macedonians, and Romans.

Numismatic evidence is crucial for the historical reconstruction of Kappadokia's history. The ancient coinages of Kappadokia have been scrutinized by K. Regling, B. Simonetta, and O. Mørkholm. The minting of coins began under Ariaramnes and his son Ariarathes III. P. makes much use of numismatic sources. She rightly draws attention to coin iconography and discusses tiaras as important royal attributes.

The first chapter of Part I is devoted to Kappadokia in the Achaemenid and early Hellenistic periods. In general, Kappadokia encompassed lands between the Halys, the Black Sea, and Kilikia (3). The importance of Persian Kappadokia was based on its location on the crucial Via Regia from Sardis to Susa (Hdt. 5.52–54). However, the exact location of this route in Anatolia is uncertain. As for Alexander's era, the author devotes only a few sentences to events in Kappadokia. It would be desirable to treat the problem more broadly. Fortunately, P. published an article in 2018 devoted to the issue of "Alexander and Cappadocia" (*Anabasis. Studia Classica et Orientalia* 9, 62–79).

The next chapter already discusses part of the Ariarathid era (ca. 250–220 BC) covered in the book ("Da Ariaramne ad Ariarate III «primo re dei Cappadoci»", 7–14). As in eastern Iran and Bactria, Anatolia experienced tremendous changes during the era of Antiochos II Theos (261–246 BC). There was a constellation of strong emergent states such as Bithynia, Pontos (Kappadokia Pontica), Pergamon,

and that of the Galatians. The son of Ariaramnes, Ariarathes (III), married Stratonike, the daughter of Antiochos Theos, around 250 BC (9). P. (10) believes that Ariaramnes did not assume the title of king, and gives an analogy with Pergamon's ruler Eumenes I. But Kappadokian rulers also had other models, like the Atropatids in Media Atropatene. This raises the question of whether the adoption of the diadem by Ariarathes III did not occur in the 250s, and thus more than two decades earlier than P. proposes: She points to the turmoil that followed the battle of Ankyra when, between 230 and 225 BC, it seems that Ariarathes III proclaimed himself "King of the Kappadokians" (13). Regardless of the dating, it is conceivable to suppose that the assumption of the royal title may have followed the conquest of Kataonia, a fact for which we have solely Strabo to inform us (12.1.2). P. reasonably interprets the coins of Ariarathes featuring his royal title and a standing goddess holding a spear in her right hand and a shield in her left. According to P. (following Reinach) this image, hellenizing in style, refers to the goddess Ma, or "Great Mother," worshipped at the sanctuary of Komana. On the coins, this female goddess appears in fact in several variants. This is a perfect example of iconographic messaging in the Greek style, although this conceals the local Oriental content.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 discuss the history of the period from 220 to 101 BC. From 130 BC the rulers of Kappadokia were clearly declining in importance. Mithradates Euergetes of Pontos imposed a sort of protectorate on the young Ariarathes VI and gave him his daughter Laodike in marriage. Another ruler of Pontos, Mithradates VI Eupator, had Ariarathes VI killed. P. assumes that the latter's son, Ariarathes VIII, died around 101 BC, bringing the Ariarathid dynasty to an end (47–48). The matter of chronology is important here, and other scholars date the death of Ariarathes VIII to around 97–95 BC. Recently, L. Ballesteros Pastor seems to have accepted a date close to 97 BC for the death of Ariarathes VIII, while C. Michels assumes the year 96 BC.¹

As the discussion of the demise of Ariarathes VIII ends, the author departs from the historical narrative and moves on to geography (Chapter 6), but the king's death did not mark the end of Kappadokia as a kingdom. In the aftermath, in the 90s–80s BC, Kappadokia became the pivotal place in the great political game that Parthia, Rome, and Pontos entered.²

The second part of the monograph begins with a discussion of the king, his court, and the military (61–108). At the present state of the research, it is easier to

¹ L. Ballesteros Pastor, *The Origins of the Ariobarzanid Dynasty*, *Gephyra* 20, 2020, 61–78, here 62; C. Michels, *Kulturtransfer und monarchischer Philhellenismus. Bithynien, Pontos und Kappadokien in hellenistischer Zeit*, Stuttgart 2009, 435.

² See M. J. Olbrycht, *Mithridates VI Eupator and Iran*, in: J. M. Hoejete (ed.), *Mithridates VI and the Pontic Kingdom*, Aarhus 2009, 163–190.

grasp the size of the temple properties than those of the king and the nobility in Kappadokia. The sanctuary at Komana is well-known thanks to Strabo's description (12.2.3). P. provides a detailed discussion of the administration. According to Strabo (12.1.4) the Kappadokian territory was divided into ten strategies. Kappadokia is the only Hellenistic kingdom for which the complete list of strategies is known. A highly informative section is devoted to the settlements in Kappadokia (78–102), with the author listing and describing 26 of them in detail.

P. stresses that Hellenization was implemented mainly through the foundation of poleis. The question remains, however: What was the percentage of the Greek-speaking population in the cities of polis status? The Ariarathids were part of the political and cultural order of their era and therefore valued Greek culture highly. In the 2nd century BC, Hellenization was progressing visibly; a particular case is Ariarathes V, known as the “Philhellene” because he spent at least a decade in Athens. But the fascinating question of Hellenization in the early Hellenistic era remains opaque. P. supposes that not only Anisa, but also Tyana, Morima, and Kybistra were Hellenized as early as the first half of the 3rd century BC. The local cultural factor must be kept in mind while discussing these issues.

Another brief sub-chapter, “Fra ellenismo e iranismo” (103–108), is of great scholarly interest. But the title is misleading, as it lacks the Anatolian factor. The author herself admits this (108), stating that Hellenistic Kappadokia had “three faces”, one of which was Anatolian. It is entirely justified to acknowledge the author's conclusions that Kappadokian Hellenism remained superficial as the two other civilizational factors were strongly at play in Kappadokia: There was the Anatolian background, with its peculiar temple-states and cults (Ma in Komana), as well as the Iranian heritage with its religiosity (Anahita, the Magi, and the fire cult). Some syncretic phenomena formed as well.

Since the publication of P.'s book, several important articles dealing with Kappadokia have been published by M. Facella, O. Gabelko, A. Lamesa, and L. Balles-teros-Pastor (mentioned above).³ Kappadokia occupies an important place in a new book by C. Lerouge-Cohen.⁴ Besides, P. Panitschek's work is worth mentioning, as

3 M. Facella, *Genealogies, Investitures and Dynastic Struggles in the Kingdoms of Cappadocia and Commagene*, *Ricerche ellenistiche* 2, 2021, 33–55; O. L. Gabelko, *Bithynia and Cappadocia. Royal Courts and Ruling Society in the Minor Hellenistic Monarchies*, in: A. Erskine et al. (eds.), *The Hellenistic Court. Monarchic Power and Elite Society from Alexander to Cleopatra*, Swansea 2017, 324–325; A. Lamesa, *Les différents sens du terme Καππαδοκία dans la « Géographie » de Strabon*, *DHA* 22, 2021, 209–225.

4 C. Lerouge-Cohen, *Souvenirs du passé perse à l'époque hellénistique. Arménie – Cappadoce – Commagène – Perside – Pont. « Royaume » arsacide*, Brussels et al. 2022.

it reveals Kappadokia in the context of Seleukid history.⁵ Of the older publications, some important studies are missing.⁶ The present book is written in a clear and careful style, but there is the rare typographical error: thus, Cyrus reigned until 530, not 525 (p. VIII).

In conclusion, P. gives a coherent and concise vision of Kappadokian history. The Ariarathids maintained good relations with the Seleukids, for whom Kappadokia was of vital importance in the geopolitical framework of Asia Minor prior to the Treaty of Apameia. Unlike other dynasties of Iranian origin such as the Orontids of Kommagene, the Ariarathids did not include any Macedonians in their gallery of ancestors, as they always declared themselves descendants of the Achaemenids and Persian satraps.

Research into Hellenistic Kappadokia is not easy: the source evidence is patchy and scattered, and bringing it together and presenting it in a commentated synthesis is a much-needed and welcome contribution to the field. Thus, Panichi's book will clearly be indispensable to historians of Anatolia and Western Asia for many decades to come.

⁵ P. Panitschek, *Die Seleukiden als Erben des Achämenidenreiches* (Grazer Altertumskundliche Studien 12), Frankfurt am Main – Wien 2016, 64–68, 339.

⁶ See O. L. Gabelko, *Some Problems of Hellenistic Cappadocia's Dynastic History. The Royal House of the Ariarathids*, *Antichnyy mir i arkheologiya* 13, 2009, 92–119; J. Kobes, 'Kleine Könige'. Untersuchungen zu den Lokaldynasten im hellenistischen Kleinasien (323–188 v. Chr.), St. Katharinen 1996.