

Report on the outcomes of a Short-Term Scientific Mission¹

Action number: CA19131

Grantee name: Liviu Mihail Iancu

Details of the STSM

Title: War and textiles. Research on the production and acquisition of textiles by the ancient Greek and Roman armies

Start and end date: 09/01/2022 to 31/01/2022

Description of the work carried out during the STSM

The activities envisaged in the working plan were successfully carried out:

1) Research on the military textile items plundered or obtained as tribute by the Greek and Roman armies

All the intended sub-activities were carried out: a) 9 more entries were added to my catalogue of sources – 6 from Appian's *Wars*, 2 from Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, 1 from Herodotus's *Histories* – there are currently 32 entries which I grouped on types of items (cordage, sails, garments, ropes for artillery, standards etc.), and can be considered a representative sample; b) modern literature was reviewed in the libraries of the host institution and the French, American and Romanian Schools from Athens, with good results for some items (e.g. Launey's discussion on the fibers for artillery, Gleba's, Dimova's and Spantidaki's works on sails); c) the sources pertaining to sails were discussed with Stella Spantidaki, director of ARTEX, in significantly valuable meetings.

A few general conclusions were drawn: a) the occurrences of these textiles in the accounts of booty and tribute are far less frequent than those of the expensive items, such as robes or carpets, which can be found in the hundreds; b) when these textiles are mentioned in the written sources, it happens either for a very important reason, such as the first encounter with a certain type of fibres or items, or accidentally, as random details in anecdotes; c) some military textiles taken as booty might be inferred from passages where they are not specifically named (e.g. conquest of arsenals); d) these spoils were not always re-used by the conquerors: sometimes they were destroyed for practical reasons or in rituals for celebrating victory; some of them were displayed as trophies (e.g. the cables of Xerxes's pontoon bridge over the Hellespont).

2) Research for the introductory remarks of the conference "Textiles and War in Europe and the Mediterranean from Prehistory to Late Antiquity".

The research was conducted in the aforementioned libraries and was focused on papers written both by ancient textiles researchers and by military historians and archaeologists. The issue is rarely tackled in the first category of papers, although in a focused manner, when it happens. The research in the second category of papers is more

¹ This report is submitted by the grantee to the Action MC for approval and for claiming payment of the awarded grant. The Grant Awarding Coordinator coordinates the evaluation of this report on behalf of the Action MC and instructs the GH for payment of the Grant.

widespread than thought, but the references to textile items are generally secondary and scattered (the linen cuirasses are a notable exception). The employed evidence is in the crushing majority of cases literary and iconographic. An illustrative example is a paper on the Roman Republican mail armour published in 2022: out of almost 25 pages, there is only one page dedicated to the *subarmalis*, the padded jacket worn under the chainmail, based exclusively on written and iconographic documents. The comparison with the 18 abstracts received for the “Textiles and War” conference reveals mostly the same leaning towards the written and iconographic sources, for tackling issues such as military status and systems of production.

3. Preparations for organising a training school on first aid and research on textiles preserved on metal artefacts.

A working meeting was held with Christina Margariti, head of WG1 and vice-chair of the host institution, and Francesca Coletti from Sapienza University of Rome (via Google Meet) where the conceptual framework and the structure for a joint WG1 and WG4 training school on the topic of mineralized textiles was drawn. Concrete steps were made towards the organisation of such a training school in 2024 in Pompeii and Rome.

Description of the activities carried out during the STSM. Any deviations from the initial working plan shall also be described in this section.

(max. 500 words)

Grantee enters max 500 word summary here.

Description of the STSM main achievements and planned follow-up activities

The goals of the STSM were achieved:

- 1 first draft of the paper “*Quod satis in usum fuit sublato*. Booty and tribute as textile supply sources for the ancient Greek and Roman armies”: the draft was written and will be presented at the conference “Textiles and War in Europe and the Mediterranean from Prehistory to Late Antiquity”, Bucharest, 17-19 May 2023; the paper will be published as a study in the proceedings of the conference;
- 1 draft of a short note on the *status quaestionis* in the research of the use of textiles by prehistoric and ancient military social groups: the draft was written, will be read as the introduction to the aforementioned conference and be published in the volume of proceedings;
- 1 conceptual plan for the organisation of a joint WG1 and WG4 training school on the first aid and study of mineralized textiles: the conceptual plan was written and expanded to a more concrete working paper with actual steps to be made for the organisation of the training school in Pompeii and Rome in spring 2024; preparation actions according to the plan are currently underway, conducted by me, Christina Margariti and Francesca Coletti (selection of the bibliography which the participants of the training school are required to read, asking for permissions from the laboratory where the training school could be organised, establishing the needed consumables etc.).

The first two outputs contribute to drawing a new vision of European history based on textiles. My research show beyond doubt that military textile supply, although largely ignored by ancient authors and mostly invisible in the archaeological record, significantly shaped the political and military history of the continent (e.g. the proficiency of the Roman Republic in quickly and abundantly supplying its troops with the needed textile items through supply lines as well as through permitting the commanders in the field to dispose of the booty and to raise tributes was decisive for the conquest of the Mediterranean). Conquest and plundering were significant in the diffusion of technical innovation, too, as shown by the spread of the Spanish *spartum* fibres for various industries following the Roman victory in the Second Punic War.

The overall activity conducted throughout my STSM will lead in the near future not only to the publication of a useful research paper, but will facilitate as well the organization of two EuroWeb events aimed at bridging the gaps between different theoretical and methodological approaches grounded in European scholarship. The outputs

of this STSM will contribute to RCO1 (“produce 50+ ground-breaking scholarly papers and 30+ conference publications”) and CBO2 (“Promote and mentor ECIs, especially from the ITCs, and offer training and STSM for a more diverse and international professional profile”).

Description and assessment of whether the STSM achieved its planned goals and expected outcomes, including specific contribution to Action objective and deliverables, or publications resulting from the STSM. Agreed plans for future follow-up collaborations shall also be described in this section.

(max. 500 words)

Grantee enters max 500 word summary here.