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ABSTRACT

Celtomachia apud Pydnam?

Nude Warriors in the Frieze of the Pillar of L. Aemilius Paullus at Delphi

Lukas Reimann

Among the Roman and Macedonian combatants peopling the battle frieze of the pillar of L. Aemilius Paullus at Delphi, three nude figures fighting on the losing side can be identified as Celts. As Celtic mercenaries played a negligible role in the battle at Pydna, this article holds that the Celtomachic motifs were included deliberately as an opportune pictorial code to represent and qualify the Aemilian victory to a Panhellenic audience. The three Celts specifically answered to the barbaricising Roman and Attalid pre-war propaganda aimed at the denigration of popular king Perseus, while also countering wide-spread anti-Roman sentiment, in kind revolving around the topos of barbarism.

KEYWORDS

Celtomachy, Roman Representative Art, Pydna, Third Macedonian War, Barbarism

Celtomachia apud Pydnam?

Nude Warriors in the Frieze of the Pillar of L. Aemilius Paullus at Delphi

Introduction

1 Setting sail from Brundisium in the spring of 168 BC, L. Aemilius Paullus first travelled to Delphi to conduct sacrifices before taking over command of the legions encamped at Phila on the Thermaic Gulf¹. While at the sanctuary, the consul would have come across a new but conspicuously unfinished pillar monument standing in front of the Temple of Apollon². It surely caught his attention: composed of fine marble ashlars, the votive had been erected in honour of his adversary, Macedonian king Perseus. In all likelihood, it had been commissioned by the Delphians or the Amphiktyonic Council when Perseus visited the sanctuary in 174 BC³, but construction works were soon discontinued, most probably when the Third Macedonian War broke out in 171 BC⁴. After three years of inconclusive fighting, Paullus was to bring this conflict to a swift end. Allegedly two weeks after catching a first glimpse of the pillar⁵, the sexagenarian resoundingly defeated its honouree at Pydna. When Paullus embarked on a tour of Greece shortly thereafter, Delphi happened to be the first stop on the list again⁶. The consul had grand plans for the *inchoata columna*⁷: snidely remarking that it was only fair if the conquered made room for the conqueror⁸, he commandeered the votive, ordering its completion as a Roman victory monument bearing an equestrian statue of himself. While

1 Diod. 31, 11, 1; Liv. 45, 41, 3.

2 Livy writes that the pillar stood *in vestibulo* and thus somewhere in front of the *pronaos* of the temple (45, 27, 7; cf. Gell. 16, 5), a statement corroborated by the findspots of the pillar's remains on the terrace of the polygonal wall near the south-eastern corner of the temple (Homolle 1897b, 41). The monument's exact location, however, remains unknown, as the foundation 418 formerly assigned to the pillar (Homolle 1903, 297 n. 2; Courby 1927, 304 f.) likely does not belong to the monument. This attribution would place the pillar in the corner of a lower intermediate terrace, almost 4.20 m below the ground level of the rival pillar of Prusias II (Jacquemin – Laroche 1982, 215–218, cf. Kähler 1965, 38 f. n. 96; Ridgway 2000, 77. 96 n. 29).

3 Daux 1936, 318 f.; Kähler 1965, 10; Bringmann 2000, 47 f.

4 Kähler 1965, 8.

5 Diod. 31, 11, 1; Liv. 45, 41, 4 f. (cf. Augustean elogium from Arretium, CIL XI 1829).

6 Liv. 45, 27, 5–28, 5.

7 cf. Liv. 45, 27, 7.

8 Plut. Aem. 28, 4.

the latter is now lost, three marble blocks which carry the frieze, originally encircling the Ionic entablature of the pillar at a height of around nine metres, have withstood the ravages of time. Carved in a classicising Attic style, the frieze is generally considered the work of Greek artisans who set to work after Paullus had left for *Lebadia* and *Chalcis*, probably elaborating on brief instructions given by his entourage⁹. Sculpting 28 human figures, on average c. 40 cm tall, and half as many horses out of the marble, they created a historicising yet streamlined account of the battle at Pydna. Omitting the Macedonian phalanx formation that had struck fear in the heart of even Paullus¹⁰, the frieze invariably depicts Roman soldiers in energetic and irresistible attack, progressing from the opening skirmish featuring the famous escaped horse (panel I)¹¹, over *mêlée* fighting (II & III), to the pursuit of fugitive enemies (IV, fig. 1)¹².

The Three Nudes: Celts in the Battle Frieze?

2 Among the combatants of the frieze, three fighting and dying figures stand out due to their nudity, setting them apart from the other, heavily armoured Roman and Macedonian soldiers. The first nude warrior of the narrative sequence appears in the centre of the *mêlée* fighting depicted on short panel II (II.12, fig. 2). According to correspondences between the dowel holes of the frieze blocks and those of the superimposed cornice, which bore the equestrian statue orientated towards the monument's main façade, this panel once adorned the rear side of the pillar¹³. The figure, depicted in three-quarter view, is now badly damaged, with the head, most of the legs, and the right arm lost. A Roman cavalryman (II.11) in an even worse state of preservation charges towards him from the left, thrusting his spear into the nude's belly. While the *hasta*, once added as a metal appliqué, has long since disappeared, a small hole to the right of the navel bears witness to the fatal blow¹⁴. Its impact has propelled the nude warrior backwards onto the ground; leaning on a small round shield attached to his left arm, the nude desperately tries to fend off the *equus* with his right. It is a hopeless struggle: towering above him in the background, a Roman legionary has already raised his sword to deliver the final blow (II.13). Naked except for boots¹⁵, the nude's companion in the centre of long panel III (III.19, fig. 3), which continues the cycle towards the right, is likewise confronted with a charging Roman cavalryman (III.18). Yet, as of now, this figure, which is missing its head as well as his left arm, shoulder, and leg, has not suffered impalement. Standing resolutely in stride, with the torso slightly bent over the metal spear once clutched with both hands, the warrior seems instead determined to hold his ground, tensing up his muscular body in bracing for impact. For the last nude of the frieze, in contrast, the fight is over (IV.25, fig. 4). Situated in the left half of panel IV

9 Kähler 1965, 19; Gruen 1992, 142 f.; Osada 1993, 28–30; Holliday 2002, 96; Taylor 2016, 562. While it remains unclear how far construction works on the *kiōn atelēs* (cf. Pol. 30, 10, 2) had progressed before the monument was abandoned, this article holds that the frieze was carved for Paullus *ex novo*. Given the remarkable coherence of the pictorial programme which could only be fully appreciated since M. J. Taylor's re-evaluation of the scenes (Taylor 2016), it seems improbable that the frieze constitutes a remodelled Antigonid or even Pyrrhic piece (cf. unpublished lectures held in the 1990s by R. Wünsche and W. Schmoll, discussed by Günther 1995, 83 f.; Flashar 1996, 349–351; Jacquemin 1999, 137; Kotsidu 2000, 445; Rödel-Braune 2015, 96 f.). For the debate regarding the original design of Perseus' monument and its status of completion, see also Kähler 1965, 11 f.; Jacquemin – Laroche 1982, 208–211; Wannagat 1995, 40–42; Boschung 2001, 60 f.; Ridgway 2000, 79. 83. 96 n. 31.

10 Plut. Aem. 19, 2 (cf. Lualdi 2019, 13).

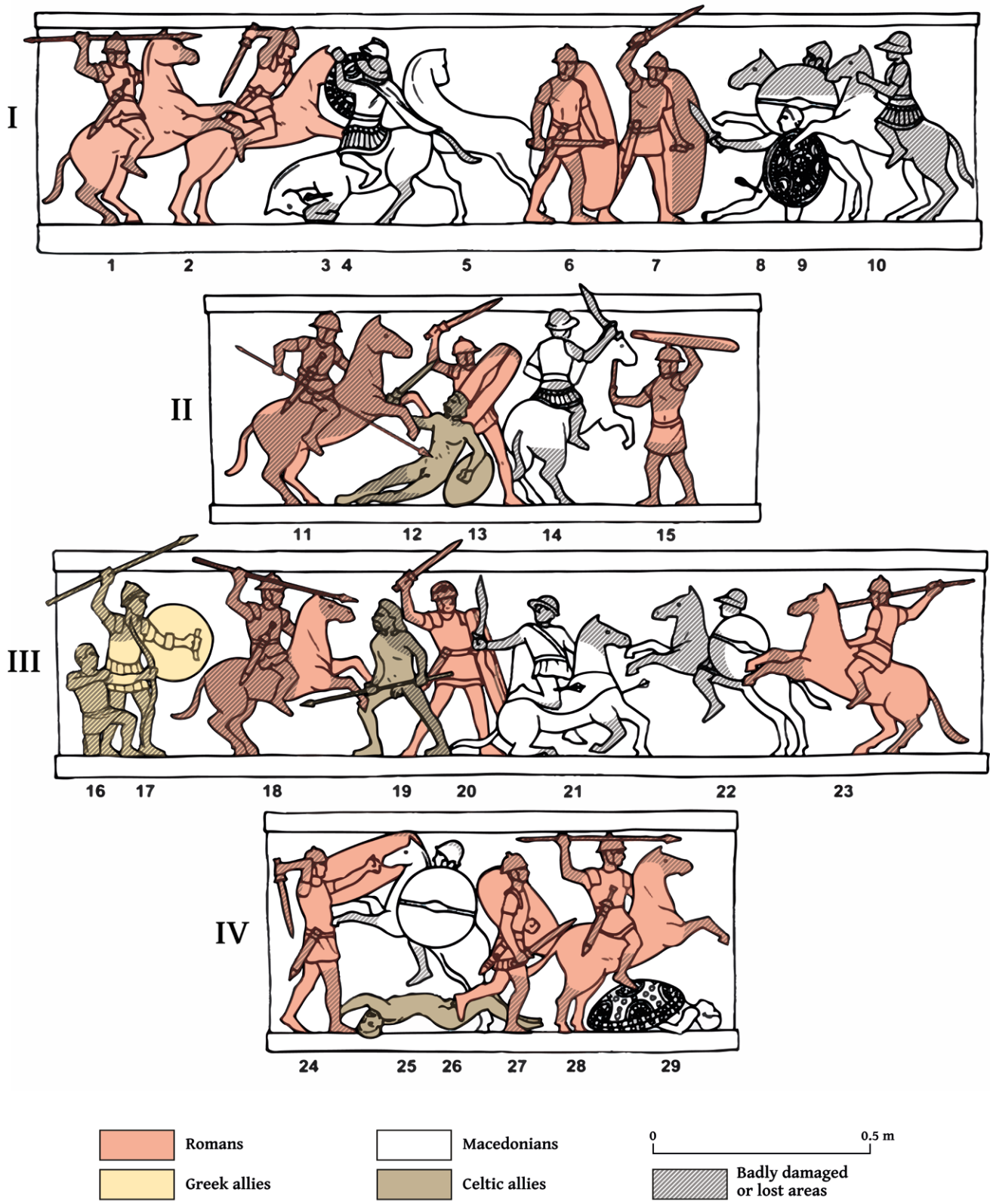
11 Plut. Aem. 18; Liv. 44, 40, 3–10 (Boschung 2001, 63–65).

12 Taylor 2016 *contra* Kähler 1965 (The numbering of panels and individual figures follows Kähler).

13 Jacquemin – Laroche 1982, 212 *pace* Kähler 1965, 18.

14 Kähler 1965, 28.

15 Kähler 1965, 31.



1

and thus on the main façade of the monument, this figure has already succumbed to the Roman soldiers, who rush over him in pursuit of fugitives (IV.27, 28). Lying on his back on the ground, the youthful, muscular warrior exhibits grotesquely twisted limbs bespeaking his brutal death. Fortunately, the figure's head survives largely intact, tilted backwards underneath an outstretched arm.

Fig. 1: Reconstruction drawing of the battle frieze of the pillar of L. Aemilius Paullus at Delphi with colour-coded military affiliations after Taylor 2016. Militaria of contemporary types have been added where appropriate

Fig. 2: Fallen nude II.12 in the battle frieze of the pillar of L. Aemilius Paullus at Delphi. The restoration excludes fragment inv. 3255 depicting the raised gladius and helmet of II.13, attributed to the frieze by Jacquemin – Laroche 1982, 211 (The rights to the depicted monument, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Phocis, belong to the Ministry of Culture and Sports (Law 4858/2021) | © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports / O.D.A.P.)



2



Fig. 3: Fighting nude III.19 in the battle frieze of the pillar of L. Aemilius Paullus at Delphi (The rights to the depicted monument, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Phocis, belong to the Ministry of Culture and Sports (Law 4858/2021) | © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports / O.D.A.P.)

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Fig. 4: Dead nude IV.25 in the battle frieze of the pillar of L. Aemilius Paullus at Delphi (The rights to the depicted monument, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Phocis, belong to the Ministry of Culture and Sports (Law 4858/2021) | © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports / O.D.A.P.)

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3 The identity of the three nudes has been a topic of perennial discussion, with earlier scholarship opting for Roman *socii* such as Samnites on compositional grounds: as Heinz Kähler and others deemed panel II and III the graphic rendition of the challenging early stages of battle – with distressed and outnumbered Romans being assaulted from both sides – the centrally placed figures II.12 and III.19 had to be Roman, notwithstanding their appearance¹⁶. Given the widely attested indebtedness of the frieze to Greek artistic conventions¹⁷, the appearance of nude figures on the Roman side furthermore occasioned little surprise. In analogy perhaps to the Macedonians fighting and dying in heroic nudity alongside their clad and armoured comrades on the Sidonian ‘Alexander’ sarcophagus, the Delphic nudes could be considered as yet another *Hellenistic topos* included by the Greek sculptors working on behalf of Paullus¹⁸.

4 The depiction of Roman allies as nude and excruciatingly subdued warriors, however, constitutes an iconographic impossibility for a Roman victory monument, even more so when considering Roman *Republican* attitudes towards male nudity and its associations with military defeat and humiliation, criminal justice, and servility¹⁹. Unsurprisingly, more recent assessments of the figure’s military affiliations place the three nudes on the Macedonian side²⁰. However, it seems equally improbable that the Aemilian sculptors chose to depict some of their patron’s Macedonian adversaries in heroic nudity, which would caricature the pronounced emphasis on Macedonian in-

16 Reinach 1910b, 440–446. 463 (Samnites/Romans); von Bieńkowski 1928, 179 f. (Roman *auxilia*, perhaps Ligurian *militēs levis armaturae*); Kähler 1965, 15. 28–31. 34 f. (Romans); Zinserling 1965, 163–165 (Romans).

17 e. g. Pollitt 1986, 157; Gruen 1992, 142–145; Schraudolph 2007, 234.

18 Bonanno 1976, 5; Gruen 1992, 143; Osada 1993, 31.

19 Hallett 2005, 61–101.

20 Lévêque 1949, 635–643; Hammond – Walbank 1988, 617; von Vacano 1988, 376; Boschung 2001, 62 fig. 1, 67; Schraudolph 2007, 232–234; Taylor 2016, 564–567.

feriority running through the frieze²¹. Furthermore, as all undoubtedly Macedonian combatants appear well-equipped – often hiding behind large *hopla* in a futile attempt to ward off blows from heroically shield-less, perhaps even helmetless, Roman cavalrymen – it remains incomprehensible why some of their comrades would be depicted facing *gladii* and *hastae* unclad.

5 Ascertaining a “lack of distinctive elements”, Anthony Bonanno resignedly felt that the figure’s nudity forestalled secure identification²². This article argues the opposite, deeming the figure’s nudity a diagnostically important feature. Indeed, the only contemporary iconographic tradition directly relatable to the three naked fighters pertains to Celts²³. Interchangeably referred to as *Galatai* or *Keltoi*²⁴, Celts were renowned for defiantly fighting naked²⁵ and thus found their way into Hellenistic iconography predominantly as nudes. The large frame and muscular build of the three Delphic figures also corresponds to the characterisation of Celtic warriors in our literary and pictorial sources²⁶, as do the features of the one surviving head (IV.25), exhibiting longish, bristling hair divided into thick tufts and possibly a moustache²⁷. The former, resulting from the Celtic custom of adding lime-wash to the hair before battle²⁸, was another visual marker in Hellenistic art to denote the ethnicity of Celtic males. Yet, while informative to our enquiry, the hairstyle would not have been discernible to ancient viewers looking up the shaft: if divorced from foundation 418²⁹, the pillar’s frieze commenced c. 7 m above the eyelevel of viewers, rendering such minuscule details unrecognisable. In identifying the figures as Celts, they would have primarily relied on the former’s conspicuous nudity, which was perhaps emphasised in paint³⁰, and their equipment. Yet, at first sight, the only surviving attribute – a decidedly Greek round shield once featuring a painted elbow clasp and handgrip wielded by II.12 – seemingly runs counter to the proposed identification. After all, the most characteristic weapon of the Celts was the *thureos*, a large, flat shield of oval shape featuring a *spina* and a spindle-shaped *umbo* covering the central handle³¹. Ultimately derived from Villanovan prototypes of central Italy³², the Celtic *thureos*, however, was largely identical to the *scutum* of Republican Roman legionaries. The close typological affinity is hinted at by Greek authors such as Polybios, who designates both Celtic and Roman infantry shields as *thureoi*, while Plutarch refers to Roman *thureoi* in his account of the battle at Pydna³³. Depictions of

21 Holliday 2002, 95.

22 Bonanno 1976, 5.

23 So far, only N. G. L. Hammond and M. J. Taylor have explicitly identified the three figures in question as Celts (Hammond – Walbank 1988, 616, echoed by Holliday 2002, 95; Taylor 2016, 564–566). Celts had, however, starred prominently in earlier discussions of the frieze. Prior to the discovery of the inscription (first mentioned by Homolle 1893, 614), scholars had regarded the combat scenes known at the time (middle block, comprising figures I.3–6 and III.19–21) as a battle between Greeks and Gauls (Ulrichs 1840, 38; Curtius 1843, 97; Conze – Michaelis 1861, 65 f.; Reinach 1889, 319; Homolle 1894, 452). Even after the inscription settled the question of subject matter (Homolle 1897b), Celts made repeated appearances in literature, as scholars kept mistaking the *scuta*-wielding legionaries for Celtic auxiliaries in the service of Paullus (Homolle 1897b, 621; Homolle 1903, 300; von Bieńkowski 1928, 180 f.; Van Essen 1928, 239), while cavalrymen I.9 and III.22 were tentatively identified as Celtic mercenaries fighting on the Macedonian side (Kähler 1965, 13. 15).

24 Strobel 1996, 123–139.

25 Diod. 5, 30, 3; Liv. 26, 7. 38, 21, 9; Pol. 2, 28, 8. 3, 114, 4.

26 Diod. 5, 28, 1; Paus. 10, 20, 7; Strab. 4, 4, 3.

27 Taylor 2016, 567. However, given the head’s mediocre state of preservation, the existence of a sculpted moustache remains open to question.

28 Diod. 5, 28, 2.

29 cf. n. 2.

30 While no traces remain, paint may have been employed to draw attention to the figure’s nudity. Conceivably, the Celt’s bodies had been painted in a monochrome skin tone or left marble-white, thus standing out among the other, multicoloured figures and from a potentially dark background (cf. Blume 2015, 23–29. 49–56. 108 f.).

31 Diod. 5, 30, 2; Strab. 4, 4, 3.

32 Stary 1981.

33 e. g. Polybian account of the Battle at Telamon (2, 30, 3. 2, 30, 8); Plut. Aem. 20, 5.

both types, such as the Galatian shields found in the Eumenian balustrade reliefs from Pergamon³⁴, or the *scuta* featured in the Aemilian frieze and the ‘census-relief’³⁵, further evince their interchangeability. Presumably, only the curvature of the shield body made from plywood set the *scutum* apart from the predominantly flat, plank-built Celtic shield³⁶, a distinction that hardly lent itself to the attributive characterisation of Romans and Celts in the Aemilian frieze. Hence, it appears plausible that a Greek round shield was preferred in this context to enable differentiation and to highlight the Celts’ role as Macedonian *symmachoi*. Further attributes denoting Celtic ethnicity, such as metal neck rings (*torques*) and long trousers (*brachae*), are not included in the frieze, although *torques* might have been added in paint or as a metal appliqué. *Torques* and/or *brachae*, however, were repeatedly omitted in undoubted Hellenistic depictions of Celtic warriors as well, be it in battle reliefs such as the friezes from Lecce³⁷ and Ephesos³⁸, or in fully sculpted Celtomachies ranging from a wounded Celt from Delos³⁹ to numerous fighting and dying Celts discovered in and around Rome in the 16th to 18th centuries, commonly believed to echo Attalid dedications⁴⁰. Furthermore, both are excluded from a great number of Etruscan sarcophagi and urns with Celtomachic relief décor⁴¹. Hence, their absence from the Aemilian frieze would have hardly prevented Hellenistic viewers from associating the nudes with Celts⁴².

6 Celtic mercenaries were, indeed, frequently employed by Hellenistic kings⁴³, with Perseus being no exception. At Pydna, however, only a small force of 2,000 *Galli* commanded by a certain Asklepiadotos fought on the Macedonian side⁴⁴, as the king had turned down an offer of assistance by a much larger Celtic host beforehand⁴⁵. Thus making up only 5–7 % of the Macedonian field army in 168 BC⁴⁶, the few Celtic mercenaries did not play a major role on the battlefield, as none of our sources included them in their accounts of events. Consequently, the conspicuous presence of Celts, appearing as often as Macedonian infantrymen (who in reality made up the majority of Perseus’ army), clearly constitutes an ahistorical feature of the Delphic frieze, raising the question why the Aemilian sculptors chose to characterise the *proelium apud Pydnam*⁴⁷ in part as a Celtomachy?

34 Jaeckel 1965, 110–112.

35 Paris, Louvre inv. Ma975.

36 Pol. 6, 23, 2–3; Varro ling. 5, 115. Hence, it is hardly surprising that much of early scholarship mistook the legionaries for Galatians (cf. n. 23).

37 Budapest, Szépművészeti Mus. inv. 4788 (Hekler 1915; Kähler 1965, 19 f.; Osada 1993, 147 f. cat. MF18; Krierer 2004, 55–57; Pirson 2014, 247 cat. H6).

38 cf. n. 197.

39 cf. n. 188.

40 cf. n. 56. 61. 97.

41 Höckmann 1991, 201; cf. Pirson 2014, cat. E8. E15. E29–30. E34–35. E44–58. E78.

42 *contra* Lualdi 2019, 14 f.

43 Iust. 25, 2, 9–10; Launey 1949, 490–535.

44 Liv. 42, 51, 7 (mentioned in relation to 171 BC, cf. n. 46).

45 A force of c. 20,000 men lead by a certain Clondicus had offered their service to the king in the winter of 169/168 BC but returned to the Danube after Perseus refused to pay the negotiated sum (Liv. 44, 26, 3–27, 3; Burton 2017, 160). While Plutarch identified these mercenaries, perhaps rightfully, as *Basternai* (Aem. 12, 4–7), which were first categorised tentatively as a Germanic tribe by Strabo (7, 306), contemporary Polybios opted for *Galatai* (29, 9, 13; cf. 25, 5) and hence perceived them as Celts, as did Livy.

46 According to Livy, Perseus assembled a force of 43,000 men at Kition at the start of the war in 171 BC (42, 51). In March 168 BC, a senatorial commission reported that Perseus’ army numbered roughly 30,000 men (Liv. 44, 20, 5). The particulars regarding the size and composition of Roman and Macedonian forces are to be considered trustworthy, as Livy’s main source was Polybios, who would have acquired an intimate knowledge of military matters in the final two years of the war. As hipparch in 170/169 BC, Polybios was heavily involved in the coordination of Achaian military assistance to Rome and accompanied consul Marcus Philippus into Macedonia (Pol. 28, 13, 1–6). Following his involuntary relocation to Rome, Polybios would furthermore have had access to many Pydna veterans thanks to his friendship with Paullus’ son Scipio Aemilianus (Pol. 31, 23, 4).

47 Vell. 1, 9, 4.

7 The very location of the frieze may provide an initial indication on the sculptor's motives for Celticising the battle to some extent. After lingering for centuries in mythic obscurity as fearless and at times friendly barbarians dwelling beyond the pillars of Hercules⁴⁸, Celtic peoples – as suddenly as unexpectedly – took the centre stage of Greek public awareness in the early 3rd century: in 280 BC, three large Celtic armies simultaneously invaded Macedonia in search of new land for settling, routed the Macedonian army in battle while killing king Ptolemaios Keraunos, and moved southwards, pillaging and plundering the countryside. The next year, outflanking the Greek coalition assembled at Thermopylai, a Celtic host invaded Aitolia and massacred the population of Kallion, while another force under Brennos went on to attack the Apollonian sanctuary at Delphi⁴⁹. Albeit repelled by a local military alliance and purportedly by divine intervention, the seemingly nefarious attempt on the sacred heart of the Greek world sent shockwaves through the Mediterranean. Henceforth, Celts were regarded as the savage antagonists of men and gods alike, taking over the role from the Classical Persians as the barbarian archenemy of Greek polis-civilisation and cosmological order. Accordingly, as with the Persians two centuries prior, victories over Celts became political events of paramount importance, and thus an influential theme in Hellenistic art⁵⁰. At Delphi alone, multiple dedications referencing or depicting Celtomachies were erected long before Paullus commandeered the pillar. The Aitolians, for instance, celebrated their participation in the defence of Delphi by, *inter alia*, erecting a victory monument sporting a personified Aitolia seated on a heap of Celtic spoils, situated behind the opisthodomos of the Temple of Apollon⁵¹. Furthermore, they installed a number of Galatian shields on the west and south metopes of the temple next to Persian spoils won at Plataia⁵², and put a plethora of ΟΠΛΑ ΑΠΟ ΓΑΛΑΤΑΝ⁵³ on display in the West Stoa, which mirrored the Stoa of the Athenians filled with the booty from Mycale and Sestos⁵⁴. To the east of the temple's forecourt, the terrace complex erected by Attalos I in the late 220s BC was similarly permeated by Celtomachic themes; presumably, a painted Celtomachy adorned the back wall of its Doric stoa, while another sculpted in the round crowned the two bases placed in front⁵⁵. The pillar's frieze was thus embedded within a sacred landscape reverberating with military exploits over Celts, leaving viewers noticing its three nudes in little doubt as to who was depicted.

8 By including Celts in the Aemilian frieze, the Greek sculptors thus employed a well-established Hellenistic *topos* which was omnipresent in the vicinity of the Delphic pillar. Furthermore, they could draw inspiration from Rome's principal ally in the war, the Attalids of Pergamon. Producing, over the course of perhaps eight decades, the largest Hellenistic corpus of Celtomachic monuments known to posterity, the Attalids were a source of numerous authoritative models, starting off with the victory monuments of Attalos I in the sanctuary of Athena Nikephoros on the Pergamene acropolis⁵⁶. While the battle raged at Pydna, the Celticised giants peopling the frieze of the Great Altar at Pergamon took shape under the auspices of king Eumenes II⁵⁷, who had played a

48 Hdt. 2, 33 (Freeman 1996; Rankin 1996, 34–82).

49 Diod. 22, 3–4; Iust. 24, 3, 10–24, 8; Paus. 10, 19, 5–10, 23, 14 (cf. Tomaschitz 2007); Nachtergaele 1977, 126–175; Strobel 1996, 214–226; Strootman 2005, 104–110.

50 cf. Hölscher 2019, 196–219.

51 Paus. 10, 18, 7 (Reinach 1911; Courby 1927, 288–291; Rabe 2008, 119–121).

52 Paus. 10, 19, 4; Courby 1927, 84.

53 cf. inscription on the rear wall of the west stoa (Amandry 1978).

54 On the date of the stoa and provenance of the spoils mentioned in the dedicatory inscription on the stylobate (SIG I³ 29), see Amandry 1978, 582–586; Walsh 1986; Bommelaer 1993, 33–36.

55 On the complex and the probability of Celtomachic themes, see Roux 1952, 182–185; Schalles 1985, 106–123; Hintzen-Bohlen 1992, 122–127; Koehn 2007, 89 f. n. 33 *pace* Jacquemin – Laroche 1992.

56 Schalles 1985, 53–104.

57 On the date of the altar, see below n. 151.

significant part in instigating the war. His younger brothers Attalos and Athenaios, who had accompanied Cn. Manlius Vulso into *Galatia* in 189 BC⁵⁸ and now fought alongside Paullus⁵⁹, might have provided further artistic stimulus. Athenaios accompanied the victorious general to Delphi⁶⁰, while Attalos might have commissioned the Celtomachic ‘Lesser Attalid Dedication’ on the Athenian acropolis after ascending to the throne in 159 BC⁶¹.

9 Neither the local historical relevance nor the general topicality of Celtomachies in the Hellenistic age, however, sufficiently explain why Paullus – like Q. Caecilius Metellus probably known as Macedonicus⁶² – chose to be portrayed as *Galatonikes*⁶³. Rather, this article argues that the deliberate emphasis on Celtic adversaries allowed the Aemilian sculptors to exploit three types of semiotic potential inherent in the Celtomachy: the translative, the alienating, and the integrative potential.

Celtomachy: The Translative Potential

10 In appropriating the Celtomachy for Roman purposes, the frieze draws upon a *topos* which had been prevalent in Hellenistic art for roughly a century. As indicated above, its appeal was founded upon the portrayal of Celts as the archenemies of Greek civilisation, provided for by the alleged cultural alterity of the *Galatai* manifesting itself in their bodily appearance, daunting manner of fighting, and archaic customs. Consequently, Celtomachies did not denote a personal victory over a political rival and thus, by definition, an equal, but the imperative elimination (*phthora*) of an alien, existential threat to all⁶⁴. As such, a victory over Celts was one of unsurpassable magnitude, serving as the paramount *exemplum* for the victor’s *aretē*⁶⁵. The sculptors of the frieze thus employed the pictorial convention to translate and qualify Aemilian *virtus* for a Greek audience.

11 Through the violation of the sacrosanct, be it Delphi or – as of 277/276 BC – Didyma⁶⁶, the Celts had furthermore come to be perceived as enemies of the gods and the cosmological order they represented. This is reflected in the arts, where the Celts, as historical *hybristai* and *aphrones*, merged into their mythological counterparts, namely the titans and giants who had challenged Olympian order as representatives of Chaos⁶⁷. A success over Celts was perceived accordingly as the manifestation of divine justice, with the victor as its enforcer taking on semi-divine qualities as well⁶⁸. Towering on horseback above the Celtomachic frieze, Paullus is thus implicitly likened to heroes such as Herakles, who had played a crucial role in the fight against the giants⁶⁹.

58 Liv. 38, 12, 8.

59 Liv. 42, 55, 7. 44, 28, 7–9. 44, 36, 8; IG II³ 1334 = SEG 25, 118.

60 Liv. 45, 27, 6.

61 Paus. 1, 25, 2; IG II² 1035. The attribution to Attalos II on largely stylistic grounds is favoured in Italo-German scholarship, e.g. Schober 1938/1939; Moreno 1994, 586–593; Kunze 2002, 221–223; Kistler 2009, 65–87. *Contra* anglophone scholarship, crediting Attalos I on historical grounds, cf. Pollitt 1986, 91; Queyrel 1989, 278–291; Marszał 2000, 196; Stewart 2004, 11–75. 218–220.

62 Flor. epit. 1, 31, 12.

63 Epithet attested for Attalos I (Suda s.v. Nikandros, v374).

64 cf. Pausanian terminology (1, 25, 2).

65 Kistler 2009, 31–87.

66 cf. I.Did. II 426, ll. 6–8 (Günther 1971, 48).

67 Kistler 2009, 192–243.

68 As mirrored in the Celtomachic prophecies for Ptolemaios II (Kall. h. 4, 171–190) and Attalos I (Paus. 10, 15, 2–3).

69 Apollod. 1, 6, 1–3. Cf. the likening of Attalid victories over Celts to Heracleian deeds (Strootman 2005, 131–134; Hintzen-Bohlen 1990).

12 Given these specificities in the construction of the Celtic Other, Celtomachies lent themselves perfectly to political self-advancement, especially as the advent of *Keltoi* in Greece and Asia minor had coincided with a profound crisis of royal legitimacy. With the death of the last Diadochi in 281 BC, direct affiliation with charismatic Alexander the Great as his *hetairoi* ceased to be an exploitable source of legitimacy for monarchical rule. Confronted with the desire of Greek *poleis* for political autonomy, the Epigoni were forced to renegotiate the foundations of kingship, placing greater emphasis on victoriousness as the means to justify monarchy. In this context, hardly any military success suited their purpose better than victories over Celts. It allowed Hellenistic dynasts and condottieri to present themselves as messiah-esque figures who, having delivered Greeks from an existential threat, could in turn expect recognition for their deeds. The concomitant adoption of titles such as benefactor (*Euergetēs*) or – striking a more divine note – as saviour (*Sōtēr*) mirrors these expectations. Celtic barbarians were thus instrumentalised as an ideological resource to maintain the consensus sustaining power⁷⁰.

13 The first to capitalise on the Celtic opportunity were the Aitolians, who had taken the brunt of the invasion in 279 BC. Formerly considered a backward, at best semi-Hellenic people⁷¹, the Aitolian contribution to the defence of Delphi and its ensuing propagation facilitated the rise of the *koinon*, soon the dominant power in the Amphiktyonic League⁷². Hellenistic monarchs, who had taken little or no part in the initial defensive success of 279 BC⁷³, eagerly followed suit, even though they frequently employed Celtic mercenaries themselves, at times recruiting whole tribes to wage war on their Hellenic rivals⁷⁴. In 277 BC, the landless king Antigonos II Gonatas achieved the first major victory over Celts near Lysimacheia – ironically, it seems, after the king's attempt to recruit the band for the fight against Macedonian regent Sosthenes went awry. Nevertheless, the victory of Gonatas, himself the cousin and rival of slain Keraunos, finally paved his way to the throne, thus re-establishing Antigonid rule over Macedonia, which was to last until Pydna⁷⁵. Perhaps a decade later, Antiochos I allegedly defeated a Celtic host at an unknown locale in central Anatolia after they had been invited to Asia minor by his rival Nikomedes I of Bithynia⁷⁶. Earning him the title *Sōtēr*⁷⁷, the victory was extolled by court poet Simonides⁷⁸ and commemorated by a monumental *tropaion* in the shape of an elephant, as the king's 16 war elephants had turned the tide of battle in the Seleucid's favour⁷⁹.

70 Strobel 1994, 83–86, building upon a charismatic definition of Hellenistic kingship (Gehrke 1982). For a more balanced view on the importance of Celtomachic victories for Hellenistic kings, see Koehn 2007, 77–134.

71 For the perception of Aitolians as rapacious *meixobarbaroi* (Eur. Phoen. 135), see Thuk. 1, 5, 3; Aristoph. Equ. 79 (Scholten 2000, 1–28).

72 The Aitolians were only admitted to the Amphiktyonic League the year after the attack (SIG I³ 399); by the late 260s, they held a majority of seats while simultaneously expanding beyond their traditional borders (Scholten 2000, 29–95. 240–251).

73 At Thermopylai, only small Antigonid and Seleucid contingents were present (Paus. 10, 20, 5).

74 e.g. Attalos I's recruitment of the *Aigosages* in 218 BC (Pol. 5, 78).

75 Pomp. Trog. *apud* Iust. 25, 1 f.; Diog. Laert. 2, 141 f. Hammond – Walbank 1988, 255–258; Strobel 1996, 227–229; Gabbert 1997, 21–28. Whether the Hymn to Pan by court poet Aratos (SH 115), Antigonid coin issues featuring the god, his Delian vase festivals, or a battle frieze in the Neorion at Delos can be linked to this victory remains doubtful (Marcadé 1951, 56–67; Barigazzi 1974; Panagopoulou 2000, 12–20; Schmidt-Dounas 2000, 310 f.; Champion 2004/2005).

76 On the 'Elephant Victory', see App. Syr. 65; Lukian. Laps. 9. Zeux. 8–11. Bar-Kochva 1973; Strobel 1996, 257–262; Schmidt-Dounas 2000, 308 f.; Strootman 2005, 115–117; critical Coşkun 2012. On the controversial date of c. 268 BC, see Wörrle 1975, 65–72; Strobel 1996, 257 f.; Coşkun 2012, 59 f. On the passage of the Celts to Asia minor in mid-278 BC, see Strobel 1996, 236–252.

77 App. Syr. 65; Lukian. Zeux. 8. The establishment of cults to Antiochos Soter in Asia minor towns such as Teos (CIG 3075) or Smyrna (OGIS 229) might be linked to the 'Elephant Victory' (Habicht 1956, 93–103; Wörrle 1975, 69–71).

78 Suda s.v. Simonides Magnes (σ443) = SH 723.

79 Lukian. Zeux. 11. Two terracottas from the necropolis of Aiolian Myrina, each depicting a war elephant trampling a Celtic warrior to death, might mirror the lost monument that had perhaps been erected at Didyma (Paris, Louvre inv. Myr 284; Athens, Nat. Mus. inv. 5017; Pottier – Reinach 1885; Hannestad 1993, 21).

14 The immense gain in prestige, and thus the allure of defeating Celts, is exemplified best by the rather absurd claims of Pyrrhos I of Epeiros and Ptolemaios II Philadelphos, who stylised themselves as Celtlayers despite being far removed from the main theatres of the Galatian conflict of the early 270s. Pyrrhos, for instance, had fought Romans and Carthaginians while the Celts plundered Greece; when he returned in late 275 BC, Galatian armies no longer posed a threat on his side of the Aegean. The following spring, the Aiakid ambushed the marching army of Gonatas in a narrow gorge, checkmating the main body after breaking through the Antigonid rear guard composed of Celtic mercenaries⁸⁰. Yet instead of publicising the humiliating defeat of Gonatas, Pyrrhos went on to draw attention to the few Celtic mercenaries he had slaughtered, “thinking that amid so many successes his achievement against the Gauls conduced most to his glory”⁸¹. Accordingly, while a set of Macedonian spoils was carted off to native Dodona, Pyrrhos put the captured Galatian *thureoi* on display in the much-frequented sanctuary of Athena Itonia⁸². Presumably attached to the epistyle like the Aitolian spoils at Delphi, the dedication equated Pyrrhos’ ambush with the repulsion of the Celts in 279 BC⁸³. All the while, little mention was given to the fact that Pyrrhos had himself deployed Celts in the ambush⁸⁴.

15 Being beyond the reach of roaming Galatian tribes⁸⁵, Ptolemaios equally had to content himself with cutting down mercenaries to draw level with the Celtomachic feats of his Hellenic rivals. This time, however, the 4,000 mercenaries in question were his own, initially hired to counter an invasion of Cyrenaian usurper Magas. Their services were no longer needed when Magas was forced to call off the attack in 275 BC. Shortly thereafter, Ptolemaios disposed of his mercenaries by tricking them onto a deserted island in the Sebennyitic branch of the Nile, where the Celts perished. While Ptolemaios thus avoided settling the bill, the official line invoked an attempted coup as the reason for violence⁸⁶. The annihilation of the mercenaries was propagated widely, with encomiastic court poetry⁸⁷ turning the Ptolemaic deceit into a fabulous victory over Brennos’ “late-born Titans”⁸⁸, thus setting Philadelphos on par with Delphic Apollon and Titanslayer Zeus. The marble head of a distressed Celtic warrior in Cairo still bears witness to a grandiose monument celebrating the suppression as a brilliant victory⁸⁹. The “hated shields”⁹⁰ of the Celts furthermore became a cornerstone of Ptolemaic royal iconography, henceforth featured as a personal emblem of Philadelphos on coinage⁹¹,

80 Iust. 25, 3, 1–5; Plut. Pyr. 26, 2–5.

81 Plut. Pyr. 26, 5 (transl. B. Perrin).

82 Paus. 1, 13, 2 f. (Bringmann – von Steuben 1995, 169 f. 172–175).

83 Schmidt-Dounas 2000, 306–308. Cf. the concomitant appearance of Pyrrhos’ ancestor Neoptolemos among the divine forces defending Delphi (Strootman 2005, 113–115).

84 Plut. Pyr. 26, 2.

85 Ptolemaic forces had engaged with Galatian tribes beforehand only in Asia minor, with small encounters recorded in Ionia, Lycia, and Paphlagonia (Robert 1983; Borchhardt 1991; Strobel 1996, 254–256; Johstono 2018, 187. 193 n. 43).

86 Paus. 1, 7, 2; Sch. Kall. 4, 175–187 (Pfeiffer 1953, 70 f.); Launey 1949, 497 f.; Laubscher 1987, 133; Kistler 2009, 213–217; Johstono 2018, 187 f.

87 cf. Kallimachos’ Hymn to Delos, containing a prophecy of unborn Apollon foretelling his and Philadelphos’ common struggle against the Celts (4, 171–188). A poem entitled Galateia by the same author (cf. Athen. 7, 284C; Pfeiffer 1949, 304–306. 422, frag. 378. 379. 621) and fragmented elegies transcribed on P. Hamb. inv. 381 (SH 958) and PSI inv. 436 (SH 969) might also relate to the mutiny (Nachtergaele 1977, 184–187; Barbantani 2001).

88 Kall. h. 4, 174.

89 The ‘Gizeh Gaul’ (Egyptian Mus. inv. CG 27475). As it was presumably found in Krokodilopolis-Arsinöe in the Fayum, the existence of a parallel monument in Alexandria seems likely (Laubscher 1987; for a critical reassessment of the head’s date and provenance, see Meyer – Schreiber 2012, 142 f.).

90 Kall. h. 4, 183 f.

91 For the discussion whether the shield relates to the Celtic victory or the dynasty’s origin myth, see more recently Schmidt-Dounas 2000, 299–306; Lorber 2018, 118–120.

while golden recreations were dedicated at Delphi⁹² and adorned the royal pavilion during the *Ptolemaia* of 275/274 BC⁹³.

16 Following the first generation of Celtslayers of the 270s BC, the theme gained new prominence under the Attalids. Roughly a decade after the Aitolians had reorganised the Delphic *Sōtēria* in 246/245 to monopolise the defensive success of 279 BC⁹⁴, Attalos I achieved a major victory over the *Tolistoagii* at the source of the river Kaikos in *Mysia*⁹⁵. The battlefield success set the seal on Pergamon's secession from the Seleucid empire, as Attalos took on the title of king and *Sōtēr*⁹⁶, turning the defeat of the Galatian tribe into the foundation myth of the Pergamene monarchy. In the ensuing decades, Attalos I and his two sons repeatedly faced Galatian warriors, who in most cases stood in service of their Seleucid, Bithynian, or Pontic rivals. The power-struggle with Pergamon's Hellenic opponents, however, was systematically downplayed in Attalid self-representation, which focused on the defeated Celts instead, regardless of their employment relationships. The young dynasty thus propped up its authority by elevating its self-serving wars into the selfless deliverance of the Greeks of *Asia minor* from Celtic barbarism. Monumental Celtomachic dedications erected at Pergamon as well as at *Athens*, *Delos*, and Delphi propagated this message widely, bearing testimony to an unprecedented intensity in the functionalisation of victories over Celts⁹⁷.

17 In the course of the 3rd century BC, Celts had thus become involuntary king-makers, promoting autocratic rule by providing horrifying counter-images which made royal *sōtēres* such as Antiochos or Attalos appear a desirable necessity. Propagating the normality of autocracy, the motif must also have been an expedient choice in visualising Rome's new role in Greece. The adoption of the regal *topos* by the Roman consul – himself an individual with a penchant for kingly modes of self-representation, even in the city of Rome⁹⁸ – thus served to naturalise Roman suzerainty over Greece, translating the outcome of the battle at Pydna into an opportune Greek pictorial code.

Celtomachy: The Alienating Potential

18 The Celtomachic motifs of the frieze, however, were hardly meant to suggest that Paullus' epochal victory came at the expense of a Celtic tribe alone. Instead, the defeated must unambiguously be identified with the Macedonian monarchy. This was made abundantly clear by the inscription placed on one of the socle's orthostates: the curt *titulus*, transgressively formulated in Latin⁹⁹, was carved over a pre-existing Greek inscription¹⁰⁰ that would have designated the pillar as an anathema to Apollo, set up in honour of the king's *arête* and *euergesia*¹⁰¹. Its Latin replacement unceremoniously turned the votive into a Roman spoil, captured DE · REGE · PERSE / MACEDONIBUSQUE¹⁰². Further up the shaft, the Macedonians are represented by ten out of the frieze's 28 human figures, explicitly marked out by three carefully carved round shields measuring

92 cf. IDelos III 1417 A, ll. 25–27.

93 Kallixeinios *apud* Athen. 5, 196 f. (Johstono 2018).

94 Nachtergaele 1977, 223–241, 328–372; Koehn 2007, 99–101.

95 Liv. 38, 16, 14; OGIS 269. 276. For the date of the battle, see the summary in Schalles 1985, 51 n. 323.

96 Liv. 33, 21, 3; Pol. 18, 41, 7; Strab. 13, 4, 2.

97 cf. overview in Schalles 1985, 51–127; Marszal 2000; Strootman 2005, 121–134; Koehn 2007, 110–135.

98 Wiseman 1992.

99 Boschung 2001, 70.

100 Jacquemin – Laroche 1982, 210 n. 77.

101 In analogy to the inscribed dedications of the adjacent Eumenian and Prusian pillar (SIG³ II 628. 632; Boschung 2001, 61).

102 CIL I² 622 = ILS 8884 = SIG³ II 652a = ILLRP 323 (Delphi, Mus. inv. 926).

between 16 and 20.5 cm in diameter (I.3, I.8, IV.29)¹⁰³. These rimless shields bearing a distinctive décor, composed of arcs and dotted lines framing a central circular field (*episēmon*), had become deeply entrenched as an ethno-political symbol of Macedon by the time Paullus set foot in Greece. Featuring frequently, for instance, as the obverse type of Macedonian coinage since Alexander III, the idiosyncratic *aspis makedonikē*¹⁰⁴ would have been easily recognisable for most Greeks. Remarkably, the type had been especially prevalent on royal and autonomous Macedonian issues in the reigns of Philip V and Perseus, at times combined with the Macedonian ethnicon, which had been absent from earlier coinage. These widely-circulating issues largely date to after 188/187 BC, when Philip had revived the production of coins as part of his change of foreign policy, opting for a path of confrontation with Rome¹⁰⁵. The shield had thus gained prominence as an emblem of a pugnacious Macedon and was as such adopted by its Roman conquerors, with moneyers of the *Aemilii*, *Caecilii*, or *Quinctii* employing the shield décor as an iconographic reference to victories *ex Macedonia* of their famous ancestors¹⁰⁶. Both inscription and frieze thus bluntly narrate the events that induced the obliteration of the Antigonid dynasty and of Macedon as a political entity, even though the king himself made no appearance in the frieze¹⁰⁷.

19 Yet to many Greek contemporaries, the demise of Perseus – the political heir of Alexander – at the hands of the Romans must have seemed calamitous. Particularly those Greeks who had enjoyed amicable relations with the one-time *erōmenos tōn Hellēnōn* Philip V¹⁰⁸, or who had more recently benefited from his son’s ‘charm offensive’, would have disapproved of the outcome at Pydna. Since the beginning of his reign, Perseus had pursued a strategy labelled *hellēnokopein* by Polybios¹⁰⁹, starting off by recalling ostracised or indebted Macedonians from their Greek exiles with a widely-publicised amnesty in 179 BC, a measure which would have resonated well with large parts of Greek society¹¹⁰. Two years later, the king brokered a debt-cancellation for Aitolia, Thessaly, and Perrhaebia¹¹¹; a debt crisis and ongoing civil strife also enabled a Macedonian intervention in Boiotia, resulting in a *foedus* between Perseus and the formerly hostile Boiotian League in 174 BC¹¹², while Macedonian troops rushed to the rescue of beleaguered Byzantium¹¹³. Even the Achaian League was taken with Perseus’ overtures, with council members considering him a “new king, innocent of all wrong”¹¹⁴. Only a vigorous admonition by pro-Roman Kallikrates ensured that the League retained its anti-Macedonian policies¹¹⁵.

20 Following roughly a century of Macedonian absence, Perseus’ readmission to the Amphiktyonic Council – with two *hieromnēmones* for Perseus attested for 178/177 BC

103 Kähler 1965, 26 f. 33; Liampi 1998, 70 f., cat. S22–S24.

104 AskI. 5, 1.

105 Liv. 39, 24, 2; Liampi 1998, 44–47. 99–105. 111–122. The shields of the frieze mirror contemporary coin types closely, even featuring the *strovilos*, a motif appearing only in the early 2nd cent BC.

106 cf. coins of *Illviri* M. Caecilius Metellus (RRC 263, 127 BC), a Quinctius (RRC 267/1, c. 126 BC), and L. Aemilius Lepidus Paullus (RRC 415, 62 BC). See also a Delian statue base composed of Macedonian shields, perhaps once carrying a statue of Flamininus or Paullus (Rabe 2008, 123–125).

107 Boschung 2001, 66 f. *contra* von Vacano 1988. However, most Macedonian soldiers starring in the frieze – i.e. cavalrymen including officer III.21 and light infantrymen – might be identified as members of elite regiments most closely associated with the king, such as the *hiera ilē/sacra ala* and the *agēma/regia cohors* (cf. Taylor 2016, 570; Liampi 1998, 15–25).

108 ‘darling of the Greeks’ (Pol. 7, 11, 8).

109 Pol. 25, 3, 1, cf. App. Mac. 11, 4, 7: *philellēn* (Hammond – Wallbank 1988, 493–495; Burton 2017, 57–61).

110 Pol. 25, 3, 1–3.

111 Diod. 29, 33; Liv. 42, 13, 8–9.

112 App. Mac. 11, 1; Liv. 42, 12, 5. 42, 40, 6.

113 Liv. 42, 13, 8. 42, 40, 6. 42, 42, 4.

114 Liv. 41, 24, 10 (transl. E. T. Sage).

115 Liv. 41, 23, 5–18.

– epitomises his fast-growing influence and reputation in mainland Greece¹¹⁶. The same holds true for his pillar, the first monument for an Antigonid at Delphi since an Athenian dedication of c. 307 BC, as the hostile Aitolians had previously prevented Macedonian displays¹¹⁷. Regaining access to the sanctuary early in his reign, Perseus made full use of the opportunity: next to the marble pillar erected in his honour, the king had transcripts of the amnesty decree and the Boiotian treaty set up at Delphi. Furthermore, palaeographic and typological evidence strongly suggests that a second pillar-shaped monument, whose remains were identified at Delphi in the 1990s, can be attributed to the king. Explaining, perhaps, why Polybios and Livy spoke of Perseus’ “columns” in the plural¹¹⁸, this limestone pier bore an inscribed anthology of old documents in chronological order testifying to the historically good relationship between Antigonids and the Amphiktyony¹¹⁹. The sanctuary, it seems, had become the epicentre of the king’s self-representation as a friend of the Greeks, and of Delphi in particular.

21 On top of this, many Greeks presumably regarded the Roman war on their Macedonian benefactor as unjust. Perseus – after all a *rex amicus*¹²⁰ – had repeatedly tried to ease tensions with Rome and even offered to make peace and pay extraordinary reparations despite winning the first engagement of the war, a battle at Thessalian Kallikinos¹²¹.

22 In exalting the final victory, Rome and her allies must have been anxious to present the war to the wider public as a *bellum iustum*. As with Octavian’s civil war propaganda 140 years later¹²², a strategy of alienation became the method of choice. By publicly associating the king’s forces with Celts, the frieze transfigured the Roman victory over a rival Hellenistic state into an act of salvation from a barbarian menace, effectively precluding any doubts regarding its legitimacy. That the Macedonians siding with *Kelttoi* posed as much of a threat to Hellenic civilisation as Brennos and his troops in 279 BC was made abundantly clear by the monument’s location. The Celtomachic *topos* thus proved an ideal means to render the war a just and indispensable undertaking.

23 In expounding this narrative to a Panhellenic audience, the Romans could tap into a long-standing tradition of picturing Macedonian kings as dangerous barbarians. This tradition rested upon a shift in meaning which had transformed the concept of barbarism – formerly a predominantly ethnic and linguistic mode of categorisation – into a politicised catchphrase, denoting opposition to the Hellenic ideal of socio-political practice centred on civic liberty and political autonomy¹²³. Accusations of Macedonian barbarism had entered the arena of Greek politics as soon as Macedon took its first steps towards hegemony over mainland Greece under Philip II in the Third Sacred War.

116 SIG³ II 636 (cf. Walbank 1977).

117 cf. Schalles 1985, 68 n. 429.

118 Liv. 45, 27, 7; Pol. 30, 10, 2. The plural had long puzzled scholarship, prompting some to identify members of a second marble pillar among the architectural remains (Homolle 1903, 298; Courby 1927, 306–308). Yet, this elusive ‘*pilier aux rosettes*’ turned out to be an illusion (Jacquemin – Laroche 1982, 207–211). Others chose to place their trust in Plutarch, who, writing in nearby Chaironeia in the early 2nd cent. AD, mentions only one pillar (Aem. 28, 2; Reinach 1910b, 464 f.; Kähler 1965, 36 n. 7; Taylor 2016, 560 n. 4) – presumably, Perseus’ limestone pillar had long been destroyed by his time.

119 Among the scattered architectural remains, two inscribed blocks from the upper end of the shaft have been identified. The first block (Delphi, Mus. inv. 4257) carried a letter to Demetrios I Poliorketes from his *philos Adeimantos* of Lampsakos (dated to late 302 BC), informing the king that the Amphiktyons had passed an unspecified decree, presumably in relation to the newly founded Hellenic League (SEG 14, 411 = ISE 72 = CID IV 11). The letter continues onto the second block (inv. 19919), followed by a transcript of the peace treaty between Demetrios and the Aitolian League from 289 BC (Jacquemin et al. 1995; Lefèvre 1998).

120 Pol. 25, 3, 1.

121 App. Mac. 12; Liv. 42, 62, 3–15; Pol. 27, 8 (Burton 2017, 129–132).

122 Incidentally, Octavian also drew on Celtomachic *topoi* to render his civil war adversaries sacrilegious bandits, cf. the ivory Celtomachy on the doors of the Temple of Apollo Palatinus, vowed after the naval victories over Sextus Pompeius off the Sicilian coast in 36 BC (Prop. 2, 31; Vell. 2, 81, 3; Kistler 2009, 291–296).

123 Nicholson 2020.

With Greek freedom perceived to be under attack, politicians such as Demosthenes of fiercely independent Athens polemically pointed towards Macedonian barbarism to rally the Greek *poleis* around a common cause¹²⁴. The resulting battle at Chaironeia in 338 BC was, even by the time of Pausanias, widely considered an *exemplum* of the heroic struggle for Greek freedom, equal to the repulsion of Persians and Galatians¹²⁵. Henceforth, *barbaroi makedonikoi* peopled the political discourse whenever anti-Macedonian factions opposed the hegemon, be it in the Lamian, the Chremonidean, or the Second Macedonian War¹²⁶. The frieze thus echoes sentiments which had been prevalent among certain political factions in Greece for more than a century, lending the narrative an air of authenticity.

24 Unsurprisingly, this trope also resurfaced in the run-up to the Third Macedonian War, as Perseus tried to regain the influence over Greece that had been lost at Kynoskephalai. Alerted by Macedonian activities and his own decline in popularity among Greeks concomitant to Perseus' ascent¹²⁷, Eumenes II travelled to Rome in late 173 BC. He appeared in the Senate in the following spring, putting forward a deluge of accusations brimming with allusions to Macedonian barbarism¹²⁸. Among other things, Eumenes alleged that Perseus collaborated with the *Bastarnae* – a people deemed even more threatening than the Asian *Galli*¹²⁹ – in preparation for an invasion of Italy. He also emphasised Perseus' own barbarian traits, such as lawlessness and savagery, by pointing towards his violations of the Flaminian peace treaty¹³⁰ and alleged assassinations of Greek ambassadors and Roman *socii*¹³¹. The Eumenian case became all the more compelling when the king was attacked and severely injured on his way back to Pergamon at Delphi, allegedly the work of Perseus' agents¹³². To this, a senatorial commission returning in mid-172 BC added the accusation that Perseus had instructed a Brundisian citizen to poison Roman dignitaries¹³³. The revelation was the last straw, prompting the Senate to declare Perseus a *hostis*¹³⁴.

25 While the declaration of war was put off until after the consular elections for 171 BC, the Senate dispatched messengers and embassies to shore up Greek support for the upcoming conflict¹³⁵. An official Roman letter addressing the Delphians, accompanied by a cover note written by a Roman magistrate¹³⁶, belongs in this context. Transcribed on two fragments of Pentelic marble which were discovered in the sanctuary in the late 19th century¹³⁷, the letter reiterates the Eumenian allegations as Roman *casus belli* almost verbatim. Yet – in an attempt to win the approval for war of a

124 Demosth. or. 3, 24, 9, 31.

125 Paus. 10, 3, 4 (Habicht 1998, 106–108).

126 cf. summary in Champion 2004, 40–44.

127 Liv. 42, 12, 7; Hansen 1971, 108 f.

128 Liv. 42, 11–13; Val. Max. 2, 2, 2.

129 Liv. 41, 23, 12.

130 Liv. 42, 13, 4–10.

131 The killing of Theban ambassadors Eversa and Kallikritos on their way to Rome (Liv. 42, 13, 6–7; Pol. 22, 18, 5); the assassination of Illyrian *socius et amicus* Arthetaurus (Liv. 42, 13, 6; App. Mac. 11, 2).

132 Liv. 42, 15–16, cf. 42.29.2. 42.40.8; App. Mac. 11, 4; Diod. 29, 34, 2; Pol. 22, 18, 5.

133 Liv. 42, 17, cf. 42, 40, 9. 42, 41, 4.

134 Liv. 42, 18, 1–2 (Burton 2017, 64–70. 79–99).

135 Liv. 42, 37 (Burton 2017, 69–75).

136 Various figures have been advanced as possible authors of the document, including consular Q. Marcius Philippus, who led the embassies to Greece in early 171 BC (Reinach 1910a, 252 n. 2; H. Pomtow in SIG³ II 643), or P. Licinius Crassus, who commenced military operations as consul in the summer of 171 BC (Bousquet 1981, 416; Ferrary 2014, 171–174).

137 Delphi, Mus. inv. 1285 (SIG³ II 613B, cover note) and 2248 (SIG³ II 643, letter); Pomtow 1896, 759–763; Pomtow 1920, 146–149; Nikitsky 1906; Colin 1930, 108–116, cat. 75, 40; Bousquet 1981. The letter provides a *terminus post quem*, as it mentions the alleged assassination attempt on Eumenes II at Delphi in mid-172 BC (ll. 29–30). It was surely published before the end of the war, most likely in the winter of 172/171 BC (Daux 1936, 322–325 *contra* Colin 1930, 114 f.)

Panhellenic audience – it also highlights an incident that is missing from our reports of the Eumenian indictment delivered in the *curia*¹³⁸: in late summer of 174 BC and thus during the sacred truce of the *Pythia*, Perseus had marched to Delphi to conduct sacrifices after crushing a rebellion of the Dolopians¹³⁹ – presumably the very occasion for the commissioning of the pillar which Paullus requisitioned seven years later. Accompanied by his army, Perseus' visit was a provocative show of strength, but nevertheless a peaceful endeavour; when confronted by the ambassador Philippus in 171 BC, the king asserted that his soldiers had mistreated nobody en route, something which even pro-Roman Kallikrates did not deny¹⁴⁰. With the outbreak of war imminent, however, Perseus' justifications mattered little. Based on the fact that Bastarnian mercenaries had been present in the Macedonian expeditionary force in 174 BC, the preserved text transfigures the event into a re-enactment of the Galatian invasion of 279 BC¹⁴¹. Alleging that Perseus “τὰς ἑλλή]/[νίδας πό]λεις καταδουλώσῃται π[άσας”¹⁴², it asserts that the king had led to Delphi the very descendants of the barbarians who had marched “ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερ[ὸν (...)] διανοούμενοι συλῆ]/σαι καὶ ἀνελεῖν αὐτό”¹⁴³ a century prior.

26 Only a quarter of a century earlier, a victorious Flamininus drew a strikingly different picture of Macedon after defeating Philip. Confronted with Aitolian calls for the abolition of the Macedonian monarchy, he pointed out that the kingdom constituted an indispensable bulwark which protected Greece from barbarian incursions¹⁴⁴. In 172/171 BC, the Romans could no longer afford such moderate views when preparing for war against Philip's popular son. Instead, the Delphic text stylises Perseus as a new Brennus in charge of even more terrifying barbarians¹⁴⁵ to win over hesitant and pro-Macedonian Greeks¹⁴⁶. In doing so, the letter was surely meant to counteract the epigraphic and architectural testimonies to Perseus' philhellenism which had popped up at Delphi in the 170s BC¹⁴⁷. While the original location of the pieces remains unknown, it seems only natural to place them in the vicinity of Perseus' pillars, thus commenting on their unfinished state¹⁴⁸. When construction works were resumed at the behest of Paullus a few years later, the inscription would have also provided the sculptors designing the battle frieze with an obvious choice: the Roman and Attalid

138 App. Mac. 11, 1–2; Liv. 42, 11–13. Livy does, however, mention that Eumenes had been informed about the incident (41, 22, 5).

139 Liv. 41, 22, 4–6.

140 Liv. 42.42.1–3. 41.23.13.

141 Reinach 1910a, 252 f. For the perception of Bastarnians as Celts in Greek discourse, see n. 45.

142 “might enslave all the Greek cities” (SIG³ II 643, ll. 27 f. Cf. l. 11).

143 “against the temple (...) intending to plunder and destroy it” (SIG³ II 643, ll. 12 f.).

144 App. Mac. 9, 2.

145 SIG³ 643, l. 26.

146 Daux 1936, 321 f.

147 Such as the claim that the Antigonids had distinguished themselves as defenders of Delphi's autonomy, implicit in ll. 21–23 of the peace treaty transcribed on the limestone pier (Lefèvre 1998, 123 f. 138 f.).

148 Fragment 2248 carrying the left upper half of the letter was found by H. Pomtow in 1887, built into a modern terrace wall near house 133 of Castri village (Pomtow 1896, 759). This house, later demolished by the French excavators, stood halfway between the Theatre and the Lesche of the Cnidians and thus in some distance to the Aemilian pillar *in vestibulo* (cf. Homolle 1897a, pl. 15). The findspot of the second piece (inv. 1285), discovered on 11 April 1894, is not recorded. Yet, it seems probable that the fragment was retrieved from the area south of the temple's opisthodom, where the pieces with adjacent inventory numbers had been found (Pomtow 1920, 209; Bousquet 1981, 407). Despite the inconclusive find contexts, scholars unhesitatingly linked the pieces to the Aemilian pillar as the wide scattering of material is a common phenomenon at Delphi. Initially, inv. 2248 was thought to be one of the blocks making up the pillar's shaft (Nikitsky 1906, 208–210; Reinach 1910b, 435 n. 2), a proposal later rejected due to the fragment's low thickness of 6–7 cm. Instead, the piece came to be identified as a stela, tentatively placed in a 47 cm wide slot on the lowest step of the pillar's tiered base (Colin 1930, 111 f.). This proposition, however, became untenable when J. Bousquet recognised that inv. 2248 and 1285 belonged together (cf. also Pomtow 1920, 221 n. 1). As the latter features a moulding, anathyrosis, and clamp and dowel holes, both pieces are rather to be understood as fragments of an orthostat with crowning moulding that once covered a rectangular base, perhaps of one of the monuments considered here (Bousquet 1981).

pre-war propaganda almost forced Celtomachic motifs upon them. From then onwards, the transcribed Roman letter would have furthermore spelled out to viewers struggling to identify the three nudes high up the shaft who Perseus' forces had been siding with.

27 Intriguingly, this pictorial merging of Galatians and Macedonians was also practised by some of Paullus' allies, namely the Aitolians and, perhaps, the Attalids. When battling Perseus' grandfather Demetrios II together with the Achaian League in the 230s BC, the Aitolian *koinon* minted a limited series of tetradrachms to pay for joint military expenses. On the obverse, these issues bore the image of the Delphian Aitolia seated on a pile of Celtic spoils. This conventional type came to sport a novel feature during the Demetrian War: conspicuously placed among the *thureoi* and a *karnyx*, a Macedonian shield now fronted the pile¹⁴⁹. In a similar way, Eumenes' balustrade reliefs from the *stoai* of the Pergamene Athenaion jumbled together Celtic weaponry with Hellenistic military equipment, including at least two Macedonian shields and a *kausia*. In this case, however, the militaria make for a less explicit reference, often understood as a visualisation of Attalid victoriousness at large. Yet, the Hellenistic spoils might also allude to specific events, be they the Attalid participation in the war against Antiochos III, or the struggles with Philip V during the First and Second Macedonian Wars and the Macedonian invasion of Pergamene territory in the interim period¹⁵⁰.

28 No less ambiguous is a possible Macedonian reference in the Celticised Gigantomachy of the Great Altar at Pergamon, a monument commissioned, perhaps, after Eumenes had survived Perseus' attempt on his life in 172 BC¹⁵¹. The element in question is a large, twelve-rayed starburst decorating the exterior of a hoplite shield which leans against the humanoid body of a fallen giant under the hooves of Hera's quadriga¹⁵². Conspicuously placed in the middle of the eastern frieze and thus opposite the entrance of the Altar's *temenos*, the star-shield must have played a significant role in the frieze's sculptural programme. Some modern commentators consider it a traditional element denoting the cosmic nature of the battle, as star-shields appear – though only very occasionally – in earlier Gigantomachic scenes¹⁵³. Yet to most, the starburst constitutes the dynastic emblem of the Antigonids, relating to king Perseus' mythical namesake and ancestor, who had been placed among the stars by Athena¹⁵⁴. If we accept the star-shield as a reference to Antigonid Macedonia, the Great Altar at Pergamon would constitute the closest counterpart to Paullus' frieze in conflating Celtic barbarism and Macedonian royalty.

149 e.g. Sear SG 2317 (Scholten 1987, 455–505).

150 Jaekel 1965; Polito 1998, 91–95 (cf. Hansen 1971, 46–69).

151 De Luca – Radt 1999, 124 f., but see Rotroff 2001. For the ongoing debate regarding date and circumstances of the Altar's commissioning, see the summaries of Stewart 2000 and Michels 2003.

152 To this, one might add two Pergamene heads of moustached Galatians in the [Schloss Fasanerie at Eichenzell](#) (Antikensammlung inv. Ama 6a–b). Hypothetically placed near Okeanos and Thetis in the Altar's Gigantomachy, the helmet of head B also features an eight-pointed star (Yfantidis 1993; Kistler 2009, 218–223).

153 De Grummond 2000, 260; Ehling 2000. To the [Praenestine](#) cista (late 4th/early 3rd cent. BC) adduced by N. De Grummond, one might add three Athenian vases: Attic black-figure column krater, c. 540 BC ([New York](#), MMA acc. nr. 24.97.95); Attic black-figure calyx krater of the Niobid Painter, c. 460 BC (Ferrera, Mus. inv. 2891); Attic red-figure neck amphora of the Suessula Painter, c. 390 BC ([Paris, Louvre](#) inv. S1677). More frequently, however, the shields of giants bear snakes and other motifs as emblems.

154 Ritter 1981, esp. 191; Kunze 1990, 137; Schmidt-Dounas 1993, 12; Yfantidis 1993, 232; Strobel 1994, 89 n. 121; Andreae 1998, 128. 162; De Luca – Radt 1999, 124; Stewart 2000, 40. Albeit a universal symbol in itself, the starburst seems to have gained royal connotations in Argead Macedonia, perhaps in relation to the kingdom's foundational myth (Hdt. 8, 137–139). From Demetrios Poliorketes onwards, stars with varied numbers of rays featured frequently on Antigonid coinage; an eight-rayed star also takes up the *episēmon* of the shield held by I.8 in the Aemilian frieze. Note also the Thrako-Phrygian helmet with griffin-head finial in the northern frieze of the Gigantomachy, a specific helmet type which is worn by hero Perseus on coins of Philip V and his son (cf. Dintsis 1986, 45 f.).

Celtomachy: The Integrative Potential

29 Casting the Macedonians and their king as an explicitly barbarous threat to Greek civilisation must also have been crucial in the light of Rome's own cultural standing in the Hellenic world, as many Greek spectators of the monument – not least all those sympathetic to the Macedonian cause – would have judged the warring parties the other way around. To a Greek eye, the militaria alone would have made the Romans, equipped with Celtoid *scuta* and *loricae hamatae*, appear more barbarous than their adversaries, who are clad and armoured in the Hellenic fashion with *linothōrakes*, Attic and Boiotian helmets (cf. I.3, IV.26), *chitōniskoi*, and *chlamydes*¹⁵⁵. Even 19th-century scholarship had long misidentified the legionaries as Celts¹⁵⁶. And indeed, in contemporary Greek thought, the Romans generally occupied a culturally ambiguous position oscillating between Hellenism and barbarism. As Latin-speaking *allophyloi*¹⁵⁷, the Roman claim to Hellenic legitimacy was far more tenuous than the Macedonian one, which had been accepted by some Greeks from the time of Herodotos onwards¹⁵⁸. While many Greek *poleis* nevertheless adopted culturally assimilationist policies whenever Rome acted in their favour, styling Romans as 'honorary Greeks', this ambiguity also allowed for the opposite when the political situation made alienation desirable¹⁵⁹. Accordingly, Rome's increasing involvement in the political affairs of mainland Greece – incrementally replacing Macedon as hegemon and thus as the threat to Hellenic autonomy¹⁶⁰ – occasioned an upsurge in anti-Roman sentiments, articulated by drawing upon cultural dichotomies.

30 The politicised *topos* of Roman barbarism first became virulent during the Second Punic War, when brutal military actions directed against Siceliots and Italic Greeks were generally thought to exhibit the same quintessentially barbaric characteristics that were later ascribed to Perseus¹⁶¹. By the First Macedonian War, the perception of Romans as *barbaroi* had become entrenched in Greek public discourse, as evidenced by three ambassadorial speeches preserved by Polybios, now portraying the Romans as the new barbarian menace bent on enslaving all Greeks¹⁶². Strikingly, the barbarian danger allegedly posed by the Romans was repeatedly allegorised as dark clouds looming in the west (*nephē apo tēs hesperas*), a rhetoric reminiscent of Kallimachos' poetic demonisation of the Celts as a nightly storm of innumerable snowflakes (*niphades*) rushing on Egypt from the furthest west¹⁶³. At the start of the Second Macedonian War, Macedonian and Athenian envoys even argued in front of the *Panaetolicum* as to who was the real barbarian, Philip or the Romans¹⁶⁴. Harsh measures adopted by Roman generals such as P. Sulpicius Galba or T. Quinctius Flamininus in the ensuing years must have perpetuated this notion. It surely survived the Isthmian Declaration of 196 BC and was arguably still in currency when Paullus set sail for Greece¹⁶⁵. Even Polybios, by the

155 Pirson 2014, 247.

156 cf. n. 23.

157 Pol. 9, 37, 7 (cf. *alienigenae homines*, Liv. 31, 29, 12).

158 Hdt. 1, 56. 5, 20. 8, 43 (Champion 2004, 48).

159 Champion 2000a; Champion 2000b; Erskine 2000.

160 e.g. Pol. 18, 45, 6.

161 Sack of *Syracuse* in 211 and *Tarentum* in 209 BC (Liv. 25, 31, 9–10. 27, 16, 1–9; Champion 2000b, 428; Champion 2004, 50 f.).

162 Speeches of the Aitolian ambassador Agelaos at the peace conference of *Naupaktos* in 217 (5, 104), Arkanian ambassador Lykiskos at *Sparta* in 210 (9, 32, 3–39, 7), and Rhodian ambassador Thrasykrates addressing the Aitolian League in 207 BC (11, 4, 1–6, 8; Deininger 1971, 23–33; Champion 2000b, 433–437).

163 Kall. h. 4, 174–176 (presumably harking back to Hom. Il. 19, 357–361); Pol. 5, 104, 10. 9, 37, 10.

164 Liv. 31, 29–30.

165 Forte 1972, 32–63 and Champion 2004, 51–57 *pace* Deininger 1971, 37. Cf. Appianos' summary of the pre-war atmosphere in Greece, characterised by a widespread hate of the Romans promoting Perseus' popularity (Mac. 11, 1), which was further increased by the exceptional cruelty and greed exhibited by the Roman commanders of 171 BC (Liv. 43, 4, 5–13; Burton 2017, 139 f.).

time of writing already on friendly terms with the highest echelons of Roman society, designated Romans as *barbaroi* in his own voice to appease his patriotic Greek/Achaian readership¹⁶⁶.

31 Arguably, the Celtomachic *topos* served to counteract the politicised cultural bias towards the Roman victors, who were well aware of corrosive anti-Roman sentiments in Greek society¹⁶⁷. As indicated above, the Celtomachy allowed for the presentation of Paullus as the champion rather than the antipode of Hellenic culture on par with Attalid or Seleucid *sōtēres*. In focusing on Celts, the frieze stressed the commonality of enemy, evoking one Graeco-Roman *oikoumenē* under attack from barbarians. Through Celtic Othering, the frieze thus created an integrative frame, as Roman legionaries fight side by side with Greek allies, represented in the frieze by an archer and a hoplite (III.16 and 17)¹⁶⁸, in defence of a shared culture. The unifying narrative consequently undermines the wide-spread notion of Roman barbarism by depicting Romans defeating Celts, the *barbaroi* par excellence. When viewed in this light, it is hardly surprising that the large Celtic contingents levied by Romans and Attalids in the run-up to Pydna make no appearance¹⁶⁹.

32 In exploiting the integrative potential of Celtomachies, Paullus incidentally followed in the footsteps of Perseus' ancestor Antigonos II Gonatas, who – roughly a hundred years prior – had sought to enhance his tainted image after crushing Greek hopes for independence during the Chremonidean War with the help of Celtic mercenaries¹⁷⁰. Vis-à-vis the barbaricising pre-war rhetoric of Athenian statesman Chremonides, who had implicitly portrayed the king as a new Xerxes or Brennos while forging an anti-Macedonian alliance with Sparta and Ptolemaios II Philadelphos¹⁷¹, Gonatas went on to propagate his Celtomachic exploits once Athens had capitulated in 262/261 BC. Having stelae or paintings set up on the acropolis that boasted the king's deeds “(...) πρὸς τοὺς βαρβάρους ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων σωτηρίας”¹⁷², Gonatas seems to have instrumentalised his famed victory at Lysimacheia to persuade the vanquished Athenians of his Hellenic qualities, fending off allegations of barbarism¹⁷³.

33 Not unlike Gonatas, Paullus could adduce weighty arguments to back up the Roman claim of defending an envisioned Graeco-Roman civilisation against Celtic threats: the frequent conflicts with the Celts of northern Italy and the *Adriatic* littoral in the 4th and 3rd centuries BC provided ample evidence for corroborating Rome's leading role in warding off barbarian attacks. What is more, these precedents had often been deliberately linked to the Greek repulsion of the *Galatai*, as this allowed Roman victors to present their military successes over Celts as outstanding cultural feats¹⁷⁴. Polybios, for instance, explicitly parallels Brennos' raid on Delphi with the largest Celtic invasion of Italy in Republican times. In 225 BC, *Insubres* and *Boii* plundered Umbria and Etruria, an

166 Pol. 12, 4b (mid-150s BC).

167 cf. the ironical and enraged reactions to the designation of Romans as *barbari* by Greeks in Plautus (Asin. prol. 11; Capt. 492. 884; Cas. 747a; Mil. 211; Most. 828) and reportedly by Cato maior (Plin. nat. 29, 14, 8).

168 As a metal arrow from the archer's bow once stuck in the right thigh of the Macedonian officer III.21, both figures fight on the Roman side, presumably representing the allied Achaian, Aitolian, *Cretan*, Pergamene, or Thessalian troops mentioned by Livy (42, 44, 7; 42, 55, 8–10; 43, 7, 1; cf. Taylor 2016, 565 f.).

169 Livy hints at the recruitment of Celtic mercenaries in cis- and transalpine Gaul prior to the departure of Paullus (44, 14, 1. 44, 21, 7), while indicating that the Attalid expeditionary force contained a large number of Galatian mercenaries (42, 57, 7–9. 44, 28, 7).

170 SEG 24, 637 (Welles 1970).

171 SIG I³ 434/5, esp. ll. 10–18.

172 “(...) against the barbarians for the salvation of the Greeks”, SIG I³ 401, ll. 5–6. The dedications to Athena Nike were set up by Antigonos' general Herakleitos of Athmonon, presumably on behalf of the king.

173 Nachtergaele 1977, 180 f.; Pollitt 1986, 45; Hännestad 1993, 19; Schmidt-Dounas 1996, 132–134; Koehn 2007, 124–126.

174 Hölscher 1990, 81 f.; Strobel 1996, 105–115.

event described by Polybios as “the most serious [incursion] that had ever occurred”¹⁷⁵, triggering a pan-Italic response similar to the Greek collaboration in defending Delphi¹⁷⁶. The venture was brought to an end by the annihilation of the Celtic host at Telamon, with the sole victor being a distant relative of Paullus, L. Aemilius Papus¹⁷⁷. Three years later, the battle at Clastidium and the sack of Mediolanum marked the conclusion of the Celtic Wars of the 220s BC; in the aftermath, the Romans sent a golden krater to Delphi, the first Roman dedication in Delphi, and the Greek East in general, securely attested in our sources¹⁷⁸. Naevius later commemorated the war in his *fabula praetexta Clastidium*¹⁷⁹, which found its counterparts in the encomiastic *Galatika* of Hellenistic court poets¹⁸⁰.

34 The deliberately construed nexus between Roman Celtomachies and the Delphic legend is most pronounced in our accounts of the sack of Rome by the *Senones* in 390/387 BC¹⁸¹. The parallels to the Delphic story are striking, with the Celts – equally headed by a Brennus¹⁸² – first obliterating the Roman forces at the Allia before sacking the city and attacking the Capitolium, with the Temple of Iupiter Optimus Maximus the Roman equivalent to Delphi. Their attempt, however, was thwarted by human heroism and divine intervention¹⁸³, and Camillus finally defeated the *Senones*; the *spolia*, again, were allegedly dedicated to Delphian Apollo¹⁸⁴. The mythopoetic alignment of the sack of Rome to the attack on Delphi, and the explicit comparison between the events of 225 and 280/279 BC, stands witness to the Roman desire for incorporating their victories over Celts into the Delphic tradition¹⁸⁵. This trend is also attested in Republican material culture: an upsurge in Celtomachic motifs in the late 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, at times directly inspired by Delphic events or derived from Hellenistic victory monuments, bespeaks the Roman self-identification with the Greek struggle against Celtic threats to civilisation¹⁸⁶. The evidence ranges from Celtomachies carved on Etruscan urns and sarcophagi¹⁸⁷, over those sculpted in the round¹⁸⁸ or modelled in clay¹⁸⁹, to corresponding medallion motifs in Calenian pottery¹⁹⁰. While the iconographic *topos* had, in part, evolved into a generic visualisation of divine justice and punishment of *superbia* and *nefas*¹⁹¹, its diffusion nevertheless reveals the Italic self-portrayal as the vanguard in the fight against Celtic barbarism. The latter had even left its imprint on the Roman constitution, with the catastrophe of 390/387 triggering, for instance, the establishment of the *tumultus Gallicus*. This military state of emergency allowed for the conscription of all citizens regardless of exemptions from military service (*vacationes militiae*) when-

175 Pol. 2, 31, 7 (transl. W. R. Paton).

176 Fabius Pictor *apud* Oros. 4, 13, 7.

177 Pol. 2, 27–30.

178 Plut. Marc. 8, 6 (Rödel-Braune 2015, 69 f.).

179 Varro ling. 7, 107. 9, 78.

180 Nachtergaele 1977, 49–81.

181 Dion. Hal. ant. 13, 7–13; Liv. 5, 34–55; Plut. Cam. 15–30.

182 This recurrence has been attributed either to a deliberate attempt to equate the Senonian raid on Rome with the attack on Delphi (cf. Mommsen 1879, 303 n. 10), or the fact that Brennus constitutes a military title rather than a personal name (Rankin 1996, 88).

183 For divine intervention (e. g. Liv. 5, 49, 1) and its correlation to the Persian and Celtic attempt on Delphi, cf. Ogilvie 1965, 720. 737.

184 Liv. 5, 34–51.

185 Lampinen 2008. The historiographical thread probably originated with Fabius Pictor, who had fought at Telamon (Eutr. 3, 5) and led an embassy to Delphi in 216 BC (Liv. 22, 57, 5). His annals, written in Greek, aimed to demonstrate Rome’s affiliation with the Greek cultural sphere.

186 von Bieńkowski 1908, 79–135.

187 Höckmann 1991; Holliday 1994; Steuernagel 1998, 91–98; Pirson 2005.

188 e. g. marble Celtomachy erected around 100 BC on the Italian agora on Delos (Picard 1936; Marcadé – Queyrel 2003); another in Peperino tuff, formerly adorning a tomb on the *via Tiburtina* (mid-2nd cent. BC; Coarelli 1978).

189 Civitalba frieze (later 2nd cent. BC; Pairault-Messau – Verzar 1978).

190 e. g. workshops of the *Gabinii*, of Anicius, and Atilius (Kistler 2009, 275–282; Höckmann 1991, 208–210).

191 Kistler 2009, 244–275.

ever a Gallic invasion was imminent¹⁹². The *sanctius aerarium*, a separate public treasury allegedly reserved for Gallic wars only¹⁹³, constituted another institutional response. With Celtic conflict thus engrained in the fabric and history of the state, Rome could justifiably claim to spearhead the defence of the civilised world.

35 Perhaps, this attitude is best exemplified by the speech of Cn. Manlius Vulso, addressing his troops in *Galatia* in 189 BC before attacking the *Tolostobogii* and *Tectosagi*, descendants of those Celts that had raided Delphi. Himself a relative of famous Celt-slaying *Manlii* like Capitolinus or Torquatus¹⁹⁴, Livy has Vulso claim that, in difference to fearful Greeks, “the Romans are quite familiar with Gallic uprisings”, as “for now two hundred years, they [our ancestors] have slain and routed them [Celts] like terrified cattle, and almost more triumphs have been celebrated over the Gauls than over the rest of the world put together”¹⁹⁵. Following two ensuing victories, in which Pergamene contingents led by Attalos and Athenaios participated, Vulso returned to Ephesos, his base of operations. Here, deputations of all cities and peoples of Asia Minor bestowed golden wreaths on the consul for the deliverance from barbaric *terror*¹⁹⁶. In addition, a fragmentary Celtomachy relief discovered in Ephesos might have been commissioned by the city on this occasion¹⁹⁷. Once adorning a monumental statue base, the Ephesian Celtomachy exhibits significant motific similarities to the Aemilian frieze¹⁹⁸. Intriguingly, these might not be the mere coincidences, for Paullus landed in Ephesos in 188 BC with Eumenes, being one of the ten legates dispatched to draw up the treaty with vanquished Antiochos III and his Celtic allies¹⁹⁹. After travelling home together with the army, Vulso and Paullus then came to blows in the *curia* the following year: Paullus vociferously led the Scipionic attempt to thwart the hopes of Vulso, with Fulvius Nobilior the core of a rival political clique, for a triumph²⁰⁰.

36 Two decades later, Paullus might have taken direct recourse to his rival’s self-advancement when instigating the completion of Perseus’ pillar. In drawing on Celtomachic motifs to glorify the Roman role as champion and integral part of the commune of civilised peoples, the Delphic battle frieze could build upon a plethora of historical precedents, many of which not entirely unknown to the Panhellenic audience frequenting Delphi²⁰¹.

192 App. civ. 2, 150; Plut. Cam. 41, 7. Marc. 3, 4 (cf. Golden 2013, 42–86).

193 App. civ. 2, 41.

194 Capitolinus: Dion. Hal. ant. 13, 7, 3–8, 2; Plut. Cam. 27; Torquatus: Claudius Quadratus *apud* Gell. 9, 13; Liv. 7, 9, 7–10, 14.

195 Liv. 38, 17, 5 f. (transl. by the author).

196 Liv. 38, 37, 1–4.

197 Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Mus. inv. I 814. I 1740 A–C (Robert 1992, 233–238; Moreno 1994, 252 f.; Stewart 2004, 233). The date and attribution, however, remain controversial, e.g. Oberleitner 1981 (Eumenes II, 166 BC); Krierer 1995, 168–172. 219 cat. T01 (Lucius Verus, AD 165–169). For a 2nd-century BC date, see also Smith 1991, 186; Osada 1993, 150 n. MF28; Ridgway 2000, 115–117 with reservations; Pirson 2002, 75 f.; Pirson 2014, 246 cat. H4. For an Imperial date, cf. Andreae 1956, 51; Hannestad 1993, 38 n. 63.

198 Oberleitner 1981, 91. 104.

199 Liv. 37, 55, 7.

200 Liv. 38, 44, 9–47, 1, with Vulso explicitly naming Paullus his *adversarius* (38, 47, 3 f.).

201 Vulso’s Galatian exploits, for instance, would have been known to many Greeks encountering the newly built Aemilian pillar. A source-critical digression in Plutarch also evinces that news of Roman encounters with Celts had travelled to Greece significantly earlier: while he bemoans the fabulous account of the Gallic sack by Herakleides Pontikos, Plutarch states that Aristotle “had accurate tidings of the capture of the city by the Gauls” (Cam. 22, 3, transl. B. Perrin), as did his contemporary Theopompos (Plin. nat. 3, 5, 57). See also the Aitolian rejection of a Roman diplomatic intervention in the early 240s BC, contrasting their own successes over Celts with the Roman failure to protect their city (Pomp. Trog. *apud* Iust. 28, 2, 4–7).

Conclusions

³⁷ In summary, the prominent inclusion of Celtomachic motifs in the frieze of Paullus' pillar at Delphi allowed for the portrayal of the victory over Perseus as the magnificent and crucial elimination of a universal threat. In doing so, the frieze addressed Rome-sceptical and pro-Roman Greeks alike. By reiterating traditional, as well as contemporary, anti-Macedonian sentiments evolving around barbarism, the frieze endorsed and empowered the political stance of Rome's Greek allies and sympathisers in front of pro-Macedonian and patriotic Greeks who equally frequented the sanctuary. Consequently, the frieze might be considered a pictorial response to complaints of *philorhomaioi* such as Achaian Kallikrates, who, in 180 BC, had bemoaned Rome's negligence of her Greek supporters in their intensifying struggle with anti-Roman factions²⁰². With the downfall of Perseus, however, these internal disputes found an abrupt end. While the frieze was being carved, pro-Roman factions disempowered, banished, and at times killed their pro-Macedonian opponents in all major *koina*, with Aitolian Lykiskos, for instance, rounding up and slaughtering allegedly pro-Macedonian elites with the help of Roman troops²⁰³. In light of these acts of violence, the stylisation of Perseus and, by extension, of his Greek supporters as a barbarian menace whose annihilation constituted a necessity must have become all the more imperative.

³⁸ The frieze was equally designed to win over hesitant and Rome-sceptical Greeks. The Celtomachic motifs were an apt choice when trying to take the edge off Rome's now incontestable hegemony by presenting the Romans as benevolent champions of the Greeks. After all, the Celtomachy had been popularised by the Attalids to construct the image of a considerate and civil, almost altruistic monarchy²⁰⁴. However, given Rome's tacit approval of the purges, and the ensuing mass deportations ordered by Paullus, it is doubtful whether many visitors to the sanctuary with ambivalent or hostile attitudes towards Rome would have bought into the idea of the Romans as common benefactors selflessly defending Greece.

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²⁰² Pol. 24, 8–10, cf. Eumenian complaint in 172 BC (Liv. 42, 13, 10 f.).

²⁰³ Liv. 45, 28, 6–8; Deininger 1971, 191–197.

²⁰⁴ Koehn 2007, 114–135.

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