Buried Far Away: Easterners in Roman Liburnia

Abstract:

Ancient Liburnia, stretching along the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, has always been a sea-faring region, and its people – the Liburni – have always been regarded as notorious pirates and sea-people. As such, the region has been visited by foreigners from both the west and the east. Greeks have sailed across the Adriatic since the seventh century BC, but travellers from the Greek mainland visited the region even in the more remote past, judging by finds of Mycenaean pottery at several Adriatic sites. In this contribution the authors shall look into the foreigners of eastern origins who came to Roman Liburnia and died there during the first three centuries AD, and investigate the ways they were buried in this land so far from their homelands. Due to exact written records left in the form of their epitaphs – mostly belonging to soldiers of legions and auxiliary units, but to some seamen and traders as well – the authors shall analyse distribution of their homelands and investigate whether there were some peculiarities with regard to their burial customs. In addition to these foreigners of unambiguously eastern origins, the authors shall also take into consideration other persons who might have also been easterners, as suggested by particular religious affiliations (such as, e.g., an archigallus buried in Iader), anthroponymy, use of the Greek language and/or writing, and similar. This analysis shall also look into the specific grave goods that strongly indicate eastern origins of those buried within these graves, and investigate whether there were some particular burial customs and/or tomb types that would indicate the same. Furthermore, the authors shall also take into consideration the influences which originated from the western territories of the Roman state and compare them to the eastern ones.

Keywords: *Roman Liburnia, foreigners of eastern origins, burial customs, epigraphy, anthroponymy.*