ABSTRACT
In this brief paper, we focus on the monument of C. Memmius and its inscription in Ephesus in western Turkey. C. Memmius was the grandson of Sulla and was mentioned in the inscription of this Ephesian monument as the epigraph of the dedicatee. After discussing the monument’s function, dating and inscription from different perspectives, in the concluding part, we refer to the positive memory of Sulla in Asia Minor, especially in Ephesus.

KEYWORDS: C. Memmius, the monument of C. Memmius, Ephesus, Asia Minor, first century BC, Late Republican period, Roman East, Latin epigraphy, Roman history.

Introduction
In 1957 and 1958 a monument of particular importance was excavated in Ephesus in western Turkey1 (fig. 1), which over the course of time had to undergo renovations until the Byzantine period. Called the monument of C. Memmius, it has been the subject of numerous papers by Austrian, Italian, Greek2 and Turkish3 scholars. Gaius Memmius (c. 99-c. 49 BC) was a Roman politician, orator and poet, and is most famous as the dedicatee of Lucretius’ De Rerum Natura, and for his appearances in the poetry of Catullus. He erected this monument to honour himself and three generations of his family. The monument originally had the form of a four-sided victory arch, and there were three sets of stairs between the columns holding an arch. The memorial had four facades depicting Sulla’s army and reliefs symbolizing the virtues of the dictator. Sulla, his son Gaius Memmius, and his grandson (also Gaius Memmius) are depicted on the reliefs of this monument of ancestral glory.

Unfortunately, not all authors are aware of studies carried out in other countries, so some contributions that appeared in Turkey completely ignore the Italian literature. Within all of these researches, the studies of Marcello Spanu in 1988 and 2008 and Mario Torelli in 1988 and 1997 stand out and have allowed us to see the monument in a new light compared to the initial editions. It has been studied especially by some art and architectural historians, therefore its pertinent epigraphs have had less attention.

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1 Alzinger 1971, 9.
2 Mallios 2010.
3 Şimşek 2014.
Function
The monument of C. Memmius in Ephesus seems to be established in its most ancient phase, characterized by three large semicircular niches, as a funerary monument, located in the most crucial street of Ephesus, on the site where in ancient times extended a vast cemetery area. The choice of its location in a privileged position and in the highest place in Ephesus reveals that it had to be loaded with very broad meanings. But similar choices were made in other cities of Asia Minor, e.g. in Sagalassus in Pisidia as regards the so-called northwestern heroon.

Dating
On the basis of other scholars Timothy Wiseman had already clearly reaffirmed in 1967 that in Rome there were two gentes denominated as Memmii who were belonging to two different tribes. The fact that in the Ephesian monument, there was a dedication to C. Memmius C. f. has identified these with the homonymous consul suffectus of 34 BC, who, according to Attilio Degrassi, could be son of L(ucius). The dating proposed in an earlier publication, i.e. the Augustan age, was anticipated independently by two Italian scholars, Spanu and Torelli, at the end of the 1980s. Spanu then further refined the analysis, finding elements typical of Italic art, as if the client had come from a native of the peninsula. Torelli also returned to the subject, seeing in the monument of C. Memmius a “masterpiece of nobiliar ideology”. Today there is a general agreement to date the monument to around the mid-first century BC.

The epigraph of the dedicatee
The inscription of the monument of C. Memmius in Ephesus referred to Sulla’s capture of the city after the Mithridatic Wars in the first century BC and is generally believed to read “to Gaius Memmius, son of Gaius

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4 Spanu 2010.
6 Wiseman 1967, 164.
7 Degrassi 1954, 130.
8 Alzinger 1974, 19; Feldman Weiss 2003, 92.
9 Spanu 2010.
10 Torelli 1997.
Memmius, grandson of Sulla Felix (who paid for this monument) from his own funds” (figs 2-3). It also informs that the statue of Lucius Cornelius Sulla once stood on a base built of stone blocks. Known since the 1950s, this inscription is sometimes misquoted. Instead of *pequnia*\(^{11}\) (fig. 4), we can read in some papers *pecunia* and the text is integrated as *ex pecunia publica*, an expression of which there is no trace here. In the first place, it must be observed that in the monument there were at least two epigraphs, in Latin, to which must be added a fragment in Greek that Torelli integrated as Μνεύωσε, i.e. a mythical progenitor of the gens Memmia.\(^{12}\) This allowed him to propose that the ancestors of the deceased C. Memmius C. f. were in the attic, and welcomed him into heaven. The hypothesis that this fragment could belong to a cartouche affixed next to one of the representations of the upper floor is very brilliant. However, we do not understand how a fragment inscribed with letters at a height of 2 cm could be read if placed at a height of about 12 meters above unless the floor of the upper storey of the monument was practicable. Furthermore, the presence of an explanation in Greek next to a sculpture could suggest that the work had been executed by a Greek artist, thus partly coming to confirm Torelli’s other brilliant hypothesis of considering the author of the monument to be Athenian C. Avianius Evander, which was favoured by C. Memmius, at least in Rome.\(^{13}\)

\(^{11}\) Feldman Weiss 2003, 91.

\(^{12}\) Torelli 1997, 166-167.

\(^{13}\) Cf. Torelli 1997, 162. However, the same is referred by Horace during the time of Augustus (Sat., I, 3, 90) as an artist who worked metals, i.e. *catillum Evandri*.
The first observation is that the archaic form *pequnia* is used in the inscription, instead of *possible*, which was common in the imperial period. The peculiar shape of the Q, with the perfectly horizontal stroke, is typical of the Late Republican period. Ernst Willibald Emil Hübner already indicated this as typical of the Caesarian age, citing an example from an inscription from Aquileia in which this type of Q is repeated several times (fig. 5). We can also add that the lateral rods of the letter M are slightly oblique, which is reminiscent of the older form.

The text was therefore commissioned by a person who spoke and thought in Latin. Under no circumstances could he have disposed of public money from the city of Ephesus, so it makes no sense to believe that the epigraph could include an expression such as *ex pequnia publica*. In the form that was reconstructed by the Austrian excavators, the inscription reaches a length of just over 3.70 m². According to the reconstruction by Ulrike Outschar, the total length of the epistyle must have been around six metres\(^\text{14}\). Therefore, there is the possibility that in the long-missing part after *ex pepunia* [sva there was the name of the father C. Memmius and a formula like *faciendum* c(uravit) or similar. Why on earth should the city government of Ephesus have erected a monument with an epigraph in Latin? Eventually, he would have had it written in Greek or at the most in bilingual form, like so many other inscriptions. We, therefore, do not believe it is a tribute from the city, but rather a private monument.

**The dedicatee**

Another epigraph, which was already placed at the beginning of one side of the epistyle, consists of only three letters, *C. Me[mmio*?\(^\text{15}\) It makes us understand that on two sides there were two identical inscriptions. The completely empty space on fragment S4 demonstrates that one side (the back one?) was without any inscription. No fragment exists of the fourth side. It is usually believed that the dedicatee was the former *propraetor* of the province of Bithynia, who was a lover of literature\(^\text{16}\) and who would have gone into exile around 52 BC due to a tangle of political scandals in the capital. Cicero addresses him in a letter in the summer of the year 51 BC, when he arrives in Athens.\(^\text{17}\) He does not find Memmius, who had left for Mytilene the day before.\(^\text{18}\) It is possible that around that date C. Memmius, who was travelling on the Asian coast, could have reached Ephesus – just a hundred miles away as the crow flies – where he could probably count on good friendships.

**Sulla’s grandson**

The epigraph of the dedicatee contains the formula *Sullae Felicis n(epos)*. In this way, we attempted to re-establish a sort of family tree that went back directly to grandfather Silla, father of his mother Fausta. Of her, the sources, which are either true or invented, have informed us about a licentious life and a divorce from C. Memmius in 56 BC. She was born shortly before 86 BC and would marry in 72 BC.\(^\text{19}\) The marriage, therefore, lasted nearly sixteen years; C. Memmius could have been born at the earliest in the late seventies. If, as we hypothesize, the monument dedicated to him had a funerary character when he died, precisely in Ephesus, he must have been twenty years old or a little more. So the reference to his illustrious ancestor can be a sort of guarantee for a positive (hoped-for) political future or even express regret for a future that would never have been realised, as we see a few years later.

\(^\text{14}\) Outschar 1990, 69.
\(^\text{15}\) Called S4 by the publishers of the monument, cf. Alzinger 1971, 32.
\(^\text{16}\) About him lately Farrell 2020.
\(^\text{17}\) For all problems relating to this letter, see Morgan, Taylor 2017.
\(^\text{18}\) Cic., Ad Att., V, 11, 6: *me ad Memmium scribere, qui pridie quam ego Athenas veni Mytilenas profectus erat.*
\(^\text{19}\) Münzer 1931.
in Virgil’s *tu Marcellus eris*, i.e. Virgil reading the Aeneid to Livia, Octavia and Augustus. Here the mention of the grandfather recalls a similar phenomenon highlighted by Michael H. Crawford in connection with two denarii issued in 54 BC by the *triumvir Q. Pompeius Rufus* commemorating his grandparents, i.e. the homonymous *Q. Pompeius Rufus* and *Silla*, who were both consuls in 88 BC.20 The phenomenon reappears in the imperial period in many official inscriptions mentioning the emperors.21

We can think about Julius Caesar’s proud affirmation of being Marius’ nephew pronounced in Rome during the funeral of his grandmother Iulia in 69 BC.22

**Sulla in Ephesus**

In our inscription, the precise reference to Sulla on a prominent and highly visible monument in Ephesus suggests that at the time there were many people who had good memories of the Roman general. Despite the serious measures he himself took in Ephesus in 84 BC, after some “rebels” had turned against the *mercatores* and the Roman soldiers in 88 BC – on these, we have precise reports, especially by Appian23 – there was certainly a good part of the population in Ephesus who had benefited from the favours of Silla and obtained Roman citizenship. Probably on their support C. Memmius could count for the erection of a symbolic monument.

An interesting document probably refers to this period: it is a lead weight from the ex-private collection of Ms Berna Oğuz in Izmir, and today in the collection of Mr Koray Selçık, also in Izmir (fig. 6). It bears the inscription ETΩI / A crown N which corresponds to the civic year 51 or to the date 84/83 BC.24 It is possible that the renewal of all the weights of the city – or perhaps of the Artemision – should be related to the presence of Sulla or at least to the serious measures he took to punish the Ephesians.

![Fig. 6: An inscribed lead weight with from the private collection of Koray Selçık in Izmir (ex Berna Oğuz Collection, acc. no. 278) (photo by B. Oğuz, 2021).](image)

**Conclusions**

What is left of the Ephesian inscription does not allow us to say that it reported the formula *pequnia publica*. Therefore the monument could be built at the private expense of the father of the deceased, obviously with the permission of the community and the administration of Ephesus. The choice of the form *peqvnia*, with the straight horizontal stroke, confirms a dating within the end of the Republican age.

In any case, the choice to highlight the lineage of C. Memmius from Silla implies the awareness that in the city of Ephesus there was a large number of people who positively remembered the politician, who had severely punished Rome’s opponents precisely in Ephesus, but had also allowed many people to acquire Roman citizenship in the first century BC.

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20 Crawford 1974 456, no. 434.
21 Among the many examples from Hadrian onwards we recall that of Septimius Severus in AD 206-207 in ILSARD-I-375-46.
22 Plut., Caes., V, 2.
23 Appian., Mith, XII, 9, 61-63.
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Lista ilustrațiilor

Fig. 1: Efes și alte locuri menționate în text (de S. Pataci, 2023).
Fig. 4: Detaliu din inscripția de pe figurile 2-3 (după Alzinger, Bammer 1971).
Fig. 5: O inscripție din Aquileia, în nord-estul Italiei (după Hübner 1885; redesenată de L. Özlüoğlu, 2023).
Fig. 6: O greutate de plumb inscriptionată din colecția privată a lui Koray Selçik din Izmir (colecția Berna Oğuz, nr. de înregistrare 278) (fotografie de B. Oğuz, 2021).

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