

MONEY ECONOMY AND TAXATION IN KIND IN SYRIA IN THE FOURTH CENTURY A. D.

It is well known that for the greater part of the fourth century the government of the eastern half of the Roman Empire carried out most of its financial transactions in kind, while private individuals continued to use money¹). The present essay is a discussion of evidence, taken from the writings of the Antiochene Sophist Libanius, which shows this dual system in operation, and may help to explain why the government found it advantageous²).

A number of passages dealing with compulsory transport services — sometimes described as *σπηγίαι* — required by the government, provide a starting point for this study.

1. In 358 one Julianus, a former governor of Bithynia, travelled to Egypt in order to supervise the transport of corn from Alexandria. It had once been possible to make much money out of this duty, but when Julianus accepted it, this opportunity was no longer open³). On the other hand, Libanius says nothing of financial losses, which Julianus, a “poor man”⁴), might suffer in the course of his duty. So he will not have had to pay for the transport out of his own purse. Libanius hopes that Julianus will be rewarded for his services with a governorship of several provinces⁵).

1) G. Mickwitz, „Geld und Wirtschaft im römischen Reich des vierten Jahrhunderts“, Helsingfors, 1932, especially cs. V and VI. S. Mazzarino, „Aspetti Sociali Del Quarto Secolo“, Rome 1951.

2) Libanius cited in edition of R. Foerster, in the Bibliotheca Teubneriana. References not naming an author are to Libanius.

Dates of the letters of Libanius were established by O. Seeck in „Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet“ (cited Seeck) in Gebhardt-Harnack, Texte und Untersuchungen, Neue Folge, 15, Leipzig, 1906.

3) Julianus' journey eps 349—50 (358?); no longer profitable ep. 350: ἐπει δὲ τὰ κέρδη ἐτέρωσε τέτραπται . . .

4) *ibid.*, l. 12 γενοῦ δὴ πάντα ἀνδρὶ . . . πένητι.

5) ep. 349, t. 10, p. 331, l. 13. κυβερνήτης ἐθνῶν. cf. Petit, „Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au 4^e siècle après J. C.“, Paris 1955 (cited as Petit) p. 255.

2. A little later in 358 Libanius appears to have made some request connected with σῖτος to the Praetorian Prefect, Strategius Musonianus, which the Prefect had turned down ⁶⁾. While Petit ⁷⁾ refers this passage to a σιτηγγία, I prefer to see in it the refusal to someone of an Annona ⁸⁾.

3. In 360 we hear of one Antoninus, who has been required to transport corn for the second time. He had been unable to perform the duty when first commanded and had handed over his property to his nominators. Thereupon, he fled from his home town and Libanius sent him to an official in the financial administration for help ⁹⁾. This Antoninus may be identical with an Armenian of that name, whose brother belonged by marriage to a curial family at Antioch ¹⁰⁾. If so, he was neither a Councillor nor a resident of Antioch ¹¹⁾.

4. In 362 we hear of the case of Megistus ¹²⁾. Petit has acutely explained this man's obscure career as that of a small decurion of an Egyptian city, who had escaped from his curial obligations by going into the service of the powerful family of the Praetorian Prefect Thalassius ¹³⁾. Now he has been called back to Egypt and his duties, and Libanius asks an official, probably a governor, either to release him for the service of his powerful patrons, or if this was not possible, to let him be included among those who export corn out of Egypt ¹⁴⁾.

6) ep. 356 (358) t. 10, p. 338, l. 4.

7) Petit, p. 159, n. 9 and p. 163.

8) σῖτος as Annona. eps. 55, 258, 545, 1397. Perhaps ep. 356 (358), like ep. 545 (356/7), concerns a request made by Libanius for himself.

9) ep. 210, date: 358, according to Foerster, following Silomon, "De Libanii epistularum libris I—VI", p. 42 Dissert. Göttingen 1909. 360, according to position of letter, and Seck p. 78: Antoninus II, and p. 372, Αντωνίνος ἐκεῖνος ὁ τῶν πατρῶων τοῖς ὡς εὐπορεῖ λέγουσιν ἀποστάς . . . αὐθις ἠνάγκασται σιτηγεῖν.

10) ep. 1495 (365). see Petit, p. 397, "Acontius"; Seck pp. 77—8: Antoninus I—III.

11) "Petit" p. 160 follows Silomon p. 42 in identifying this man as the Antoninus whose desertion to the Persians is related by Ammianus 18, 3, 1. But that two men of the same name were both unable to meet demands of the government is not proof that they were identical, and Seck's objection, that the place of ep. 210 in the collection is not among the letters of 358, has force.

12) ep. 705 (362), on same man ep. 626 (361).

13) Petit, pp. 340 and 402.

14) ep. 705, t. 10, p. 639, l. 5. ἐν τοῖς κομιζουσιν ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου σῖτον τετάχθω.

5. In 363 Alexander, the formidable consular of Syria, appointed by Julian, threatened Eusebius (XXI), a Councillor of Antioch, with a *περὶ τὴν ναῦν λειτουργία*. Libanius opposed this with the argument that Eusebius was too poor¹⁵).

6. In 365 a man contrived to obtain his brother's property by the following device. He volunteered for a *σιτηγία* and then asked that his brother should be required to share the liturgy. The brother Meilichius was at the time studying at Antioch. If he refused to participate in the liturgy, his brother would be entitled to take over his property¹⁶). We have already met a similar case of exchange of property in the case of Antoninus. A remarkable aspect of this affair is that the governor concerned was the governor of Galatia, an inland province, while the corn transport was definitely by sea¹⁷).

7. In 388 the governor of Syria, Eustathius, tried to compel one Romulus to undertake a *σιτηγία*¹⁸). Romulus was a member of an impoverished, probably curial, family of Antioch¹⁹). The governor's object, in making this second attempt to compel Romulus to undertake a liturgy that was far too expensive for him, was to force him to launch an accusation against Libanius.

8. About the same time, the same governor refused Libanius' request to exempt the ship of his friend and assistant, Thalassius, from the duty of corn transport²⁰). There were plenty of ships available at the time and this governor had already given many such exemptions²¹). The transport would have been destined to feed "the Emperor, the soldiers and the two capital cities", Rome and Constantinople²²). It is not certain that Thalassius was at the time already a decurion of Antioch. Attempts were certainly being made to enrol him. He

15) ep. 1414, t. 11, p. 455, l. 24.

16) ep. 1496 (365).

17) The letter written to governor of Galatia, Seeck, p. 438. transport by sea, ep. 1496, t. 11, p. 524, l. 1.

18) Or. 54, c. 40. Ῥωμύλος πάλιν σίτον πέμπειν ἐπὶ νεῶν ἀναγκαζόμενος.

19) Petit, p. 400.

20) Or. 54, c. 47. ἤξιουν μὲν αὐτὸν ἐλευθερῶσαι τῆς σιτηγίας τοῦ θεοῦ εἰκότος . . . τοῦ φιλοσόφου τὴν ναῦν.

21) *ibid.* τουτὶ δὲ αὐτῷ πρὸς πολλοὺς ἐπέπρακτο δι' ἀφθονίαν πλοίων.

22) *ibid.* ἀλλ' ἡ ναὺς αὕτη τὴν σωτηρίαν ἔφερε καὶ βασιλεῖ καὶ στρατιώταις καὶ πόλεσι ταῖς ὑπὲρ ἄλλας.

resisted strenuously and tried to enter the senate at Constantinople as a refuge²³).

9. A letter of 390 describes the corn transport liturgy as a most dangerous hazard, which would threaten Libanius' son, Cimon, if he were to become a member of the Council of Antioch²⁴).

These passages have been discussed by P. Petit, in his recent book. Petit argues that the *σιτηγία* was a liturgy which entailed the supervision of the loading of corn into ships in Egypt and the transport of the corn to its destination, normally Constantinople. This liturgy had originally been purely supervisory, involving no expenditure, as in the case of Julianus. Later, the performer of the liturgy was also obliged to make a heavy financial contribution to the cost of transport. The liturgy had become a "munus mixtum", but the governors could at their discretion lighten the burden by providing a government-owned ship. The duty normally fell on decurions, but in times of special need it could be imposed on landowners outside the Councils²⁵).

In this article an attempt will be made to show that Petit's interpretation is too simple. I will try to show that the scrappy passages of Libanius used in evidence show too much variation in detail to fit convincingly into the reconstructed evolution of a single liturgy. I will also argue that the compulsory duty which Libanius calls *σιτηγία* was not necessarily, or even most frequently, connected with the transport of corn exacted in Egypt, but furnishes an example of a practice of much wider scope: the use of compulsory transport services to make the system of taxation in kind more flexible, and to convey the produce of taxation to wherever the exigencies of the moment created a demand for it.

The view that our passages illustrate the evolution of a single liturgy, connected with the transport of government corn from Egypt, largely depends on the cases of Julianus and Megistus, for these alone involved duties that were relatively

23) Attempts to enter Senate: Or. 54 cs. 5—6, threatened with Council Or. 42 c. 6 ff. and Or. 54, c. 66. Perhaps the *σιτηγία* would have been Thalassius' first liturgy.

24) ep. 959 (390) definitely links *σιτηγία* with service in Council, to avoid the latter would be to escape the former.

25) Petit pp. 159 and 162.

attractive and explicitly connected with the transport of corn from Egypt. Yet, the social positions of the two men and the circumstances in which they came to Egypt and obtained their duties were quite different. Julianus was "honoratus", a former governor of Bithynia ²⁶). For the performance of his duty in Egypt he might hope to be rewarded with the office of Vicar ²⁷). There is no suggestion that Julianus was performing a civic liturgy. Megistus was man of much humbler rank and prospects. He may have belonged to a curial family. He certainly lived in a position of dependence on a great Antiochene family, the senatorial house of Bassianus, for whom he came to Egypt as agent ²⁸). He was prevented from leaving Egypt by a local official and he asked "to be assigned to the men carrying corn out of Egypt" in order to avoid the more unpleasant obligations — possibly curial service — which the official was forcing him to undertake ²⁹). Also Libanius' words suggest that the tasks which faced the two men in Egypt were different. Julianus was sent to supervise the loading of ships with corn ³⁰). Although this task was no longer profitable and involved for Julianus a lengthy separation from his family, it was of some dignity and might become a stepping stone in an official career ³¹). Megistus

26) Ep. 349, Seeck, p. 190/1: Julianus V.

27) The Vicarate: see above Note 5. It is not stated what authority sent him to Egypt. In Egypt he is commended to the "dux" Sebastianus, who can be of assistance to him but is not necessarily his chief. See Seeck, p. 271, Sebastianus II.

28) Curial background suggested by Petit pp. 340 and 402. Agent of house of Bassianus: ep. 625 (361) and 705 (362), addressed to Apolinaris, an official, perhaps provincial governor in Egypt. Seeck p. 384.

29) See note 14 above.

30) ep. 349 τὴν περὶ τὰ πλοῖα φροντίδα
ep. 350 ἀνδρὸς ὁ σίτος ἄμισθον εισοίσαντος . . .
ibid. . . δπέστη τὰς δλικάδας ἐμπιπλάναι.

31) In spite of the reward which Libanius expects for Julianus, his language makes clear that the task was troublesome — a burden rather than an honour.

ep. 349 μοχθήσων οὐκ ἐπὶ κέρδει

ep. 350 μὴ δόξαι τοῖς ἀπείροις αὐτοῦ φεύγειν τὸν πόνον διὰ τὸ μὴ λαβεῖν ἐνεῖναι . . .

These suggest a munus rather than an official post. I would suggest an unpaid or badly paid post concerned with the handling and loading of the corn tax destined for Constantinople at Alexandria. Possible duties are suggested in Justinian's 13th edict cs. 4 and 6. See also P. W. t. 44, i, col. 1276 art. "Praefectus Annonae Alexandriae". Perhaps the lost pay was a perquisite which had recently been stopped. Cf. Justinian ed. 13, praef. and c. 7.

asked to be assigned to a group of men engaged in the actual transport of the corn from Egypt. This might well have been the guild of "navicularii" of Alexandria, membership of which would have given him immunity from curial duties ³²).

It therefore appears that Megistus and Julianus were not involved in the same compulsory service and that their cases cannot be used to illustrate the development of a single liturgy. Furthermore, there are considerable differences between the cases of Megistus and Julianus and those of the other men engaged in a compulsory corn transport duty for the government, sometimes described as *σπηγία*. First, these *σπηγίαι* were frighteningly expensive. Then, there is no reference to any of the men threatened with a *σπηγία* anticipating a voyage to Egypt. Lastly, while Megistus was subject to an Egyptian official, and Julianus worked in co-operation with an official in Egypt, the others were subject to the governors of their home provinces ³³). Moreover, the remaining cases fall into two groups. Four of the men concerned — Eusebius XXI in 363 ³⁴), Romulus and Thalassius in 388 ³⁵), and Cimon in 390 ³⁶), were citizens of Antioch and either decurions or at least liable to be enrolled in the Council of Antioch. All four were ordered by the consular of Syria to transport corn by sea. It therefore appears likely that among the services required by the government from the city of Antioch was an extremely expensive sea transport liturgy, to which decurions were liable. The second group consists of two cases, involving men who were not citizens of Antioch — Antoninus, who may have been an

32) See note 44 below.

33) Officials i/c of corn transport duties:

- (i) Antoninus, subject to Euphemius I, whose authority extended over several provinces. A high ranking subordinate of the Comes Sacrae Largitionis? (Seeck p. 136).
- (ii) Eusebius XXI, subject to Alexander, consular of Syria.
- (iii) Galatian brothers, subject to Leontinus IV, consular of Galatia (Seeck pp. 438 and 195).
- (iv) Romulus — subject to Eustathius V, consular of Syria (Seeck pp. 147/8).
- (v) Thalassius IV, to Eustathius V, consular of Syria.

On the other hand, Julianus V and Megistus dealt with Egyptian Officials. Megistus with Apolinaris, a praeses? (note 28), Julianus co-operated with Sebastianus, the „dux“ (note 27).

34) See note 15. Seeck, p. 143. Petit, p. 398.

35) See notes 18, 23. Petit, p. 400.

36) See note 24. Seeck, p. 81. Petit, p. 398.

Armenian³⁷⁾, and the Galatian brothers — all inhabitants of inland provinces. The fact that the Galatian brothers³⁸⁾ were called upon to transport corn by sea, although they lived inland, need not occasion surprise. A law survives directed against officials who exacted sea transport from inland cities³⁹⁾, and the liturgy of the Galatians may be an example of the abuse against which this law was directed. In any case, it is clear that Antioch was not the only city to be burdened with sea transport duties and it is quite likely that most cities around the Mediterranean had to bear them from time to time, not necessarily always on identical terms.

There remains the question of the origin and destination of the corn which the citizens of the eastern cities were obliged to transport.

As we have seen, Julianus and Megistus were probably associated in different capacities with the transport of corn from Egypt. Their cases have special features, and since Egypt is not mentioned in connection with any of the other cases, it is not necessary to assume that these too involved transport of corn from Egypt. With the possible exception of Megistus, none of the men mentioned by Libanius as obliged to transport corn by sea belonged to one of the two⁴⁰⁾ guilds organised by the Emperors to transport corn from Egypt to Constantinople⁴¹⁾, the "Navicularii Alexandriae" and the "Navicularii Orientis". For, while we hear that Syrians were enrolled into the second of these guilds⁴²⁾, the conditions of service of a "Navicularius" were quite different from those suggested by the passages of Libanius. "Navicularii" performed a lifelong hereditary duty⁴³⁾. The men mentioned by Libanius performed their duty once or twice only, on the command of their provincial governor. The "Navicularii" were exempt from membership and

37) See notes 9—11.

38) See notes 16—17.

39) C. T. 11, 1, 22 P. P. O. (386). cf. Cicero 2 in Verrem III, c. 81 ff.

40) C. T. 13, 5, 7 (334) }
 C. T. 13, 5, 14 (371) } mention both fleets.
 C. T. 13, 5, 32 (409)

41) C. T. 13, 5, 32 shows that both fleets transported corn from Alexandria.

42) C. T. 8, 4, 11 (365?) exempts officials of consular of Syria from conscription among navicularii.

43) C. T. 13, 5, 1 (314) Pr. Urb.
 C. T. 13, 5, 19 (390) P. P. O.

compulsory services of the city councils⁴⁴). The *σιτηγία*, at Antioch at least, was particularly incumbent on decurions.

But if these men were not "Navicularii", there is no reason why they should have transported corn only or mainly from Egypt. It is just as likely that they were required to transport the product of taxation of their own home provinces. In fact, if the corn which the decurions of Antioch had to transport by sea came from Syria, the *σιτηγία* at Antioch would be absolutely parallel to certain compulsory land transport duties which the Councillors of Antioch were obliged to perform. A letter of the year 358 suggests that the garrison of the fortress of Callinicum on the Euphrates was supplied from Syria⁴⁵). A sentence from a much later speech tells us that at the time of Constantius' wars against the Persians, councillors of Antioch were sent to the River Tigris and suffered severe financial losses there⁴⁶). Combining the two passages, we may draw the conclusion that at the time of the Persian wars the councillors of Antioch were obliged to transport supplies to the army in Mesopotamia at their own expense. Libanius does not use the term *σιτηγία* in connection with this duty, but otherwise this land transport duty seems not to have differed very much from the sea-transport liturgies discussed earlier. If this land transport liturgy furnishes a true parallel to the sea transport duties, the *σιτηγία* of Antioch is another example of the practice, already known from the codes⁴⁷), of making the transport of the produce of taxation itself into a tax.

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- 44) C. T. 13, 5, 5 (326) P. P. O. } exemption from compulsory
 C. T. 13, 5, 7 (354) Nav. Or. } services, and civic functions.
 C. T. 13, 5, 17 (386) P. P. Occident.
 C. T. 13, 5, 16 (380) Corp. Nav. Navicularius may not be enrolled into Council.
 C. T. 12, 1, 149 (395) Procos. Af. Councillors try to escape from Council by enrolling as Navicularii.

45) ep. 21 (358) cf. "Petit", p. 256, n. 2. τοῦτο δὴ τὸ χωρὶον ἔχει στρατιάν ἰδρυμένην, ἣν δεῖ τρέφεσθαι παρ' ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐκεῖσε κομιζόντων ἀλλ' ἑτέρωσε τὴν τροφήν, ἐκεῖθεν δὲ εἰς Καλλίνικον ἀγειν νόμος τὸν ἀρχόντα τῶν περὶ τὸν Εὐφράτην.

46) Or. 49 c. 2. The circumstances of the Persian War proved disastrous for the Councils: τὰ περὶ τὸν πόλεμον .. πράγματα .. καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτάς ἔτος ἐπὶ τὸ χειρὸν ἄγοντα τῶν ἐπὶ τὸν Τίγρητα πεμπομένων βουλευτῶν ταῖς ἐκεῖ βλάβαις τὰ πατρῶα πωλούντων. cf. Petit, p. 110.

47) e. g. "translatio annonae" as a tax:

C. T. 7, 5, 2 (404) P. P. Occident = C. J. 12, 38, 2.

The destination of the corn sent by the decurions of Antioch presumably varied according to circumstances. Only once, in the late 380s, are we told the destination of a *σιτηγία*. Rome, Constantinople, the court and the army are possible recipients of the corn Thalassius had been asked to transport over-seas⁴⁸⁾. The location of the army changed according to the military situation. At the time of this reference it was fighting the usurper Maximus in Italy. That corn from the taxation of Syria helped to feed the growing citizen body of Constantinople is confirmed by the evidence of Eunapius, a contemporary of Libanius⁴⁹⁾. The *σιτηγία* with which Eusebius XXI was threatened in 363 is likely to have been rather exceptional. At that time there was a famine in Antioch⁵⁰⁾, and it thus is very unlikely that corn was then exported from Syria. It is more likely that Eusebius was required to transport corn to Syria, probably from Egypt⁵¹⁾.

We have only the vaguest information about the manner in which the decurions of Antioch actually performed their *σιτηγία*. Thalassius was probably required to transport the corn in his own ship⁵²⁾. Since the Orontes was navigable from An-

C. T. 1, 5, 14 (405) P. P. O. = C. J. 1, 26, 5.

C. T. 16, 2, 15 (359?) P. P. Occident = C. J. 1, 3, 3.

C. T. 16, 2, 40 (412) P. P. Occident = C. J. 1, 2, 5.

or the supply of frontier troops in Africa:

C. J. XI, 60, 1 (385) C. T. XI, 1, 11 Vic. Afr. (365) = C. J. 10, 16, 6.

C. T. XI, 1, 21 P. P. O. (385), transport to Eastern frontier = C. J. 10, 16, 8.

See also C. T. VII, 4, 15, P. P. O. (369) = C. J. 12, 37, 4.

cf. also the difficult and fragmentary African taxation regulations discussed by Ch. Saumagne, „Un tarif fiscal du 4^e siècle de notre ère“, Karthago I, 1950, which lists a tax, „limitis nomine“, together with one, „naviculariorum nomine“, as well as others.

48) See note 22.

49) Eunapius 'Lives of the Philosophers', life of Aedesius 462: οὐδὲ τὸ ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου πλῆθος τῶν δολκᾶδων οὐδὲ τὸ ἐξ Ἀσίας ἀπάσης, Συρίας τε καὶ Φοινίκης καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν συμφερόμενον πλῆθος σίτου, κατὰ ἐπαγωγὴν φόρου ἐμπλήσαι καὶ κορέσαι τὸν μεθύοντα δύναται δῆμον.

50) On Eusebius see above note 15.

On the famine at Antioch see Petit, pp. 109—118, also G. Downey in "Essays in honor of A. C. Johnson", edited by Coleman-Norton, Princeton 1951, p. 312, "An economic crisis at Antioch under Julian the apostate".

51) Julian, Misopogon, 369 B.

52) Or. 54, c. 47, τοῦ φιλοσόφου τὴν ναῦν.

tioch to the sea⁵³), it is possible that there were other ship-owners among the decurions of Antioch, and that the liturgy was most frequently imposed on them⁵⁴). It is likely that Libanius himself at one time owned a ship⁵⁵). This could be the reason why he worried so much that his son might be forced into the shipping liturgy, if he became a member of the Council⁵⁶). On the other hand, the pressure exercised on Romulus in connection with a *σιτηγία* seems to have been designed to force him to contribute money⁵⁷). In this case the government will have provided the ship, perhaps by requisition⁵⁸), compensated

53) P. W. article "Orontes", t. 18, i, col. 1163. Pausanias VIII, 29, 3.

54) Or. 54 c. 47. *τοῦτ' δὲ αὐτῷ πρὸς πολλοὺς ἐπέπρακτο δι' ἀφθονίαν πλοίων* shows that there was no shortage of ships. Petit takes these ships to have formed a fleet of publicly-owned vessels, which, at his discretion, the governor could place at the disposal of the men performing a *σιτηγία* — or withhold. He bases his view on C. T. 13, 5, 14 of 371, but this law deals with the building of ships out of taxation for men who were newly enrolled into the *navicularii orientis*. These were owned by individuals, clearly not ship owners to start with, who would henceforth have to transport corn for life. The case of our men performing a single liturgy was quite different and it does not follow from the law that the government built up a fleet of ships which might be supplied to performers of the liturgy. It is more likely that the *σιτηγία* was in the first place imposed on ship owners, and that if others were required to pay for the transport of corn, a ship was found for them by requisition, with or without compensation. Requisition of ships: C. T. 13, 7, 1—2. The ships would presumably be requisitioned from ship owners of Antioch or Seleucia at the mouth of the Orontes.

55) Eps. 177—8. Two slaves sent to Constantinople and Sinope by ship. On these Petit, p. 305, note 5, *ibid.* p. 408, note 1. H. Bouchery: "Themistius in Libanius' Brieven", Antwerp, 1936. p. 182 explains that the servants were to sell the house which Libanius had inhabited during his stay at Constantinople. They did, however, go on to Sinope *κατ' ἐμπορίαν*, and the ship as well as the slaves had been sent by Libanius. So the ship may have been Libanius' own.

Cf. also the other small scale domestic trading venture noted by Petit, p. 305 n. 5, ep. 709, wine sent to Cilicia; ep. 568 buys wood in Cilicia, also eps. 649 and 1191. It is important to realise that these activities arose from Libanius' domestic needs as a landowner. He was in no sense a trader. There is similarly no evidence at all that any of the many well-to-do citizens of Antioch whom we meet in Libanius' writings engaged in commerce for its own sake or owed his wealth to commerce. cf. Petit p. 305.

56) ep. 959 (390).

57) Or. 54, c. 41. *σῆσας βίᾳ τὴν εἰσπραξίν* suggests an exaction of money. Cf. tax raised in Egypt to pay for transport of corn by sea to Constantinople, A. C. Johnson and L. C. West, "Byzantine Egypt: Economic Studies", p. 160 ff.

58) On the source of the ship, cf. note 54 above.

the owner and paid for the voyage out of the money supplied by Romulus. Perhaps Romulus would also have had to supervise the transport for which he had paid. It seems that personal supervision was required from the Galatian brothers⁵⁹), whose liturgy will have resembled Romulus' since as inhabitants of an inland province they had surely not been required to supply a ship.

Did these long distance transport duties form a normal part of the annual demands made on the cities by the government, or were they required only at times of special emergency? The fact that all the cases mentioned by Libanius belong to periods of crisis — the Persian Wars⁶⁰) and the revolt of Maximus⁶¹) — suggests that they were extraordinary impositions. But it must be remembered that by chance the greater part of Libanius' surviving writings dates from these two periods.

In connection with the compulsory land transport it may however be significant that transport of supplies to the armies in Mesopotamia, which had such a disastrous effect on the finances of the Council of Antioch during the Persian War, is not mentioned in the writings of the later period, when there was peace on the Persian frontier. On the contrary, we are told that a consular of Syria was sent to Mesopotamia to buy corn⁶²). We also learn that a certain Councillor of Antioch was obliged, in the course of some compulsory service, to deliver gold at the depot of taxation in kind at Barbalissos, the military headquarters on the Euphrates⁶³). The explanation of this

59) ep. 1496 t. 11, p. 524, l. 1 συμπλεῖν suggests that liturgy required personal supervision. Otherwise, if it was nothing but a tax, it would not have interfered with the young man's studies.

60) The Persian War lasted with varying intensity from 337—351. There was another Persian invasion in 359. In 363 there was Julian's campaign and lasting peaceful conditions were only re-established by the terms accepted by Jovian later in 363. On the details of the war, see P. W. article "Constantius" in P. W. t. 4, i, cols. 1047—8, 1053—4, 1055, 1061—2, 1063—4, 1091—3.

61) On Theodosius' campaign against Maximus see A. Piganiol, *L'Empire Chrétien*, pp. 253—5.

62) Or. 33, cs. 6—7, also c. 27. *Ibid.* t. 3, p. 168, l. 10 shows that corn purchase in Euphratensis was normal, but not normally supervised by the governor of Syria himself.

63) Or. 28, c. 16. ἡ γὰρ δὴ Βαρβαλισσὸς καὶ ὁ οἶτος καὶ πάντα τὰ ταιαῦτα τὸν ἀποδέκτην εἰς τιμωρίαν ἤγε ... ἀλλ' οὐ τὸν Λάμαχον, ᾧ τὸ ἔργον ἦν δοῦναι χρυσίον καὶ ἐδεδώκει.

might be that in peace time it was no longer necessary to transport supplies from Syria to Mesopotamia, and that the taxes were now changed into money, with which supplies could be bought on the frontier⁶⁴). If this was indeed the case, this land-transport duty had been an extraordinary one.

The account of the corn transport duties puts us in a position to understand why the government continued to collect taxes in kind, in a province where, as Petit has conclusively shown⁶⁵), money was used by all classes in all private transactions⁶⁶). To feed its armies and capital cities the government needed large quantities of corn. Frequently war or famine created additional needs in different localities. Through its practice of raising taxes in kind the government could obtain the corn to meet these needs, and a system of compulsory transport duties made it possible to transport the corn wherever it was needed.

Means had, moreover, been found to reduce the inconvenience inherent in this system of state finance. Thus, there is evidence to suggest that occasionally a tax in kind was converted into a money levy. We have already noted some evidence which suggested that the tax which had gone to feed the army in Mesopotamia had been converted into money, with which corn could be bought on the frontier⁶⁷). A letter of 357 records that a man owning an estate near Boroa (Aleppo) was forced to sell grain to men in an official position⁶⁸). Mazzarino sees in this a case of compulsory purchase at a price fixed by the government, such as was used to obtain supplies for the troops when the tax had been raised in money. There is, further, a

Barbalissos was the H. Q. of the Dux Syriae et Euphratensis, "Martyrium Sergii et Bacchi", Anal. Bolland. XIV, 1895, p. 384. Libanius uses the term ἀποδέκτης to describe the men in charge of the stored taxation in kind. Petit p. 154 and below note 72. The situation described is very obscure. I suggest that the decurion Lamachus had been accused because of some deficit in the matter of σῆτος in the public corn store at Barbalissos, and that his defence is that he had been ordered to deliver gold, and that the amount of corn in the store was not his concern but that of the store-keeper.

64) For an example of a tax raised in gold followed by corn purchase at fixed price in Egypt see A. Segré "Annona Militaris in Egypt", Byzantion 16, 1942—3, p. 441 ff.

65) Petit pp. 299—303.

66) See above note 1.

67) See above p. 249 and notes 62—64.

68) Ep. 276 (361) Mazzarino p. 161.

suggestion that the Councillor in charge of that department of tax collecting which dealt with garments for the soldiers, collected money from the taxpayer, and with that purchased garments, either from the government directly, or at least at prices over which the provincial governor had control⁶⁹). But these possible cases of "adaeratio" do not alter the impression that the bulk of the φόρος of Syria was raised in kind⁷⁰).

More widespread were arrangements for converting salaries in produce into money wages. There is no doubt that the salaries to be paid to officials out of the product of taxation were assigned in kind. This is indicated among other things by the terms Libanius uses to describe state salaries, whether he is talking of the salary of the Comes Orientis, or of a humble sophist of the little city of Elusa in Palestine. The words used are βασιλική τροφή, τροφή or σίτος⁷¹). But the fact the salaries were assigned at a rate calculated in kind did not necessarily mean that they were always drawn in kind. Thus, in his speech against the former governor Severus, Libanius charged him with bullying the ἀποδέκται in connection with the wages due to him in agricultural produce. He forced the storekeepers to buy his rations from him, and further cheated them by using measures not in accordance with the law. No doubt, he managed in this way to get more for his rations than they were worth⁷²). Severus used force and deceit when turning his rations into money, but the same matter could also be arranged in a more friendly way, by men of less power than the consular of Syria. Thus in 359/60 Libanius wrote to a leading Councillor of Elusa

69) ep. 602 (357). On the exaction of a gold tax followed by compulsory purchase of garments at fixed price in Egypt see A. Segré "Annona Civica and Annona Militaris" Byzantion XVI, 1942—3, p. 418 ff. esp. 420 on P. Oxy. 1905.

70) As in Or. 33, c. 19; Or. 47, c. 8; Or. 30, c. 42; Or. 25, c. 43. Petit, p. 153, note 2 and p. 298.

71) e. g. ep. 132 (359—60) sophist of Elusa; ep. 207 (360) Imperial pension; ep. 258 (361) sophist tries to get σίτος; ep. 348 τροφή salary of official; ep. 356 (358) Libanius himself seeks σίτος; ep. 345 (356—7) same matter; ep. 55 (359) Libanius asks for increase of σίτος for Comes Orientis from P. P. O.; ep. 1397 σίτος as kind of pension promised by governor. Libanius' own salary ep. 28 (359/60) τροφή also ep. 207 (360) ep. 740 (362).

72) Or. 57, c. 51. ὅς καὶ τοὺς ἀποδέκτας ἐπλεονέκτησεν ἐν ταῖς τιμαῖς ὧν βασιλεὺς [ἐν] ταῖς ἀρχαῖς ἐκ τῶν παρὰ τῆς γῆς αὐτῷ προσιόντων δίδωσιν, ὠνεῖσθαι τε ἀναγκάζων ὧν οὐδὲν ἐδέοντο καὶ προσέτι μέτροις ἀδικῶν οὐ συμβαίνουσι τῇ νόμῳ.

that the local sophist wished his βασιλική τροφή to be changed into money. The point seems to be that Libanius wished the decurion to use his influence with the local ἀποδέκται to get them to buy the sophist's rations at a reasonable price⁷³). Both parties might benefit by a bargain of this kind. The sophist would be saved the embarrassment of disposing of a quantity of corn larger than he required for food. The storekeeper could obtain for himself a stock of corn which he might sell when prices were favourable.

Further light is thrown on the case of the sophist of Elusa by a chapter of a speech written by Themistius, the great sophist of Constantinople, in 377/8. Themistius argues that he might have had a very large salary in wheat, oil, pork and wine, but accepted only the rations which the Emperor granted to every citizen of Constantinople. Large payments, far above a man's needs, must be turned into money and this involved quarrelling with ταμίαι, behaviour unworthy of a philosopher⁷⁴). I imagine that the ταμίαι were the people Libanius calls ἀποδέκται, storekeepers in charge of the produce of taxation. Thus, Themistius considered this practice of bargaining with storekeepers about "adaeratio" an inevitable consequence of being assigned a salary out of public funds.

Libanius himself received a salary in wheat and barley, part of which he drew in gold at a price fixed by the governor of Phoenicia⁷⁵). That this portion of Libanius' salary came from Phoenicia and not from the immediate environment of Antioch reveals a disadvantage of the policy of collecting taxes in kind. It made it troublesome, but not impossible, to organize expenditure at a distance from collection. On the other hand, the disadvantage was modified from the salary earner's point of view by the possibility of selling the salary in kind on the spot, and transferring the proceeds.

73) Ep. 132 (359—60).

74) Themistius ed. Dindorf, p. 353 D. Or. 23 (Winter 377—8).

δοσις ἰστέ τε ἕβια ταρίχη καὶ ζυγομαχεῖ τοῖς ταμίαις, τὸν οἶνον καὶ τὰ ὄψα ἀπαργυρίζων.

75) Ep. 800 (362—3).

On the various sources of Libanius' income and the difficulties in which he became involved as a result, see Petit p. 409.

Petit also points out an occasion when the government required Libanius to repay in gold a salary he had received in kind: Petit p. 409, on ep. 454 (355—6), mentioning reclaiming in gold of farm produce, granted Or. I, c. 80.

I imagine that such agreements for the *adaeratio* of salaries in kind were extremely common, if not universal. It is difficult to suppose that they were even strictly speaking illegal. They were far too convenient for that. What was wrong with them was that they lent themselves to grave abuse by powerful officials, to the ruin of the storekeepers and of the territories whose taxation was in the stores. Mazzarino gives many examples of the abuses of this system, which frequently must have given rise to most ruinous situations for the tax payers⁷⁶). In turn, this produced much legislation, prohibiting, restricting, and regulating *adaeratio* under various circumstances⁷⁷).

It is hard to believe that the prohibitions, at any rate, were generally observed, and they should be taken to indicate the prevalence of abuse and the despair of the government, rather than the rarity of turning wages in kind into money.

The examples given in this essay illustrate how the apparently clumsy system of taxation in kind could be made to work to distribute the resources of the Empire wherever the government needed them, provided that this did not involve too distant transport by land⁷⁸). It has also been shown that the practice of *adaeratio*, prevalent in Syria, mainly in connection with the paying out of government salaries, greatly modified the inconveniences involved in any system of payment of salaries in kind.

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76) Mazzarino pp. 136—168.

77) The numerous laws issued by the government in its attempts to control the abuses of "*adaeratio*" are summarized by Mickwitz, pp. 170—173.

78) Of course, land transport of bulky loads over all but the shortest distance was enormously expensive. See F. W. Walbank in "Cambridge Economic History of Europe", t. c. 2 pp. 76—7. Also A. Segré in article cited in note 69, p. 395 ff. Also the disastrous effect of the transport duties on the financial strength of the Council of Antioch, recalled in Or. 49, c. 2.