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ON THE FRONTIERS OF THE PROVINCE: MONUMENTALIZING ROMAN TOWER TROPHIES IN THE TIMES OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC AND EMPIRE¹

Abstract: Trophy building was a tradition in Rome already in the third century BC. To believe the written sources, the first trophies were placed in the Capitol, but whether they had counterparts in the field is not entirely clear. The first trophies that Roman commanders appear to have put up in enemy territory, in 121 BC, were not the ephemeral trophies of the Greeks but rather stone towers dominating the battlefield. The remains of five such tower trophies on the frontiers of a province or in enemy territory, ranging in date from the times of the Roman Republic and Empire, are studied in this paper. They constituted a symbol of imperial might and at the same time were a harbinger of the romanization of a conquered territory and its inhabitants.

Key words: tower trophy, spoils of war, Coll de Panissars, La Turbie, Adamclisi

The trophy (Gr. *τρόπαιον*, Lat. *tropaeum*) was an established tradition in the Mediterranean world already in the fifth century BC.² In Greece, it was originally a victory marker, put up on a battlefield to mark the spot where a routed enemy had turned and fled. The armor and weapons of the defeated were hung up in a tree or on a wooden frame.³ Mannequin trophies of this kind were dedicated to the gods: Zeus *Tropaios* or Poseidon, the latter in the case of naval battles. It was blasphemy to destroy such a battlefield marker, but ones that had disintegrated on their own were not rebuilt in an effort to let old conflicts die out and be forgotten.⁴

Ephemeral battlefield markers were ultimately replaced with commemorative monuments resembling the trophies in appearance but built of more durable materials.⁵ A more elaborate

¹ The author gratefully acknowledges Dr. Georges Castellvi for making available the results of the investigations at Coll de Panissars and for sharing literature on the subject.

² GANSINIEC 1955; PICARD 1957; KINNEE 2018. The earliest mentions of trophies are to be found in the works of the poet Aeschylus and the historians Thucydides and Xenophon. Pausanias' repeated information on trophies in Homeric times is considered anachronous by most researchers, because Homer never once used the word *τρόπαιον*.

³ JANSSEN 1957, pp. 240–241. The word “tropaion” originates from the verb *τρέπω* “to turn”. It meant “to retreat from the battlefield” in army jargon.

⁴ PICARD 1957; PRITCHETT 1974, p. 275. Picard was among the few researchers to point out the “magic nature” of a *tropaion* as a talisman embodying all the souls of soldiers died in battle.

⁵ CASTELLVI 2015, p. 213. One example of this type of marker is the trophy discovered in 1860 in Orchomenos and dated probably to the turn of the fourth century BC.

architectural form was given to these monuments from the fifth century BC on⁶ and they were no longer restricted to the battlefield.⁷ Surviving literary sources and numismatic evidence indicate that the Greek practice was adopted by the Romans no later than by the close of the third century BC [Fig. 1].⁸ It was then that trophies made of stone or precious metals were placed in the Capitol.⁹ Whether these gifts to Jupiter had a counterpart in the field cannot be ascertained.¹⁰



Fig. 1. Roman *Victoriatius* (RRC 93/1c), coin struck from 211 BC (reverse with a representation of Victory wreathing a trophy)

Available sources indicate that the Romans set up trophies on the battlefield for the first time in Transalpine Gaul during the campaign of Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus and Quintus Fabius Maximus in 121 BC. These were stone towers (*saxae turres*) rather than ephemeral markers, crowned with the weapons of the routed enemies.¹¹ Any discussion of Roman trophies, especially the so-called tower trophies, starts with these monuments.¹²

Archaeological investigations have yielded data for the study of five different Roman tower trophies: that of Gnaeus Pompeius the Great at Coll de Panissars, that of Augustus at La Turbie and of Trajan at Adamclisi, as well as the trophies at Urkulu¹³ and at Adamclisi (an older one?),¹⁴ in which two cases there is no agreement among researchers as to who commissioned their construction. Importantly and unlike the structure from 121 BC, none of these trophies were built on a battlefield. They were set up at a province frontier or already in enemy territory, most often on hills or in mountain passes in order to be visible from a distance (hence the term landscape-trophy in reference to these monuments).¹⁵ These structures, which were built after a military campaign, surpassed in architectural form the field monuments (such as that of Lucius Cornelius Sulla among others)¹⁶ which were raised during a war. The splendid tower trophies of Pompeius, Augustus and Trajan discussed in this article were constructed in this fashion.

⁶ HÖLSCHER 2006, p. 31. In this period trophies started to be put up on columns as at Marathon or turrets as at Leuctra.

⁷ STROSZECK 2004, p. 315.

⁸ RRC 93/1c.

⁹ Flor. 1.20.4–5; ITGENSHORST 2005, p. 208. According to Florus, Gaius Flaminius placed a trophy on the Capitol in 223 BC. The practice was continued in later years. T. Itgenshorst has suggested that Lucius Emilius Paulus may have done the same in 181 BC.

¹⁰ CASTELLVI 2015, p. 208.

¹¹ Flor. 1.37.3–5.

¹² CASTELLVI 2015, pp. 207–258; KINNEE 2018, p. 108.

¹³ AMELA VALVERDE 2016, pp. 73–77. Researchers have suggested that the trophy at Urkulu could have been

raised by either Pompeius, Sertorius or Marcus Valerius Messala.

¹⁴ POULTER 1986, pp. 519–528; STEFAN 2009, pp. 613–634. Poulter connects this trophy with Trajan, Stefan with Domitius.

¹⁵ HÖLSCHER 2006, pp. 31–33. Hölscher also analyzes the battleground markers of Sulla in Cheronea and Caesar's at Zela as landscape trophies.

¹⁶ CAMP *et alii* 1992, pp. 443–455; KOUNTOURI 2009, pp. 248–253. Sulla's trophies at Cheronea and Orchomenos were discovered respectively in 1990 and in 2004. The remains of the second of the two monuments (still not studied in detail) suggest a rectangular base and a column in imitation of a tree trunk, supporting the armor and weapons, all made of local limestone.

The trophies of Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus and Quintus Fabius Maximus

As said already, the earliest trophies constructed by the Romans in enemy territory were the monuments of Ahenobarbus and Maximus,¹⁷ reported by both Strabo and Florus. According to the second-century-AD historian, the Romans responded to the call of the Aedui and the inhabitants of Massilia and fought a couple of victorious battles with the Allobroges and the Arverni. In charge of military action in Transalpine Gaul at the turn of 122/121 BC, Ahenobarbus first fought the Celtic tribes. Following a victory he raised a trophy in the form of a stone tower topped by the weapons of the defeated enemy. A few months later Maximus did the same to commemorate his success against the Allobroges and Arverni. In his narrative Florus noted that the Roman commanders decided to build these monuments even though it was not a Roman practice, the Romans not being in the habit of boasting about their victories to the defeated enemy.¹⁸ Strabo mentioned the two battles (situating the first one near Vindalium, where the Sorgue enters the Rhone, and the second one at the confluence of the Isère and the Rhone), but wrote only casually of the trophies. He noted the trophy of Maximus, which was made of white stone, together with the temples of Hercules and Mars.¹⁹

No archaeological remains of these monuments have ever been found,²⁰ which however did not stop speculation on their shape and identification. Jean-Pierre Révellat believed that the trophy of Maximus stood near the locality of Andance, where ruins of a tower from the Roman period were preserved (*Sarrasinière*).²¹ Recent archaeological investigations of the structure revealed it to be a family mausoleum from the first century AD.²² A hypothesis connecting the trophy of Ahenobarbus with the Tour Magne in Nîmes has also been rejected.²³

The form of the monument chosen by the generals has also excited debate. Gilbert Charles Picard sought the reason behind the choice of the tower form in the art and architecture of Pergamon where commemorative markers of this kind were common.²⁴ According to Katherine E. Welch, the explanation was more prosaic, namely, the dense forests of Transalpine Gaul and the low urban index necessitated trophies that towered over a battlefield; otherwise they could not have been seen from afar. Welch also observed that the monuments could have resembled in appearance the cenotaph of Drusus from Mainz.²⁵ According to Georges Castellvi, the generals initially constructed trophies in the form of tumuli encircled by a ring of stones and placed the

¹⁷ PICARD 1957, pp. 106–107. Picard thought that Lucius Aemilius Paulus raised a trophy already after the Battle of Pydna in 168 BC. This idea is based on the reverse of a *denarius* depicting the Roman general together with Perseus and his sons, standing next to a trophy (*RRC* 415/1). The coin was not struck until 62 BC, hence the scene itself may have been symbolic in nature rather than rendering a real event.

¹⁸ Flor. 1.37.3–5: *Utriusque victoriae quod quantumque gaudium fuerit, vel hinc aestimari potest, quod et Domitius Ahenobarbus et Fabius Maximus ipsis quibus dimicaverant locis saxaeas erexere turres, et desuper exornata armis hostilibus tropaea fixerunt, cum hic mos inusitatus fuerit nostris. Numquam enim populus Romanus hostibus domitis victoriam exprobravit.*

¹⁹ Strab. 4.1.11: καθ' ὃ δὲ συμπιπτουσιν ὁ Ἰσαρ ποταμὸς καὶ ὁ Ῥοδανὸς καὶ τὸ Κέμμενον ὄρος, Κόιντος Φάβιος Μάξιμος Αἰμιλιανὸς οὐχ ὅλαις τρισὶ μυριάσιν εἴκοσι μυριάδας Κελτῶν κατέκοψε, καὶ ἔστησε τρόπαιον αὐτόθι λευκοῦ λίθου καὶ νεῶς δύο, τὸν μὲν Ἄρεως τὸν δ' Ἡρακλέους.

²⁰ CASTELLVI 2015, pp. 214–215.

²¹ RÉVELLAT 1864, p. 19. According to Révellat, the tower had a few floors with trophies placed in niches and a quadriga of the defeated Bituitus on its top.

²² BURNAND 1979, pp. 119–140.

²³ PICARD 1957, pp. 152–153; CASTELLVI 2015, p. 244. The tower was part of a Gaulish *oppidum* already in the third century BC and stood near the sanctuary of a Celtic water-spring deity (*Deus Nemausus*). In the time of Augustus, it was developed and incorporated into the town fortifications. Castellvi posed the question as to whether such a finely decorated monument could have commemorated the Battle of Actium beside being a structure of defensive function. After all, it stood near a sanctuary dedicated to the water-spring deity.

²⁴ PICARD 1957, pp. 154–155; CARLSEN 2014, p. 112. Carlsen thinks that the Greek mercenaries in Ahenobarbus' army may have been responsible for the construction of the trophy.

²⁵ WELCH 2006, pp. 12–13.

weapons of the defeated enemy at the top. Later, the monument of Maximus among others could have been developed just as Strabo describes.²⁶ However, pending the discovery of any kind of archaeological evidence, these speculations must remain just that. The important thing at this stage is that these buildings must have served as a blueprint for generals, like Pompeius, who later built his trophy on the Coll de Panissars.

The trophy of Gnaeus Pompeius the Great on the Coll de Panissars and the trophy at Urkulu

There are many more sources, both literary and archaeological, for the trophy of Pompey the Great raised after the war with Quintus Sertorius in 72 BC. The earliest mention of the trophy comes from the fragmentarily preserved *History* of Sallust. The historian stated laconically that the general, having conquered Spain, put up markers along the top of the Pyrenees (*summum Pyrenaeum*).²⁷ More details of the foundation were presented by Julius Exuperantius, who reported that the trophies were raised after defeating Sertorius' ally Marcus Perperna Vento and pacifying the cities of Clunia, Calagurris and Uxama.²⁸

Strabo gave a more exact localization, stating that Tarraco was the first city between the trophies on the summits of the Pyrenees and the river Iberus. He also noted that some of the Emporitans inhabited the ridges of the Pyrenees all the way to the trophies of Pompey the Great, where a road ran from Italy to Iberia and on to Baetica.²⁹ Book IV of his *Geography* indicated that the trophies, along with the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Portus Veneris, marked the frontier between Spain and Gaul.³⁰

Pliny the Elder supplied more details on Pompey's trophies, which included an inscription informing about the conquest of 876 *oppida* between the Alps and the frontier of Hispania Ulterior.³¹ He also suggested that the monument was decorated with an indeterminate representation (*imago*), similar to pictures that were presented during Pompey's third triumph in 61 BC.³²

Cassius Dio also mentioned the Pyrenean *tropaion* when describing Julius Caesar's campaign in Spain. Instead of building a victory monument at the top when he crossed the Pyrenees in 49 BC, the Roman general had a great altar of polished stones constructed (probably for Venus) in the vicinity of the trophies of Pompey the Great. According to Dio, Caesar did so because he was well aware that the trophies his rival raised did not bring him any fame.³³

A closer study of these reports calls attention to a few details. Pliny said that Pompey intentionally omitted Sertorius from the inscription.³⁴ This may have been a considered political act rather than mere spite. Florus said in his account that the victorious generals (Pompey and Quintus Cecilius Metellus Pius) chose to conduct a foreign war rather than a civil one in order to be able

²⁶ CASTELLVI 2013, p. 51; CASTELLVI 2015, p. 215. The stone used in the construction may have been limestone quarried in the Alps.

²⁷ Sall. *Hist.* 3.89: [Pompeius] *de victis Hispanis tropaea in Pyrenaei iugis constituit.*

²⁸ Iul. Exuper. 56: *Postea Pompeius Perpennam subegit; Auxummen, Cluniam, Calagurrim civitates delevit, et factis in Pyrenaeo trophaeis, Romam regressus est.*

²⁹ Strab. 3.4.7–9.

³⁰ Strab. 4.1.3: *ἐνιοὶ δὲ τὸν τόπον ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶ τὰ Πομπηίου τρόπαια ὄριον Ἰβηρίας ἀποφαίνουσι καὶ τῆς Κελτικῆς.*

³¹ Plin. *HN* 3.4.1; Plin. *HN* 7.27.1: *Citerioris Hispaniae sicut conplurium provinciarum aliquantum vetus forma mutata est, utpote cum Pompeius Magnus trophaeis suis,*

quae statuebat in Pyrenaeo, DCCCLXXVI oppida ab Alpibus ad fines Hispaniae ulterioris in dicionem ab se redacta testatus sit.

³² Plin. *HN* 37.6.3.

³³ Cass. Dio 41.24: Πομπηίῳ ἐτεταμειύκει ἦν αὐτὸς δὲ μέχρι Ταρράκωνος πλοίοις ἐκομίσθη. ἐντεῦθεν δὲ διὰ τοῦ Πυρηναίου προχωρῶν τρόπαιον μὲν οὐδὲν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ἔστησεν, ὅτι μηδὲ τὸν Πομπηίων καλῶς ἀκούσαντα ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἦσθετο, βωμὸν δὲ διὰ λίθων ξεστῶν συνφοκοδομημένον μέγαν οὐ πόρρω τῶν ἐκείνου τροπαιῶν ἰδρύσατο.

³⁴ Plin. *HN* 7.27.1: *Suae adscripsit et maiore animo Sertorium tacuit.*

to seek the right to a triumph.³⁵ In Rome, celebrating a military success over fellow citizens was perceived in a negative light, hence the silence about the defeat of Sertorius and his allies, replaced with information about the conquest of 876 villages.

Researchers are in doubt regarding the number of *oppida* actually subjugated by Pompey, especially as no regular military action took place in Transalpine Gaul at the time. Hence, it is thought that the number was inflated by including villages and even isolated forts or towers subjugated during the campaign.³⁶ Neither is it clear what this *imago* mentioned by Pliny actually looked like; it is commonly assumed that the *tropaion* was decorated with either a statue of Pompey, a relief with his representation, or a personification of the conquered peoples or the weapons of the defeated enemies.³⁷

The line of the frontier between the provinces has also been debated for years, the goal being to establish the exact localization of the *tropaion*. One of the ideas assumed that Pompey's monument was constructed at the edge of the sea, like the sanctuary of Aphrodite. However, it would mean that there was no clear border between Hispania and Gaul, which does not seem probable. The other idea placed the trophy inland, enabling an exact line to be drawn between the monuments. In this case, the sanctuary of Aphrodite would have been an ideal navigation point for sailors plying the coast, whereas the trophy would have played the same role for those traveling by land.³⁸ Archaeological research at Coll de Panissars corroborates the second hypothesis.

Last but not least, ancient authors often wrote of Pompey's marker in the plural, but this hardly means that the general put up two separate trophies. Some researchers have suggested that the use of the plural reflected the elaborate architectural form of the monument itself.³⁹

Summing up the information from the sources, the *tropaion* was not a perishable structure; instead, it was an architectural form towering over the landscape.⁴⁰ Picard suggested the form of a tumulus crowned with trophies and dedicated to Venus *Victrix*. Unlike the Greeks, Roman generals dedicated their trophies to the guardian deities, which they perceived as their personal patrons.⁴¹

Tradition had situated Pompey's trophy on Coll de Pertús, but the results of archaeological excavation have verified this view. In 1984, working at Coll de Panissars, Georges Castellvi discovered the remains of a structure, which he identified as a *tropaion* raised after the campaign against Sertorius.⁴² The foundations of this structure were found under the ruins of a medieval monastery of Santa Maria de Panissars [Fig. 2]. Today one can see two parallelepiped bases, of unequal height, separated by a ditch 5.15 m wide. This is believed by researchers to be a fragment of the *via Domitia*, which joined the *via Heraclea* (later *via Augusta*) in Hispania.⁴³ The bases were executed in the *opus caementicium* technique presenting pseudo-isodomic bondwork, using limestone probably quarried around the town of Gerunda. The blocks were 0.60 m high and weighed more than a ton each. The eastern base was 1.65 m high, the western one 6.50 m. The pedestals were more or less symmetrical, 30.76 m and 30.91 m long, and 15.53 m and 16.06 m wide. Combined, they covered an area of 36.70 m by 30.84 m. A sign of a cross was found (0.50–0.55 m) at the bottom of the trench in the southwestern corner of the base; it most probably marked the edge of the monument. Subtracting this measure from each corner, we arrive at dimensions that are

³⁵ Flor. 2.10.9.

³⁶ AMELA VALVERDE 2016, p. 49.

³⁷ CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 1995, p. 17.

³⁸ CASTELLVI 1989, p. 15; AMELA VALVERDE 2016, p. 53.

³⁹ CASTELLVI 2013, pp. 52–53; AMELA VALVERDE 2016, pp. 67–68.

⁴⁰ GANSINIEC 1955, pp. 122–123.

⁴¹ PICARD 1957, p. 184.

⁴² CASTELLVI 1993, pp. 27–30; CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 1995, pp. 5–18; CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 2008; CASTELLVI

2015, pp. 219–230. Coll de Panissars lies 325 m a.s.l. and is 1250 m away from Coll de Pertús.

⁴³ AMELA VALVERDE 2016, p. 59; RODA 2013, pp. 533–534.

Amela Valverde suggests that Pompeius could have moved the *via Heraclea* from Coll de Pertús to Coll de Panissars, enabling the Romans to control the pass during the conflict with Sertorius.



Fig. 2. Remains of the monastery at Coll de Panissars, current state of preservation (source: Wikimedia Commons)

close to classical for Roman architecture, that is, 120 feet by 100 feet (35.55 m by 29.63 m). Above each base one finds U-shaped foundations opening toward the trench, marking a quadrangle 22.40 m by 18 m, which could indicate that the structure had two or more tiers. Nothing has survived however of the superstructure [Fig. 3].⁴⁴ A few remains of a cornice made of local sandstone, as well as fragments of inscriptions consisting of single letters were also found on the spot. The material is too fragmentary for analysis.⁴⁵

The preserved ruins verified Picard's theories as to the appearance of Pompey's *tropaion*. The structure must have been quite original. According to one hypothesis, it was a double altar standing on either side of the *via Domitia*, the trophies set up on its top.⁴⁶ Alvaro Ibarra would like to see an arch decorated with trophies, but nothing to attest to this form of the structure has ever been discovered.⁴⁷ Last but not least, a tower has been envisioned on the grounds of the inner foundations (*trofeo turriforme*). Supporters of this idea reconstruct the *tropaia Pompeii* as a double-tiered tower with the top resembling a stepped pyramid crowned with a statue of the victorious general. The inscription that Pliny mentioned would have been placed on the facade of either the first or the second platform. It could have been flanked by a frieze or relief decoration, but again, no evidence of anything of the kind has been preserved [Fig. 4]. The monument would have been either 30 m high according to the first hypothesis or 60 m according to the second one, although the latter seem improbable considering that a similar trophy of this kind, the *tropaion* of Augustus at La Turbie, was only 49 m high. It has also been suggested that Pompey's architects drew on the Hellenistic mausolea and tower tombs of Numidia that Pompey could have seen during his campaigns in Africa.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 1995, pp. 9–11; CASTELLVI 2015, p. 224.

⁴⁵ CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 2008, pp. 171–176.

⁴⁶ CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 1995, pp. 5–18.

⁴⁷ IBARRA 2009, p. 84; IBARRA 2014, p. 141.

⁴⁸ CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 2008, pp. 154–160.

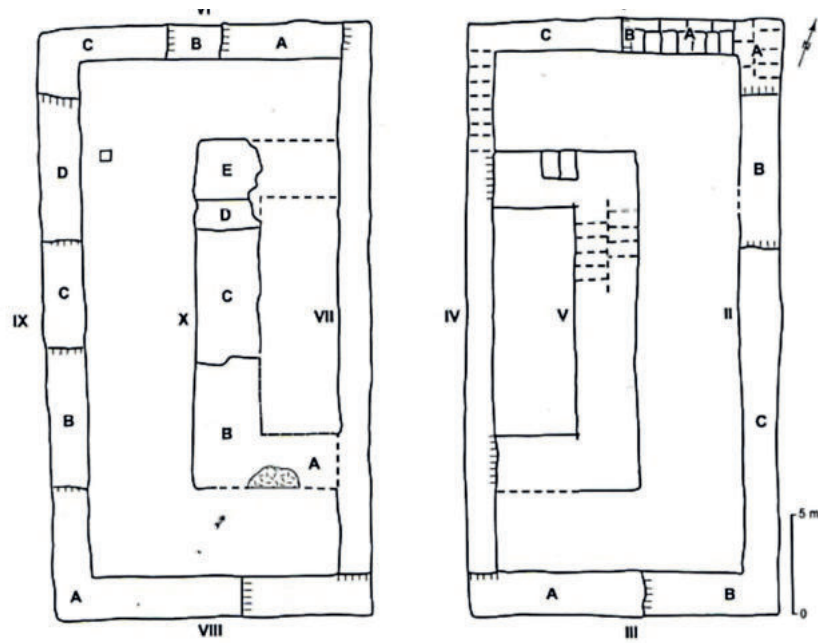


Fig. 3. Plan of the trophy of Pompeius at Coll de Panissars (author: G. Castellvi)

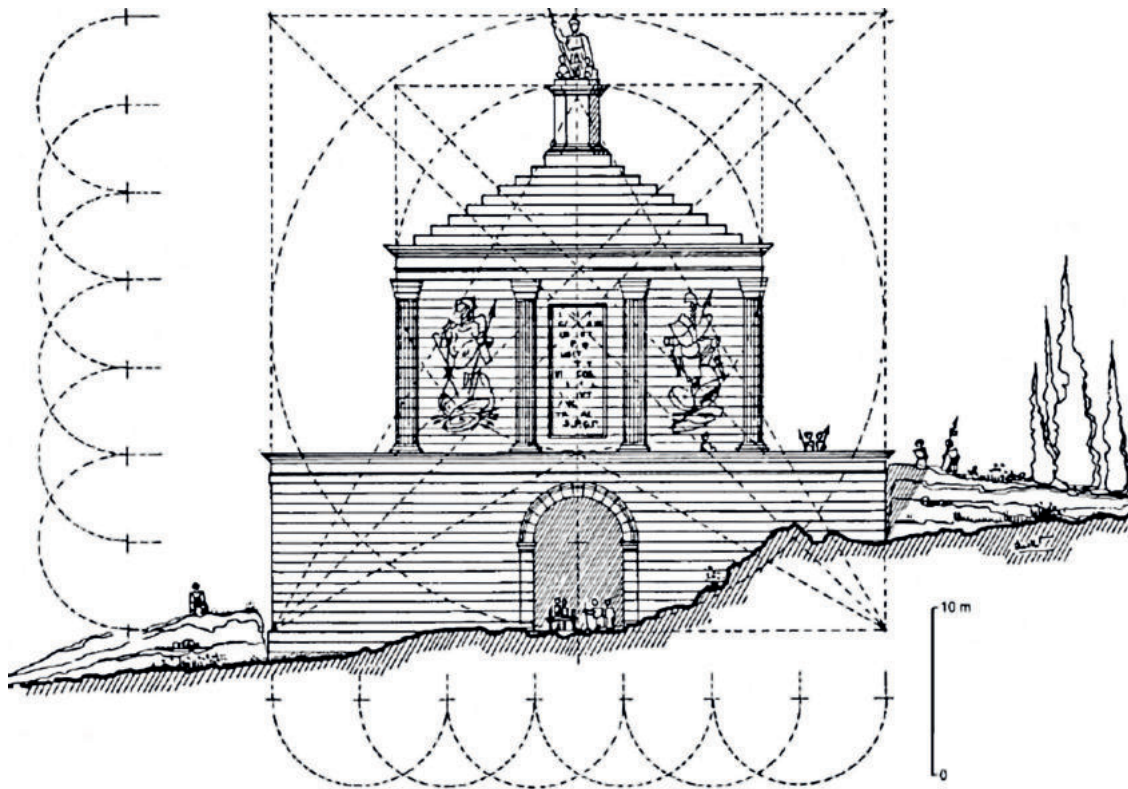


Fig. 4. Reconstruction of the trophy of Pompeius at Coll de Panissars (author: J. L. Paillet)

Javier Arce is skeptical, primarily because he does not believe the remains discovered on Coll de Panissars to be part of a *tropaion*; to him they represent fortifications securing the pass through the Pyrenees (*clausurae*). The proposed reconstructions are, in Arce's opinion, mistakenly derived from later monuments of this kind, such as the trophy of Augustus. Having studied the narrative sources again, the numismatic material,⁴⁹ as well as the remains of one of the two trophies Sulla left at Cheronea, Arce suggested that Pompey's building could not have been of equally monumental form. He reconstructed a base with two sculpted trophies on either side flanking a small column bearing a statue of the general. In a variant of his reconstruction, the base was decorated with a relief representation of Pompey and twin trophies were placed on pedestals on top of it. Arce was also of the opinion that like Sulla's trophy, Pompey's marker must have been raised near a temple, hence he preferred to situate it near the sanctuary of Aphrodite, but without indicating an actual location.

Arce's reasoning stands to doubt. Georges Castellvi, Josep Nolla and Isabel Roda noted already that for whatever reason conscious or not, he failed to take into consideration the results of archaeological excavations on Coll de Panissars.⁵⁰ Second, conclusions *per analogiam* between the trophies from Cheronea and in the Pyrenees are insupportable. The former were raised on the battlefield during a raging war (First Mithridatic War), so they were probably field *tropaia* which were shortly replaced by permanent markers, as evinced by the discovery of the remains of one of Sulla's monuments on the Turion hill.⁵¹ To believe Exuperantius, Pompey started on his marker only after military action had ceased, hence he could devote to the project definitely more time and effort than Sulla. It is presently assumed that the construction took place in 72–71 BC, but his ally Lucius Afranius could have continued on the work after the general had departed for Rome.⁵²

In any case, coins are hardly a credible source for the reconstruction of any architectural structure, *tropaia* included. Those issuing coins were satisfied usually with schematic representations of particular monuments. They omitted many details in favor of a symbolic depiction of a given structure. Consequently, Pompey's *tropaion*, presumably of an original form, could have been represented according to a scheme that was popular in the Roman tradition and easily recognized by its recipients.

Lastly, the fortifications (*clausurae*) mentioned by Arce were found in the Pyrenees, but not on Coll de Panissars; they were located 3.5 km north of this locality, in the small town of Les Cluses.⁵³ Coll de Panissars remains an ideal location for a *tropaion* which would have towered over the *via Domitia* connecting the two provinces. Most researchers today accept the reconstruction of Pompey's trophy as a *trofeo turriforme*, proposed by Castellvi in conjunction with his associates, the architects Jean Luis Paillet and Ricardo Mara.⁵⁴

Francisco Pina Polo is of the opinion that Pompey put up not one, but two trophies. Pointing out the sources that use the plural when referring to Pompey's trophies, Pina Polo believes that Pompey built a second *tropaion* on the summit of Urkulu in the western Pyrenees, on the frontier between Hispania and Aquitania. To Polo, the trophy marked the deportation of the routed peoples of Hispania to Lugdunum, that is, on the route from Pompaelo to Burdigala, north of the Roncesvalles pass, which Pompey's army had to cross.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ *RRC* 359/1; *RRC* 468/2; *RRC* 536/4; ARCE 1994, p. 263. Arce analyzed the coins of Sulla, Caesar and Mark Anthony, among others, bearing representations of field trophies.

⁵⁰ CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 1995, p. 18.

⁵¹ CAMP *et alii* 1992, pp. 443–455.

⁵² AMELA VALVERDE 2016, p. 52.

⁵³ CASTELLVI, NOLLA, RODA 1995, p. 18.

⁵⁴ CASTELLVI 2015, p. 224; AMELA VALVERDE 2016, p. 67; KINNEE 2018, p. 70. Kinnee accepts the location of the trophy, but is skeptical regarding its reconstruction in the form of a tower.

⁵⁵ PINA POLO 2009, p. 284.



Fig. 5. Remains of the trophy on the summit of Urkulu, current state of preservation (source: Wikimedia Commons)

The remains of a tower are preserved on Urkulu. The structure was 19.50 m in diameter [Fig. 5], the walls 2.60 m wide and standing 4.50 m high (surviving height is 3.60 m), made of local limestone. It was built on bedrock without any foundations. Fragments of an altar were located near the trophy. The excavations did not produce any conclusive dating evidence, resulting in many researchers negating the ideas of Pina Polo. Jean-Luc Tobie has given a date in the reign of Augustus, perhaps even after the campaign of Marcus Valerius Messala, who pacified the revolt in Aquitania in 26 BC.⁵⁶

The reconstruction of this monument does not raise any doubts. It is generally accepted today that it was composed of a stone ring 4.50 m high and an earth mound approximately 3 m high with the weaponry of the routed enemy placed at the top, altogether perhaps even 10 m in height.⁵⁷ In appearance, the trophy on Urkulu resembled more the tumulus-shaped trophy of Drusus on the Elbe,⁵⁸ rather than the monumental towers of Pompey on the Coll de Panissars or Augustus in La Turbie.

Trophy of Augustus in La Turbie

To the Emperor Caesar — The son of Caesar now deified, Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, and emperor fourteen years, in the seventeenth year of his holding the tribunitial authority, the Senate and the Roman people, in remembrance that under his command and auspices all the Alpine nations which extended from the upper sea to the lower were reduced to subjection by the Roman people [...].⁵⁹

⁵⁶ TOBIE 1976, pp. 43–62; AMELA VALVERDE 2016, p. 78.

⁵⁷ CASTELLVI 2015, p. 217.

⁵⁸ Flor. 2.30.

⁵⁹ Plin. *HN* 3.24 (transl. J. Bostock).

This excerpt comes from an inscription found on a *tropaion* dedicated to Augustus, raised on the border of Transalpine Gaul (already Gallia Narbonensis at this time) and Cisalpine Gaul.⁶⁰ The building was erected on the initiative of the Senate at the turn of year 7 BC to commemorate the victory of the emperor and his generals over the Alpine tribes in the campaign of 16–14 BC.⁶¹ This trophy, like the ones described above, was not situated on the battlefield and its location was carefully chosen, by the *via Iulia Augusta*, one of the chief routes across the Alps to Italy. It marked the highest point (*Alpe summa*) [Fig. 6] as well as the intersection of many roads, including one in the direction of the port in Monoikos.⁶²



Fig. 6. Trophy of Augustus in La Turbie, current state of preservation (source: Wikimedia Commons)

Contrary to Pompey's trophy, parts of which were either destroyed or reused in the foundations of another building,⁶³ the monument in La Turbie was used also in later times, for instance in the Middle Ages, when it served as a guard tower. Many elements of its decoration, statues included, were destroyed by the monks from Lérins. Its present appearance the *tropaion* owes to years of research by Jules Formigé, who worked on the reconstruction in 1923–1933, paid for by Edward Tuck.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ *CIL* V 7817. 140 fragments of inscriptions were found at La Turbie.

⁶¹ FORMIGÉ 1955, pp. 101–102. The tribes conquered by the Romans inhabited an area from the Adriatic to the Mediterranean, and from the sources of the Rhine and Rhone to the territory north of Lake Garda. Depending on the text edition, the number of tribes oscillates between 44 and 46.

⁶² IBARRA 2014, p. 146; KINNEE 2018, pp. 119–124. The settlement of Monoikos was located 3 km from the tro-

phy. In the nineteenth century, the writer C. Lenthéric believed that the trophy had been raised to commemorate a Roman victory over the Ligurii. None of the sources, however, mention any skirmishes in the vicinity of La Turbie.

⁶³ AMELA VALVERDE 2016, p. 62. The fortress of Bellegarde, for instance.

⁶⁴ CASTELLVI 2015, p. 238; KINNEE 2018, pp. 115–120.

Formigé proposed local limestone from the quarries in Justicier and Giram as the building material of this monument. It was composed of an outer basis in the *opus caementicium* technique, its sides 32.52 m wide and 12.34 m high. The stone blocks were bonded with clamps bearing the name of the emperor. Inscriptions (17.44 m by 3.63 m) commemorating the Alpine campaign were located on the eastern and western walls. They were carved into slabs of Luni marble and flanked by two carved trophies and a personification of Victory. Steps on the northern and southern sides led to the top of the monument. Standing on an inner base, which was 27.10 m wide and 4.21 m high, was a rotunda measuring 18 m in diameter. A row of 24 Tuscan columns ran around the perimeter, set up each on pedestals 2 m high, topped by a Doric frieze of metopes carved with representations of bucrania, weaponry and armor. The niches between the columns were filled most probably with statues of commanders fighting in the campaign.⁶⁵ The one surviving statue is that of Drusus. A conical roof made up of 12 steps was found at the top, crowned presumably with the actual trophy. Altogether the monument was 49 m high.⁶⁶

The appearance of the monument at the top cannot be reconstructed for lack of any surviving elements. Medieval sources speak of a statue of a man or a god with a demon at his feet. Lauren Kinnee believes this description to reflect a typical theme in Roman art of a captive or captives at the feet of the victor and characterizes the monument as a so-called *trophy tableau* (this is the case, for example, of the trophy of Trajan).⁶⁷ The motif appeared frequently on coins and in reliefs. Picard, however, thought that the figure at the top was a statue of Augustus; after all, the monument was dedicated to him.⁶⁸

Other trophies beside the one at La Turbie were raised in the reign of Augustus. In 9 BC, the emperor's stepson Drusus raised a monumental *tropaion* in the form of a tumulus on the Elbe; the weapons of the routed Marcomanni were placed on top of it.⁶⁹ Writing in the mid-second century AD, Claudius Ptolemy listed in his geographical work the locality of *Tropaia Drousou*, which led Picard to speculate that the building stood for a long time and was even elaborated and decorated.⁷⁰ However, without archaeological evidence the appearance of this monument is merely speculation. The trophy may have had an ornamental inscription, like the trophies of Germanicus that was constructed at Idistaviso in AD 16.⁷¹

The trophies in Adamclisi

The long skirmishing of the Romans and Dacians ended with the conquest of Sarmizegetusa in AD 106. Trajan commemorated this success by building a trophy in AD 109, not in the Dacian capital, however, but in Lower Moesia. The *tropaion* was constructed on one of the hills around Adamclisi; even today, it is visible from more than 10 km away. Remains of an altar were preserved near this monument, next to a “mausoleum” that many researchers identify as an earlier trophy.⁷² The structure was reconstructed to its present shape in 1977, by Florea Bobu Florescu among others⁷³ [Fig. 7].

⁶⁵ LAMBOGLIA 1956, p. 53.

⁶⁶ FORMIGÉ 1949.

⁶⁷ KINNEE 2018, p. 119.

⁶⁸ PICARD 1957, p. 294.

⁶⁹ Cass. Dio 55.1; Flor. 2.30: *Nam Marcomannorum spoliis et insignibus quendam editum tumulum in tropaei modum excoluit.*

⁷⁰ Ptol. *Geogr.* 2.11.13; PICARD 1957, p. 302; CASTELLVI 2015, p. 216.

⁷¹ Tac. *Ann.* 2.18.2: *Miles in loco proelii Tiberium imperatorem salutavit struxitque aggerem et in modum tropaeorum arma subscriptis victarum gentium nominibus imposuit; cf. also Tac. Ann. 2.22.1.*

⁷² POULTER 1986, p. 524; STEFAN 2009, p. 621.

⁷³ FLORESCU 1965.



Fig. 7. Twentieth-century reconstruction of the trophy of Trajan in Adamclisi (source: Wikimedia Commons)

The choice of location for this trophy has led some researchers to suggest that the Romans had fought the Roxolani not far from Adamclisi; there is, however, nothing in the narrative sources and no archaeological evidence in favor of this idea.⁷⁴ Alvaro Ibarra proposed that Trajan had wished to eclipse a trophy put up in this place by Domitian and razed after the emperor's death and his *damnatio memoriae*.⁷⁵ However, the Romans, like the Greeks before them, tended to spare the trophies of their rivals for religious reasons.⁷⁶ Trajan presumably would not have acted differently. And there is little reason for Domitian to have raised a trophy here because, as Brian W. Jones observed, he did not reach Dobruja during the campaign of AD 84–85.⁷⁷

Andrew G. Poulter put forward the idea of two trophies in Adamclisi, both built by Trajan. The older *tropaion* according to Poulter would have been 90 m northwest of the trophy of AD 109 and would have dated to around AD 102 (after the first Dacian war), commemorating together with an altar the legionaries killed in this campaign.⁷⁸ The monument was constructed of local limestone on a circular plan. It consisted of three stone walls with buttresses and a mound rising on this substructure. The inside ring was thicker (1.50 m) than the outer casing walls, suggesting a substantial height. A hole in the middle may have been for a column that towered over this structure. No human remains were ever found within the monument, rejecting the mausoleum theory.⁷⁹ Despite the skeptical opinion of many researchers,⁸⁰ Trajan's army may have raised the trophy already during the First Dacian War, upon occupying Dobruja about AD 102. This would explain

⁷⁴ IBARRA 2014, pp. 148–149.

⁷⁵ IBARRA 2014, p. 149.

⁷⁶ Vitr. 2.8.15; Cass. Dio 42.48. Vitruvius speaks of the Rhodians who did not destroy the trophy built by Artemisia after reconquering their city. Caesar also spared two trophies, that of Pompey and that of Mithridates VI.

⁷⁷ JONES 1992, pp. 138–139.

⁷⁸ POULTER 1986, p. 525; ALEXANDRESCU VIANU 2015, p. 169. Contentious issues regarding the identification of

the altar are analyzed by Alexandrescu Vianu, among others.

⁷⁹ POULTER 1986, p. 525.

⁸⁰ ALEXANDRESCU VIANU 2015, p. 167. Some researchers still think that the monument was a mausoleum of Cornelius Fuscus, a general of Domitian. Vianu suggests that it was a tomb from the times of Augustus.

according to Poulter why another victory monument was constructed at Adamclisi following the Second Dacian War.⁸¹ Following this assumption, the trophy pictured on the reverse of a denarius struck in Rome in AD 103 may represent this tentative older monument⁸² [Fig. 8].



Fig. 8. Reverse of a denarius (*RIC* II 88) struck between AD 103–111 with a representation of the trophy of Trajan

The narrative sources fail to mention the trophy of AD 109, but its dating is precise, based on the inscription preserved at the top of it.

Ma[rti] Ultor[i] / Im(perator) [Caes]ar, divi / Nerva[e f(i)lius], N[e]rva / [Tr]aianu[s
Aug(ustus) Germ(anicus)] / 5. [Dac]i[cu]s p[ont]ifex max(imus)] / [trib(unicia) potes]-
t(ate) XIII / imp(erator) VI, co(n)s(ul)] V, p(ater) p(atriciae) / (? [devicto exer]citu / [Da-
corum et e.g. Sarmata]rum / 10. [- - -]E / [- - -] / [? tropaeum consecravit].⁸³

On the grounds of this text, it may be established that the monument was raised three years after the conclusive battle.⁸⁴ The trophaion was built on a crepidoma composed of nine steps, 38.62 m in diameter and 2.40 m high. A rotunda was constructed on it, 30.20 m in diameter and 7.58 m high. This rotunda was decorated with six rows of limestone blocks from the Deleni quarry, all of the same size. Above this ran a frieze featuring vegetal motifs and Dacian dragons; topping it were 54 metopes with scenes from the military campaigns, under a frieze of palmettes and linear patterns. At the top was an ornamental cornice with panels presenting captives [Fig. 9]. Lion-shaped gutters for discarding rainwater were fitted at the edges.

A conical roof covered with stone tiles, 5.30 m high, rose above the rotunda. Its central part consisted of a hexagonal tower 11.30 m high. The corners were decorated with pilasters and the said inscription was found at the center. Topping the tower was a pedestal decorated with panoplies and above this a monumental, 9-m high trophaion [Fig. 10]. The trophy was made up of the armor, a helmet, the shields and weapons. The armor breastplate was decorated with a scene of Trajan on horseback, an eagle flying above his head. A *gladius* was depicted next to the emperor along with two hexagonal shields with Gorgon's heads on them. The helmet was placed above the armor. Three captives were shown at the foot of the trophy: two women sitting on either side and

⁸¹ POULTER 1986, p. 526.

⁸² *RIC* II 88.

⁸³ *CIL* III 12467: "To Mars Ultor, Caesar the emperor, son of the divine Nerva, Nerva Trajan Augustus, Germanicus, Dacicus, Pontifex Maximus, Plebeian tribune

for the 13th time, [proclaimed] Emperor [by the army] for the 6th time, Consul for the 5th time, Father of the Fatherland, conquered the Dacian and the Sarmatian armies".

⁸⁴ CASTELLVI 2015, p. 249.



Fig. 9. Adamclisi, Archaeological Museum, metope with a representation of a Dacian captive (photo T. Płóciennik)



Fig. 10. Adamclisi, Archaeological Museum, original remains of the trophy of Trajan (photo T. Płóciennik)

a man with hands bound behind his back. The monument measured close to 37 m in height and was dedicated to an avenging Mars.⁸⁵

Trajan is believed by some researchers to have built more trophies than just the one at Adamclisi. Juan Roman Carbo Garcia and Felix Julian Rodriguez San Juan suggested that the emperor was responsible for another trophy resembling the structures from Lower Moesia, La Turbie and Coll de Panissars, which he commissioned at Characene on the Euphrates and Tiger rivers after the Parthian campaign. The monument would have been a mark of Roman power in the East. However, sources, including Jordanes, whence this idea derives from, do not speak of a trophy, but of a statue of the emperor which may have been decorated with weaponry.⁸⁶ Moreover, no archaeological evidence of this monument has ever been found. Even so, one should keep in mind the possibility of a trophy of this kind being constructed, especially as coins struck in Rome after the Parthian campaign in the East presented a *tropaion* on the reverse, furnished with the legend *PARTHICA CAPTA*.⁸⁷

Recapping, the following observations come to mind. First, Roman trophies from the mid-second century BC evolved from simple tumuli resembling provisional towers into monumental structures modeled on Hellenistic tombs or mausolea. These models were repeated throughout the time of the Republic and the Empire. The natural conditions of the setting of these structures may have also determined the architectural form of the trophies. It was essential that they towered over the surrounding territory.

⁸⁵ FLORESCU 1965; IBARRA 2009, pp. 179–178; CASTELVI 2015, p. 250.

⁸⁶ CARBO GARCIA, RODRIGUEZ SAN JUAN 2012, pp. 17–35.

⁸⁷ RIC II 325.

As rightly noted by Castellvi and Maria Alexandrescu Vianu, the tropaia from Coll de Panissars, La Turbie and Adamclisi constituted symbols of imperial power, commemorating the death and glory of the legionaries.⁸⁸ Their monumental form was meant to tower over the conquered peoples and spoke of the inevitable Romanization of newly conquered territories. According to Hölscher, the raising of trophies was the first step in forging political domination of a conquered area from a military success.⁸⁹ Personal ambition of individual generals may have motivated the building of trophies, but the superior objective was to extend Roman territory ultimately to become *imperium sine fine*.

Abbreviations

<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum</i> .
<i>RIC II</i>	<i>The Roman Imperial Coinage</i> , vol. II, ed. H. Mattingly, E. Sydenham, London 1968.
<i>RRC</i>	<i>Roman Republican Coinage</i> , ed. M. H. Crawford, Cambridge 1974.

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⁸⁸ CASTELLVI 2015, p. 256; ALEXANDRESCU VIANU 2015, pp. 166–181.

⁸⁹ HÖLSCHER 2006, pp. 27–48.

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Streszczenie

Na granicy prowincji — monumentalizacja rzymskich tropajonów wieżowych w okresie republiki i cesarstwa

Pod wpływem greckich idei tradycja budowy tropajonów praktykowana była w Rzymie, najpóźniej od schyłku III w. p.n.e., co sugerują źródła literackie oraz numizmatyczne. W okresie tym wykonane z metali szlachetnych lub kamienia trofea ofiarowywano na Kapitolu. Nie ma jednak pewności, czy pomniki te miały swoje polowe odpowiedniki, czy były tylko darem dla Jowisza.

Według dostępnych przekazów Rzymianie wzniesli tropajony na polu bitwy dopiero podczas kampanii Gnejusza Domicjusza Ahenobarbusa i Kwintusa Fabiusza Maksimusa w Galii Zaalpejskiej w 121 r. p.n.e. Nie były to jednak efemeryczne trofea, a kamienne wieże (*saxae turres*) zwieńczone orężem pokonanych wrogów. Przykład ten jest punktem wyjścia w każdej publikacji na temat tropajonów, w szczególności zaś monumentów, które w literaturze przedmiotu określane są jako *towers-trophies* lub *trophées-tours*.

Dzięki badaniom archeologicznym możemy obecnie przeanalizować pozostałości pięciu trofeów wieżowych: Gnejusza Pompejusza Wielkiego na Coll de Panissars, Augusta w La Turbie i Trajana w Adamklissi. W przypadku tropajonów w Urkulu i (starszego?) w Adamklissi badacze nie są zgodni co do tego, kto zlecił ich budowę. Charakterystyczne jest jednak to, że żadne z tych trofeów (oprócz budowli z 121 r. p.n.e.) nie zostało wzniesione na polu bitwy. Monumenty te wystawiano na granicach prowincji bądź na terytorium wroga, najczęściej na wzgórzach lub przełęczach, aby były widoczne z wielkiej odległości (*landscape-trophy*). Ponadto konstrukcje te przewyższały swą architektoniczną formą tropajony polowe (m.in. Lucjusza Korneliusza Sulli), gdyż w przeciwieństwie do nich były one wznoszone po kampaniach wojennych, a nie w ich trakcie. W ten sposób powstały okazałe trofea wieżowe Pompejusza, Augusta i Trajana, którym poświęcony jest niniejszy artykuł.

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