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**LIBANIUS'S SPEECH «TO TIMOCRATES» AS A SOURCE
FOR THE LATE ANTIQUE THEATRE CLACQUEURS STUDIES**

Summary. *The article deals with theatre claqueurs of the 4th century in Roman Empire as a progenitor of deme-odious «parties of hippodrome» of the 5th – 6th centuries. Based on Libanius' speech, the article describes the number of claqueurs, their social status, activity beyond theatres, interactions with government (both local powers and Emperor representatives), their role in mass riots. The methodology of the study is based on the principles of science, historicism, consistency, as well as on the use of general scientific methods (induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis) and special-historical methods (historical-systemic, historical-genetic, historiographical and source-analysis). The scientific novelty is that for the first time in the national historiography the activity of the theatre claqueurs has been investigated separately as a powerful organization, which has become an important factor in urban life since the end of the 4th century. The conclusions are as follows: the claque phenomenon was spread in Antique times even before that. People were hired by the theatre actors to back up the theatrical plays with claps and yells, encouraging other people to do the same. Other way to support actors*

was to repeat rhythmic phrases that were called acclamations. But in the 4th century, theatre claqueurs went further and became a political force in the cities of the Roman Empire. This perturbation was pictured in Libanius's speech «To Timocrates». Libanius himself was the most famous orator of the 4th century, originally from Syrian Antioch, spending most of his life in that city and dedicating most of his speeches to its problems. Antique author was very hostile towards claqueurs, he considered them to be a menace to the city, while describing their existence in full details. Analyzing Libanius's speech, other sources and scientific literature, one can see claqueurs as an organized association of young people who have set themselves the goal of making money both legitimate and not so legitimate. In the city of Antioch, their number was about 400 men. In addition to receiving funding from the actors of the theater, the claqueurs demanded money from officials for the approval of their person, also engaged in a simple extortion of money of ordinary people in Antioch. In social terms, most theatrical «screamers» were from the poor, but there were some representatives of wealthy families. The theory that the claqueurs were one of the initiators of the rebellion in Antioch against the emperor in 387 renders sound is justified. This means that they have gained the value of an independent political force.

Key words: theatre claqueurs, Libanius, Antioch, Late Antiquity.

ПРОМОВА ЛІБАНІЯ «ДО ТИМОКРАТА» ЯК ДЖЕРЕЛО ВИВЧЕННЯ ПІЗНЬОАНТИЧНИХ ТЕАТРАЛЬНИХ КЛАКЕРІВ

Анотація. **Мета дослідження** – характеристика діяльності театральних клакерів у Римській імперії IV ст. як прообраз демів – одіозних «партій іподрому» V–VI ст. Спираючись на промову оратора Лібанія, у статті визначається чисельність клакерів, їхнє соціальне походження, діяльність за межами театру, взаємовідносини з політичною владою (як місцевою курією, так і представниками імператора), роль в організації масових заворушень. **Методологія дослідження** спирається на принципи науковості, історизму, системності, а також на використання загальнонаукових методів (індукції та дедукції, аналізу і синтезу) та спеціально-історичних методів (історико-системний, історико-генетичний, методи історіографічного та джерелознавчого аналізу). **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що вперше у вітчизняній історіографії окремо досліджено діяльність театральної клаки як потужної організації, яка стала важливим фактором міського життя, починаючи з кінця IV ст. **Висновки.** Явище клаки було відоме в Античності і раніше. Це були люди, які наймалися акторами театру, щоб підтримувати театральні постановки своїми оплесками та криками і тим самим підштовхувати інших глядачів до схвалення дійства. Однією з форм підтримки були акламації – спеціально заготовлені ритмічні фрази. Але в IV ст. театральна клака еволюціонує як організація і отримує, здавалося б, невластиві для себе ознаки. Ця пертурбація яскраво видна за промовою Лібанія «До Тимократа». Сам Лібаній – найвідоміший оратор IV ст., уродженець сирійської Антіохії, який більшу частину життя прожив у цьому місті і більшість промов присвятив його проблемам. Античний автор з ворожістю ставився до клакерів, вважав їхню діяльність злом для міста, але в той же час намалював деталізовану картину їхнього існування. Аналізуючи промову Лібанія, інші джерела та наукову літературу, можна побачити клакерів як організоване об'єднання молодих людей, які ставили собі за мету заробляння грошей як законними, так і не надто законними способами. У місті Антіохія їхня чисельність становила близько 400 осіб. Крім отримання фінансування від акторів театру, клакери вимагали грошей від чиновників за схвалення їх персони, займалися простим рекетом звичайних жителів Антіохії. У соціальному плані більшість театральних «крикунів» були вихідцями з бідноти, але були і окремі представники заможних родин. Обґрунтованою виглядає теорія, що клакери були одними з ініціаторів повстання в Антіохії проти імператора у 387 р. Це означає, що вони отримали значення самостійної політичної сили.

Ключові слова: театральні клакери, Лібаній, Антіохія, Пізня Античність.

Problem statement. In the early Byzantine Empire of the Vth – VIth centuries, the most powerful and most dangerous for a central power by the force of urban life were demes, or the so-called «parties of hippodrome». The main ones were «Blues» and «Greens», with their political program, the structural organization and the paramilitary formations. Demes

repeatedly manifested themselves on the political arena with various performances, the most famous of which was the uprising of «Nicka» in 532. This rebellion barely cost the power of the Emperor Justinian and was trampled by extraordinary efforts. The IVth century was the time of the birth of the future odious parties to the hippodrome. Moreover, the embryos of such formations existed not only around the racecourse. One of the predecessors of the demes were theatrical claqueurs. Their job was to support theatrical performances with their applause and shouts, and thereby to encourage other viewers to approve the action. Clapping was not a phenomenon that appeared only in the days of the Late Antiquity. The theater claqueurs were also known from the previous epochs. Thus, Tacitus in the «Annals» recollects the soldier Percenius, who organized the riots in the army after August's death: «In the past, the head of the theatrical claqueurs, then the ordinary warrior, is eloquent and sagacious and is able, through his theatrical experience, to heat up the gathering» (Tacitus, Ann. I, 16). Dio Cassius reports that Nero used his guard services as theatrical claqueurs, which were called Augustinian with the number of 5 thousand people. They «were the initiators of applause, and together with them, even contrary to their own will, all the other spectators were forced to shout out» (DioCassius, LXII, 20.4). But in the IVth century the theatrical claqueurs evolved and developed, seemingly, uncharacteristic political features for them. The Speech «To Timocrat» written by the orator Libanius may help us to understand how the theatrical claqueurs functioned in one of the largest cities in the empire – Syrian Antioch.

The analysis of sources and recent researches. The modern scientific literature is used in the article, in addition to the speech «To Timocrates» and other Libanius works. Since the issue of studying of the theatrical claqueurs in one speech is narrow/small-minded enough, but it was a part of a broader topic exploration. An important milestone in the study of the late antique class was the article written by R. Browning, who explores the participation of this social group in the Antioch rebellion of 387 AD. (Browning, 1952). The author considers the claqueurs to be the main reason for the performance to take place. D. French continues to study of the rebellion and mentions the claqueurs in this context (French, 1998). The article also uses the scientific works devoted to the life and views of Libanius. They help to understand deeper the outlook of the speaker, the reasons for those ratings that he gives to theatrical screamers. Libanius is a rather popular object of modern historical researches, both in the form of monographs and articles. The orator interests the researchers as a defender of the traditional model of education (paideia) and paganism associated with it (Swift, 2016; Jones, 2013). The significant investigator of Libanius activity was G. Kurbatov. He paid much attention to the speaker: one of the sections of the «Early-Byzantine portraits» is devoted to this author (Kurbatov, 1990), and also the monography, which in various aspects investigates the development of Antioch in the IVth century, including the widely used speeches of Libanius (Kurbatov, 1962). The greatest modernist researcher of Libanius is the historian R. Cribiore, who explores in detail the functioning of his school in Antioch (Cribiore, 2007). To evaluate the urban life of Antioch as an environment in which claqueurs developed, can help the fundamental work of G. Downey (Downey, 1961). The author mentions the theatrical screamers in the context of the uprising of 387 and supports R. Browning's view of their active participation in the riot.

The publication's purpose is to solve a number of the research tasks. Among them are the following: determining the number of claqueurs and their activities in the theater; the study of the origin and social belongings of this population; finding out the ways to earn money by claqueurs; the analysis of the peculiarities of the relationship with the political

authorities – both with the local curia, as well as with the representatives of the emperor in Antioch. The article also revealed the claqueurs involvement in the uprising in Antioch in 387 AD. Libanius's personal attitude towards this group of people was observed separately.

Statement of the basic material. Libanius is fairly considered to be a true titan of eloquence of the IVth century. We received about 70 of his speeches on the contemporary topics, about 50 declamations – on the topic of fiction and over 1,000 letters. His influence on the formation of the rhetoricians and sophists generations was enormous. According to the scientist Udaltsova there are 134 known names of his students (Udaltsova, 1984, p. 334). Many of his Christian speakers and preachers were the representatives of his school, for example, the famous Ioan Zlatoust. Libanius was born around 314 AD in Syrian Antioch in an influential and wealthy family of curials (Kurbatov, 1990, p. 52). According to Libanius, he was a spoilt kid in his childhood, but at the age of fifteen he embraced an all-consuming passion for eloquence, all the other interests were suppressed immediately and permanently (Lib., Or. I, 5). The lightning stroke Libanius, which led to the health problems and was the life-changing event. Like many other orators of the IVth century, Libanius focused on the self-development during 336 – 340 AD in Athens, which remained the capital of oratorical art (Cribiore, 2007, p. 15). He appeared to be an extremely talented intellectual and got the right to open his own school. During the next 14 years, Libanius was looking for the best place to realize his potential – he taught and performed in Constantinople, Nicaea, then in Nicomedia. The oratorical skills were so popular that the competition between well-known speakers raised the audience. In such kind of oratory battles, Libanius in Nicomedia won a victory over one of the most famous Athenian speakers – Hymerius, and Bemarchius in Constantinople (See: Lib., Or.I, 39; Udaltsova, 1984, p. 335). In 348 AD he had the opportunity to make a panegyric to emperors Constantius and Constans. Panegyric succeeded, and Libanius was officially approved for the position with the imperial salary in Constantinople. In Constantinople he strengthened his friendship with another prominent rhetorist – Themistius. However, Libanius didn't indulge into the Constantinople's atmosphere, with its new bureaucratic tendencies. He did not get accustomed to the capital and in 354 AD he returned to Antioch, received a heart-warming welcome and after numerous petitions he got permission to stay here (Udaltsova, 1984, p. 335). Libanius's school flourished. The students came to his school from all the East regions, and as a result, he even got the permission to hold his classes in the large hall of the Antiochian curia (Cribiore, 2007, p. 30). During Julian's reign, who valued his rhetoric art, he strengthened his position and influence. The speaker himself expressed his respect and respect for the ruler, especially during his stay in Antioch in 362 – 363 years (Teitler, 2013, pp. 264–265). After Julian's death, Libanius was in disgrace – he practically didn't write the speeches, his correspondence ceased (Kurbatov, 1990, p. 54). But with the reign of Theodosius I and Libanius brought his respect back, for instance, in 383/4 he was awarded the title of honorable praetorian prefect. The last decade of Libanius's life was extremely fruitful. A large number of speeches and letters were written precisely in this period, until his death around 393 AD.

Libanius came from the municipal aristocracy and became an active defender of the municipal structure. He has the ideal view of a social life, it was a polis in the form of the municipality of the day of the Principate (Kurbatov, 1990, p. 54). The ritual paganism was in accordance with it. But Libanius was not a radical fighter for old believers like Julian the Apostate. He was tolerant to the Christians, perceived paganism as an element of the traditional municipal life, as well as a treasury of the mythological motives for the rhetorical

use. His views on the religious question are expressed in the speech «On Temples» (Lib., Or. XXX), addressed to Theodosius I. Most of the researchers considered this work to be the most prominent one (Jones, 2013, p. 860; Swift, 2016, p. 170). But Libanius paid attention to the public affairs, specific political problems. In his speeches, the speaker described practically all the basic elements of the life of Antioch in the IVth century.

The speech «To Timocrates» was written in the last decade of Libanius life. Filagrius, the comes of the East, is mentioned in the context he once held this position. (Lib., Or. XLI, 18). Officially, he served as a comes in 382 AD, respectively, the speech was written after that date. Filagrius became famous for punishing seven bakeries who tried to enrich themselves by rising the price of bread when Antioch had problems with the grain supply (Downey, 1961, p. 420). It is hard to define the exact date. The addressee of the speech is the Consul (Viceroy) of Syria Timocrates. But there is no written evidence that came to light about such a person among the rulers of the province in the 80-ies and the 90-ies in the IVth century. The speech «To Timocrates» is addressed to a high-ranking official. Libanius has got a lot of similar texts that refer to the leaders of the provinces and the emperors. In this context, it should be highlighted that while writing such speeches, the speaker did not put himself in the position of a flatter, but showed his civil attitude. Libanius, while approaching to the grandee, allowed himself to give a fair share of criticism of their actions, advising them on what kind of decisions to make. (Downey, 1961, pp. 424–425). However, on the other hand, the researcher R. Penella finds the examples of flattery in his speeches (Penella, 2012, p. 894).

The speech is a reference to Timocrates in his sad times. As the governor was upset after he returned from the theater because he received the cold welcome, there was no approval or applause for either the figure of an official representative or the theatrical performance in which he was involved. Libanius persuaded him not to worry because he was sure that the action was planned by the claqueurs: «They are making agreements to keep silent, while sitting in their places, and keep viewers under the threat by gestures, making them to do the same. Then, the day goes by, and those who had finished their performance, leave the scene without approval. It seems something outrageous to the ruler and he feels miserable» (Lib., XLI, 3). In contrast, in his speech «Against Florentius», Libanius is forced to admit the advantage of the claqueurs: «The claqueurs have the power in theaters, because they rule the mob by the power of their voices, and these people throw thunder and lightning on whom they wish ...» (Lib. Or. XLVI, 17). The following traditional scheme was as follows: the official was worried because of the silence of the audience, he appealed to the leaders of the theater claqueurs and bought their support on the certain or the next performance for money or other preferences. This support could be expressed in the form of acclamations – prepared beforehand «chants», the rhythmic phrases. They could either praise an official or criticize him if he could not agree with the claqueurs (see Browning, 1952, p. 17; French, 1998, p. 469).

Libanius refers to Timocrates with a speech for a specific purpose. The speech isn't aimed at verbally patting the official on the shoulder with the following words: «Do not worry, everything will be fine». The purpose of the speech is to convince Timocrat neither to negotiate with the claqueurs, nor to buy their support. After all, Libanius considers the claqueurs to be the most despicable part of the population of Antioch. The speaker's words leave no doubt to this: «... What is the price of the glorification/praising of these people, who have lived from their childhood till nowadays in cruelty and in great perversity? ... All these men came here with shame because of their crimesthey were expelled from their native cities...» (Lib.,

Or. XLI, 5–6). The hatred of the claqueurs makes the speaker to describe them exaggeratedly: the part of the theatrical screamers according to Libanius killed their parents, the part of their youth were hookers (Compare with: Browning, 1952, p. 16). But Libanius' basic idea can be taken for granted: a significant part of the claqueurs did not have permanent jobs and considered their activity to be the main source of income in the claue: «They hurried here to earn money from the local theater, wishing to live only for such income» (Lib. Or. XLI, 6). According to Libanius, the actors of the theater provided for the claqueurs constantly: «Some of them were at mimes disposal, most of them were dancers (masters of pantomime). They provide them for more or less salary. The claqueurs receive low salary when they rest, and higher salary when they dance» (Lib., Or. XLI, 7). In the speech, the total number of the claqueurs in Antioch is 400 people, estimated by Libanius (Lib., Or. XLI, 9; see also: Kurbatov, 1990, p. 89). This number of people was enough to influence the events in the city. It is interesting that about the same number of people was the number of members of the Curia of Antioch.

Libanius, in his attempt to describe the claqueurs as the declassed elements contradicts himself. He reproaches the claqueurs that they are «spoiling» the noble boys. Some of these noble young men even give up classes in eloquence and go to the claue (Lib., Or. XLI, 9). Here, Libanius obviously sadly admits that some of his students have become the claqueurs, left their studies. Rhetorical education was the culmination of the education at that time, requiring the graduation from the grammatical schools and significant financial resources (Compare with: Cribiore, 2007, p. 30). Hence, we can make a conclusion that not only the poor foreigners became claqueurs, but also the young people who had quite good social and financial backgrounds were striving for making easy money and illegal adventures. The claqueurs activities for earning money go beyond the theater. In the speech «Against Florentius», Libanius accuses the claqueurs for being engaged in a racketeering: «It is necessary to give them respect, or to perish otherwise. What is respect? They ask for something and receive it, then again ask and receive ... At the same time, if one refers to his poverty as a cause, why doesn't he borrow him something, he is the offender, and he is ready for the abusive revenge ...» (Lib., Or. XLVI, 17–18). In the quotation it is said that the claue leaders demanded a «tribute» from the merchants and the craftsmen of the city. If they refused to pay, then public scandals could be organised against them, their property could be devastated, and in the worst cases they could be murdered.

As the time was passing by, the claqueurs key activity was their interaction with the authorities. But let's go back to the consular Timocrates. Libanius saw that during the theatrical performance, the official representative sent a messenger to get acquainted with the claqueurs with the following words: «I am not very acquainted with you», «What are you dissatisfied with?», «Why are you silent?» (Lib., Or. XLI, 15). Libanius consistently and rigorously criticizes Timocrates for such kind of actions, calls him not to seek for support from such indecent and unworthy people: «Like the tamed lions, who, had lost their freedom, are afraid of the guardian's threats, so are you. Having lost your power, you are able to lead yourself out of fear of four hundred people» (Lib., Or. XLI, 15). Libanius gives an example of the decent official representative – the comes Filagrius, who, without hearing the approval from the claqueurs of his person in the theater, just stood up and left the theatrical performance (Lib., Or. XLI, 18). He is compared with the two unnamed officials who collaborated with the claqueurs and therefore had a bad reputation in the city. Although, in other fields they were respectable and prudent men (Lib., Or. XLI, 18).

The clacker's exclamations not only flattered the pride of the officials, but could also influence their specific decisions regarding the management of Antioch. The above-mentioned speech written by Libanius «Against Florentius» informs about such kind of situation. The speech is addressed to Emperor Theodosius I, and is aimed at criticizing the activities of the Consular (governor) of the province of Syria, Florentius. Libanius accused him of co-working with the claqueurs and many others unworthy acts. The speech describes the unnamed rhetorician, a decent person, who was «disgraced by the bribed majority in the theater». Florentius succumbed to the «black PR» and gave the rhetorician away as «a sacrifice to habits and insolent, unlawful speeches» of his enemies (Lib., Or. XLVI, 5). The unnamed sufferer was the subject to the prosecution and, as a result, was deprived of the curial status. With the help of their screams the claqueurs could have an influence on the trial outcomes or just dishonor a person and call into the question the person's virtues. Libanius acknowledges this fact sorrowfully. While referring to Timocrates, the ancient author said that the claqueurs «have become stronger than the curia, and they receive more honors from You (Timocrat – authoritative) than those who spent their wealth on the public service» (Lib., XLI, 17). At the same time, Libanius believed that the claqueurs should behave in a different way: «... capture some of those who offend, show their anger to them, punish for the people's audacity, who live at the expense of the debauched dancers, there is no need to consider slander more reliable than the facts» (Lib., Or. XLVI, 5). Timocrat is required «if possible, to cleanse this city from scum, or if not, deprive this element of true power» (Lib., XLI, 19).

The claqueurs activity gradually became a threat to the entire city elite. For some period of time the claqueurs did not have their own political program and were ready to support any officials for the money. But soon the situation changed, the rebellion in Antioch in 387 AD was the reason for that. The main source of the riot research is actually the speeches of Libanius. Five of them (Lib., Or. XIX – XXIII) are dedicated to the rebellion directly. Most of them turned to the emperor and his officials to mitigate their sanctions against the city after the rebellion was suppressed. R. Browning, the researcher, calls the claqueurs the main driving force which stands behind the rebellion (Browning, 1952, p. 20).

According to the scientists, the approximate date of the performance was on the 25th or the 26th February in 387 AD (Stephens, 2013, p. 6). The people were dissatisfied with the new extraordinary city taxation imposed in the honor of the 10th anniversary of the reign of Emperor Theodosius I (Kurbatov, 1962, p. 213; Downey, 1961, p. 426–427). In order to inform about the new taxation, Celsus, the governor of the province, gathered the curials in the courthouse. When the information was announced, the part of the wealthy Antiochians wept (Lib., Or. XIX, 26), some began angrily to deny that fact (Lib., Or. XXII, 5). Radical curials began to run out of court and appealed to the public. According to the reconstruction of R. Browning's events, the claqueurs intervened. Their participation in the rebellion was the following: the curials enlisted the services of theatrical screamers for organizing protests against the extraordinary tax imposed by Theodosius I. The protests were supposed to be peaceful, and the curia had to use that peacefulness as an argument for reducing the size of the duty. But at some point, the claqueurs refused to play the role they were given and began to call the citizens for violence. The rebellion was unstoppable, despite the fact that the curials separated from the rebels. The rebels tried to capture the emperor's palace, confusion began in craftsmen quarters. The statues of the emperor and the members of his family were destroyed in the city (Lib., XIX, 29; Lib., Or. XX, 4, Lib., Or. XXII, 8. See also: Browning, 1952, p. 20; Kurbatov, 1990, p. 90), the houses of the local elite representatives were burnt

down (Lib., Or. XIX, 32; Lib., Or. XXII, 9). The rebellion was quickly suppressed, but showed the complexity of the political situation in the cities of the empire.

The authoritative researcher G. Downey agrees with R. Browning's ideas about the claqueurs. Both researchers consider the claqueurs as the main driving force of the rebellion (Downey, 1961, p. 428). At the same time, it should be noted that in his speeches Libanius never calls the theatrical claqueurs as the provocateurs of the rebellion directly. As a result, some researchers doubt R. Browning's concept. The certain part of the researchers insist on the fact that there is not enough evidence of the key role of the claqueurs in the performance heating. Thus, D. French notes that the claqueurs could have been among the drivers of the rebellion, but their success in the rebellion of the crowd relied on the ability to remain unnoticed (French, 1998, p. 484). However, a few sentences in Libanius speech show indirectly that they were the main culprits. The ancient author rhetorically asked who incited the rebellion and then gave the answer: «Those who favoured the dancers over the sun itself, the moon and the clouds» (Lib., Or. XIX, 28). For several times, Libanius highlighted that the migrants from other cities were the initiators of the riot, which correlates with the orator's idea from the speech «To Timocrates» that the majority of claqueurs are the newcomers (Lib., Or. XLI, 6).

Conclusions. Consequently, the speech «To Timocrate» written by Libanius depicts that the claqueurs became a powerful force in Antioch at the end of the IVth century. At that time there were 400 men, which was enough for the group of claqueurs to achieve their goals. At first, the claqueurs served the theatrical actors (mimes and pantomimes) interests, they were always giving them the applause or weeping for the sake of the theatrical plays success. But throughout the time, the claqueurs realized that not only the actors were seeking for fame and recognition, but also the representatives of the political elite. The claque as an organization began to use that weakness, provided the support to the official representatives during the events for the appropriate reward. At the same time, the claqueurs activity went beyond the theater. Firstly, the claqueurs were demanding money from the local population under the threat of a physical abuse. Secondly, the elite was trying to use the claqueurs as a physically strong men group to perform their «delicate» tasks that the curia could not do themselves. For example, it could be the organization of the peaceful protests against the policy of the central government. But during the rebellion in 387 AD, in Antioch, the claqueurs refused to act in accordance with the plans of the curians and began to call people for the violence and the destruction of the emperor's statues. The events of the rebellion have shown that the claqueurs were gradually becoming the separate political force that was oriented towards their own interests, and they did not care about the wishes of customers. As for the social composition of the claqueurs, Libanius tried to convince the others that the claqueur's clan included only the declassed elements. But Libanius admitted that among the claqueurs there were also the youngsters who had strong social and financial backgrounds and joined the group of claqueurs because of easy money and their desire to live at a full speed. Libanius considered the claqueurs to be the vilest part of the urban population, the parasites, who lived on the body of Antioch. He called Timocrates for cleaning the city from these people, or at least not to cooperate with them.

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