



The Historical Reception of Diodorus Siculus: An Analysis of the *Status Quaestionis* of Diodorian Studies

A recepção histórica de Diodoro Sículo: uma análise do Status Quaestionis dos estudos diodorianos

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Abstract: Until the middle of the last century, a significant portion of historiography considered Diodorus a mere copyist, and his value as a source lies primarily in the works that he supposedly used. However, this was not always the case. The author of *Agryrium* was praised and quoted for many centuries, especially by the early Christians and the Byzantines. His autonomy and uniqueness were rediscovered in the 1950s, and today they set the tone for studies on Diodorus. This article seeks to analyze the evolution and changes of Diodorian studies over the centuries, in order to understand what is the current stage of academic discussions.

Keywords: Diodorus; universal history; Quellenforschung; copyist.

Resumo: Até a metade do século passado, Diodoro era considerado, por boa parte da historiografia, um mero copista, residindo o seu valor enquanto fonte apenas nas obras que supostamente ele utilizou. No entanto, isso nem sempre foi assim. O autor de *Agírio* foi elogiado e citado durante muitos séculos, em especial pelos primeiros cristãos e pelos bizantinos. Sua autonomia e singularidade foram redescobertas a partir dos anos 1950, e hoje dão a tônica dos estudos sobre Diodoro. O presente artigo busca analisar a evolução e as mudanças dos estudos diodorianos ao longo dos séculos, com o intuito de compreender como qual é o estágio atual das discussões acadêmicas.

Palavras-chave: Diodoro; história universal; Quellenforschung; copista.

1 Different periods and different readings: Diodorus' fortune from Antiquity to the seventeenth century

The reception of Diodorus' work varied over time and according to each historical context of the authors who mentioned or studied the *Library of History*. For a genesis of the history of the work itself, it is necessary to analyze commentaries concerning the work, reaching back to the earliest studies. Orriols (2015, p. 334-335) claims that research on Diodorus has focused on two spheres: the author's narration and his method.

The same author divides the main trends that shaped Diodorian studies into three phases: (1) the first ranges from Antiquity to the 15th century, with a generally positive view of Diodorus and his work; (2) the second includes studies from the 17th and 18th centuries that are relatively more critical; the author considers them to be an intermediate point between the ancient tradition and the more severe criticism that would follow, which the author still places within the second phase, even though it is set in the 19th century; and (3) in the final phase, in the twentieth century, the previous studies were not disregarded; however, many of the prior criticisms were revised, especially those that touched on Diodorus' originality. The present study will follow this chronological order, but it will also add questions concerning the manuscripts and editions of the work, since they are part of the history of Diodorus' reception.

As far as classical and late antiquity are concerned, the authors can be divided into non-Christians and Christians. The first citation of Diodorus' work was made by Pliny the Elder (23-79 A.D.), in the epistle dedicated to the emperor Vespasian. This is the preface (25) of his *Naturalis Historia*, in which the author praises Diodorus' choice of the title of his work, criticizing other authors who put grandiose and fanciful titles in their books, but who failed to stick to the content.¹ Pliny, in the general index of the same work, also cites the name of a certain Diodorus Syracusan² as one of his non-Latin sources for Book III, which

¹ The original Latin excerpt: "*Apud Graecos desiit nugari Diodorus et Βιβλιοθήκης historiam suam inscripsit*". In our own translation: "Among the Greeks, Diodorus put an end to superfluities and titled his history the Library".

² Zecchini (1991, p. 348) questions whether the term "Syracusan", to denote the origin of Diodorus, was a mistake by Pliny or if it was something recurrent in the Flavian era.

treats, among other territories and islands, Sicily, and for Book V, which describes Asia Minor and North Africa.

After Pliny, another non-Christian author who quoted Diodorus in his work, came Athenaeus of Naucratis (*Deipnosophisti*, XII, 59), who lived between the second and third centuries A.D., which presented the passage of Diodorus (XI, 25, 4, 5) regarding a pool (*κολυμβήθρα*) held at Akragas after the victory over the Carthaginians, which Athenaeus erroneously attributes to the tyrant of Syracuse, Gelon. However, Diodorus does not involve this tyrant in the creation of this enterprise. Through Jerome (347-420 A.D.), in the preface to his commentaries on the prophet Daniel, the reader also discovers that Diodorus would have been used by the Neoplatonist Porphyry of Tyre (234-304 A.D.), who would quote the author of Agyrium for the history of the Seleucids, in his work *Contra Christianos*. As the last non-Christian author, Achilli (2012), in a reinterpretation of the “Dissertations” (*διαλέξεις*) by the philosopher Maximus of Tyre (second century AD) finds a passage where the author praises the usefulness of history (XXII, 5-7), an echo of Diodorus’ preface (I, 1-5), which uses terms that are very similar to those of Maximus.

In the following centuries, Diodorus had an important reputation, especially among Christians. The first to quote him in the *Cohortatio ad Graecos* (9), is Pseudo-Justin (100-165 A.D.), who praises Diodorus and speaks of his work and his travels, describing him as follows: “Diodorus, your³ most famous historian, spent thirty years in summarizing various collections of books, and, to gain the exact truth of events, he traveled (as he states) throughout Asia and Europe. Thereafter he witnessed many things with his own eyes; he wrote forty books on history” (our translation). Thus, as Zecchini (1991, p. 351) explains, through this

It can also be hypothesized that confusion arose because, according to Diodorus himself (XVI, 88, 4), the citizens of Agyrium would have received Syracusan citizenship after the expulsion of the local tyrant, Apolloniads, by Timoleon of Corinth. Moggi (1976, p. 355) even conjectures a true incorporation of Agyrium, along with Centuripe and Leontini, into the territory of Syracuse. Perhaps, in this way, the name of Diodorus reached the period of Pliny.

³ Pseudo-Justin refers to the Greeks.

statement by Pseudo-Justin, it can be deduced that Diodorus had a certain prestige in Syria in the third century AD.⁴

Tertullian (160-240 A.D.) quotes Diodorus in two of his works. In one of them (*Apologeticum*, 10, 7), Diodorus is only cited as one of several pagan authors who speak of Saturn only as a human being, in an attempt by Tertullian to prove that pagan deities were in fact deified human beings.⁵ In the other work (*Ad nationes*, II, 12, 26), Tertullian alludes to Diodorus again in relation to the myth of Saturn. Still another Christian author, Minucius Felix, who lived from around the second century to 260 A.D., in *Octavius* (21:4), again speaks of Diodorus to place him among the non-Christian authors who referred to Saturn as a man, and not as a god. The same quotation from Minucius Felix and Tertullian appears in Lactantius (*Institutiones Divinae*, I, 13, 8). In a tone similar to that of Justin, Eusebius of Caesarea (265-339 A.D.),⁶ in the *Praeparatio Evangelica* (I, 6), also praises Diodorus at a certain point in his work:

Well then, in recording the ancient theology of the Egyptians from the beginning, Diodorus, the Sicilian, leads the way, a man thoroughly known to the most learned of the Greeks as having collected the whole Library of History into one treatise. From him I will set forth first what he has clearly stated in the beginning of his work concerning the origin of

⁴ According to Cavallo (1995, p. 267), Diodoro's textual tradition should have, until the tenth century, a Syrian or Palestinian branch.

⁵ This passage, in addition to the quotation from Minucius Felix below, makes reference to the episode narrated by Diodorus (V, 66) about how Saturn (*Κρόνος*, in Diodorus), by the various beneficent actions (*εὐεργεσίαν*) to men, teaching justice, and, in the words of Diodorus, causing his subjects to pass from a harsh to a civilized life, was deified after his death. All these narrative elements of Diodorus are part of the author's own belief system, as he himself mentions in his preface (I, 2, 4), when he praises History as the guardian of the past, and that it is beautiful that illustrious men receive, in exchange for their mortal fatigues, immortal fame.

⁶ According to Cordiano (2018, p. 37), Eusebius would have had access to Diodorus through the collection of Origen's library in Caesarea, Palestine. Zecchini (1991, p. 356) goes so far as to attribute to Origen the introduction of Diodorus into Greek-speaking Christian culture in the first half of the third century A.D.

the whole world, while recording the opinion of the ancients in the manner following (*Praep. evang.*, I, 6).⁷

Moreover, Eusebius, this time more similar to Minucius Felix, Tertullian, and Lactantius, in another passage from the same work (II, 52-62), which is the first fragment of the sixth book of Diodorus, directly quotes the author of Agyrium when he tells the accounts of Euhemerus of Messina, author of a *Sacred History* (*Ἱερὰ ἀναγραφή*), in which the human and mortal origins of Uranus, Kronos, and Zeus, respectively, are explained even more directly. All of them, along with their sons, were deified, according to what Eusebius attributes to Diodorus.⁸ Still in the *Praeparatio Evangelica* (X, 4; 8), Eusebius, quoting passages from Book III of the *Χρονογραφία* of Sextus Julius Africanus (160-240 AD), brings the name of Diodorus,⁹ along with that of other authors, to a chronology of Cyrus and Greece before the Trojan War.

Another Christian author, who also takes a similar approach to the authors mentioned above is Jerome (already cited earlier), in his translation into Latin of the chronicle of Eusebius of Caesarea (Jerome *apud* Helm, 1956, p. 155, our translation), who describes the author of the Library of History as: “Diodorus Siculus, author of Greek history, is considered illustrious.”¹⁰ This interest, on the part of Christian apologists,

⁷ Excerpt from the English translation by E. H. Grifford (2019). The original Greek version by E. H. Grifford (1903): “Γράφει τοίνυν ἄνωθεν τὴν παλαιὰν Αἰγυπτίων ὑφηγούμενος θεολογίαν ὁ Σικελιώτης Διόδωρος, γνωριμώτατος ἀνὴρ τοῖς Ἑλλήνων λογιστάτοις, ὡς ἂν ὑπὸ μίαν συναγοχὼς πραγματεῖαν ἅπασαν τὴν ἱστορικὴν βιβλιοθήκην. “Ἐξ οὗ πρῶτα παραθήσομαι ἃ περὶ τῆς τοῦ παντὸς κοσμογονίας ἀρχόμενος τοῦ λόγου διείληψε, τὰς τῶν παλαιῶν ἱστορῶν δόξας τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον.”

⁸ According to Bounoure (1982, p. 434, n. 5), it is not possible to know the accuracy of Eusebius' quotation, given the contradictions present in the passages of Diodorus (V, 42, 6) and Eusebius (*Praeparatio Evangelica*, II, 52-62), in which the author of Agyrium refers to the sanctuary of Zeus, built on the island of Pancaia by the same Zeus when he was still a king, as a place situated in a flat area, Eusebius, quoting Diodorus, says that the sanctuary was located on a high mountain.

⁹ The original Greek excerpt from the first quotation is: “ὡς ἐκ τῶν Βιβλιοθηκῶν Διόδωρον” (as in Diodorus' Library, by our translation). The second quotation brings the following passage: “καὶ τὰ πάντων Διόδωρος ὁ τὰς Βιβλιοθήκας” (and Diodorus included the history of all peoples in his Library, by our translation).

¹⁰ In the original: “Diodorus Siculus Graecae scriptor historiae clarus habetur”.

is understood by Beatrice (1998, p. 220, our translation) as being, on the one hand, the result of the universal genre of the Library of History but, mainly, because it “[...] is equally close, in many ways, to their moral sensibilities and their needs as polemicists engaged in the fight against the dominant idolatry”.¹¹ In addition, the use of Diodorus in the third and fourth centuries A.D. and the genre of his work, a universal history, were important for that society, given that Library tried to compress the entire human experience. Moreover, for a group of readers who valued brevities and epitomes, Diodorus seemed the best solution (Zecchini, 1991, p. 353).

Before entering Diodorus’ fortune in the Byzantine world, it is important to note that Diodorus also became known outside the Greco-Roman world as well. In the fifth century A.D., the Armenian historian Movses Khorenatsi (410-490 A.D.), in his *History of Armenia* (*Պատմութիւն Հայոց*) also quotes Diodorus, especially in the preface of book III, in which he claims that:

There is no study of the antiquity of our land, nor can we go through all that of the Greeks owing to the lack of time. Likewise the works of Diodore are not available to us, so that by casting an eye on them we could discuss everything without forgetting anything that is important or significant and worthy of being recorded in our account. (Khorenatsi, III, from the English version of Robert W. Thompson, 1978).

This account is important to testify to how much Diodorus’ work could have circulated in the Near East and the Caucasus region, where Movses Khorenatsi lived. Traina (1995, p. 84-87) observes not only a certain familiarity of the author with some concepts related to Diodorus and other authors of the first century B.C., such as the idea of highlighting important or significant events, which in Diodorus appears with the term *Ἀξιόλογος*, but also shows how Diodorus was a useful author to be consulted, especially for Christian authors, even though he was a pagan author, but it would have been more difficult to consult to an Armenian historian, whose historiographical tradition had not yet been formed.

¹¹ “[...] qui était également proche, sous beaucoup d’aspects, de leur sensibilité morale et de leurs nécessités de polémistes engagés dans le combat contre l’idolâtrie dominante.»

In Byzantine times, Diodorus' fortune remained positive. John Malalas (491-578 A.D.), in his *Χρονογραφία* (*Chronography*), describes Diodorus as “the most learned chronicler” (I, 13), speaking again of the humanization of Zeus made by the author of Agyrium, as the apologists cited above had mentioned. Another author who praised him is George Syncellus (8th century-810 A.D.), in a work that has the same title as Malalas's, inserting Diodorus among a group of illustrious (*ἐπίσημος*) historians, alongside Polybius, citing them as sources for the Assyrian kings who dominated the Arabs (v. 73, 10, p. 172, ed. Dindorf). The prominence of Diodorus along with other so-called “illustrious” historians, also demonstrates a certain prestige of the author in the Byzantine period. Also from Syncellus (v. 155, 5, p. 366, ed. Dindorf) it is possible to infer that Diodorus, in his book VII, would have narrated about the foundation of Rome.¹² Always referring to the Byzantine period, Schreiner (1990, p. 56) points out that Diodorus served as a model for a general history of all nations, with a Christian garb, just as Thucydides would be the model for a contemporary history.

Even more importantly, the Library of Photius (810-893 AD) and the *Constantinian Excerpta*, commissioned by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (945-959 AD), can be cited. Photius, patriarch of Constantinople, compiled and wrote an immense work, in which there are 280 tomes or codices, with comments on several authors, among them, Diodorus, who appears in codices 60, 70 and, especially, 244, which is the largest codex of Photius' work (Pfuntner, 2015, p. 259).

In the first mentioned (60), Photius uses Diodorus to reference this codex, which speaks of the life of Herodotus. In Codex 70, the Byzantine author praises the style of the Diodorian work and its author, describing it as “clear and unadorned, which fits perfectly with the story” (*Bibliotheca*, 70, our translation *apud* Pfuntner, 2015),¹³ in addition to making general comments on the structure of the work and with biographical data brought by Diodorus himself. In codex 244, Photius takes up passages from

¹² In the original Greek version of Dindorf: «περί τῆς ἀρχαιογονίας ῥωμαίων ἐκ τῆς ζ Διοδώρου Σικελιώτου».

¹³ In the original Greek: «Κέχρηται δὲ φράσει σαφεῖ τε καὶ ἀκόμψῃ καὶ ἱστορίᾳ μάλιστα πρεπούση».

books XXXI to XL. About book XXXIV, specifically, Photius cites the passage from Diodorus in which Antiochus Epiphanes takes Jerusalem (167 BC), in which the author of *Agyrium* would have criticized the laws of Moses, found by Antiochus in the temple. Photius, at the end of this codex, reproaches Diodorus, calling him a liar, at least in this passage (379b-380a). According to Botteri (1992, p. 32-33), the patriarch would have been quite scrupulous and precise when carrying out this compilation. Pittia (2011, p. 173, n. 9) points out, however, that these passages did not follow an exact order in the succession of books, and Pfuntner (2015, p. 259) adds that Photius would have omitted some parts of books XXXIV and XXXVI, which were only completed by the *Excerpta*.

The *Excerpta* were part of the works carried out during the rule of Constantine VII, who also wrote treatises on the art of government (*De administrando imperii*) and a biography of his grandfather Basil I. Of the 53 original sections of the *Excerpta*, only 4 have survived: *de Legationibus*, *de Virtutibus et vitiis*, *de Insidiis* and *de Sententiis* (Cordiano, 2018, p. 38, n. 15). Of these, the *Excerpta de virtutibus et vitiis* and the *Excerpta de sententiis* should be highlighted, which have preserved the largest number of fragments of Diodorus, 380 in the first and 480 in the second, which, together with the 34 fragments found in *Legationibus* and the 54 found in *Insidiis*, totaling 949 fragments of the Library of History in the work of Constantine VII (Bertrac, 1993, p. CXXXIV). The *Excerpta* contained from sacred history to Jewish and Greek history, universal chronicles, the history of Alexander the Great and Rome, and Hellenistic history was included in works such as those of Diodorus or Polybius (Canfora, 1995, p. 190). In general, these sections have preserved the fragments and summaries of books XXI to XXVI. Casevitz (2002, p. 455, our translation) already points out that “obviously, what has been preserved is above all the extraordinary, the paradoxical, the remarkable, the exemplary, but it seems quite faithful, where it can be confronted”.¹⁴ Pittia (2011, p. 174) also questions how close they can be to the original text. With Eusebius, Stephen of Byzantium, Photius

¹⁴ «Évidemment, ce qui a été conservé est surtout l'extraordinaire, le paradoxal, le remarquable, l'exemplaire, mais il semble assez fidèle, là où on peut le confronter».

and Constantine VII, the fragments of the lost books of Diodorus' work are preserved (Vidal-Naquet, 2002, p. 149).

The Byzantine encyclopedia *Suda* is mainly known for bringing, in the entry on Diodorus, a brief biographical description from Hesychius of Miletus (Alasà, 2001, p. 17), in which it says that “Diodorus Siculus, historian. He wrote a Library: It is a Roman history and diversified history in 40 books. He lived in the times of Caesar Augustus and earlier”.¹⁵ But *Suda* also transmitted 64 excerpts from Diodorus' work, without, however, directly using the Library of History, and based on the *Excerpta* (Bertrac, 1993, p. CXL; Cordiano, 2010, p. 386). There are also quotations from Eustace, Archbishop of Thessalonica (1115-1198 A.D.), who wrote the *Commentarium ad Iliadem*, and who quotes Diodorus in what is the second fragment of Book VI of the Library of History, and in other uncertain fragments,¹⁶ but he turns out to be an author of lesser relevance when studying the fragments of Diodorus (Pittia, 2011, p. 174, n. 18).

Pittia (2011, p. 175) and Bertrac (1993, p. CXLII) state that the missing books from the Library were lost during the fourth crusade, in 1204. However, it is necessary to reconsider this hypothesis, if we take into account the testimony of the Byzantine humanist Constantine Laskaris (1434-1501), in his comments on Greek writers,¹⁷ especially from Sicily, in which he describes the author of Agyrium and his work:

Diodorus Siculus from Agyrium was a celebrated historian who lived under Tiberius Caesar. He composed a history of forty books, which he called the Library: he dealt with the ancient things of the Egyptians, Sicily and other islands, the Trojan war, and the actions of Alexander and the Romans up to his period. Of these books, six¹⁸ were published by

¹⁵ In the original Greek «Διώδορος, Σικελιώτης, ἱστορικός. ἔγραψε Βιβλιοθήκην· ἔστι δὲ ἱστορία Ρωμαϊκὴ τε καὶ ποικίλη ἐν βιβλίοις μ'. γέγονε δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν χρόνων Αὐγούστου Καίσαρος καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ».

¹⁶ See Bertrac (1993, p. CXLII-CXLIII).

¹⁷ The edition made by Migne (1866), entitled “*Patrologiae Graecae*”, was used, in which several works by different authors are collected, among them Constantine Laskaris. The quote comes from pages 917-918.

¹⁸ As will be mentioned below, Poggio Bracciolini translated the first five books of Diodorus' work, but here there is talk of six books because Diodorus' book I is divided

Poggio [Bracciolini]. The other books are difficult to find. I, however, saw all his books in the library of the emperor of Constantinople (Migne, 1866, p. 917-918, our translation and emphasis added).¹⁹

Not only does this testimony show a positive view of Diodorus' work, but it is also evidence that Diodorus' work was not yet complete, at least until the middle of the fifteenth century.²⁰ Bertrac (1993, p. CXLII, n. 183), however, observes that this testimony is too imprecise and Canfora (1995, p. 69) states that the sentence underlined in the quotation, that Constantine would have seen the complete work of Diodorus, does not appear in another draft of the same text, written for the citizens of Messina.²¹ Casevitz (2002, p. 452) agrees with the damage and destruction

into two parts, although there is controversy about the authenticity of this division (see the first footnote of the BUR Rizzoli edition of chapter 42 of Diodorus' first book). Casevitz (2002, p. 450) points out that the division would have been necessary due to the length of the scrolls, since the codices would be used more commonly from the 3rd-4th centuries AD (see McCormick, 1985, p. 150-158). Canfora (1995, p. 12) says that not only book I, but also book XVII had this division into two parts, maintaining, however, the unity of the book. The same Canfora explains that, from the Hellenistic period and the library of Alexandria, the labels increased in size, allowing the writing of historical works to be considerably larger than those of authors such as Herodotus, Thucydides or Xenophon. There may also be works such as those of Polybius and Diodorus.

¹⁹ Original excerpt: "*Diodorus Siculus Argyrensis, historicus praestantissimus, qui sub Tiberio Caesare militavit. Historiam composuit libris quadraginta, quam Bibliothecam vocavit: de antiquitate Aegyptiorum, de Sicilia et aliis insulis, de Bello Trojano, de gestis Alexandri et Romanorum usque ad suam aetatem, quorum sex a Poggio Florentino circumferuntur. Reliqui vix inveniuntur. Ego autem omnes ejus libros vidi in bibliotheca imperatoris Constantinopolitani.*"

²⁰ In 1453, with the capture of Constantinople, Laskaris became a prisoner, arriving in Milan only in 1458. It can be concluded that this account, that he would have seen the complete work of Diodorus in Constantinople, would portray a scenario prior to the Ottoman conquest. For more information on the life and work of Laskaris, see Manzano (1998).

²¹ In another excerpt further on, Canfora (1995, p. 191) attests that some of Diodorus' codices from the time of the Palaiologos dynasty (1259-1453) already showed that the Library of History may well have been incomplete from book V onwards.

of libraries during the fourth crusade, but takes into account Constantine Laskaris, attributing the destruction of Diodorus' lost books to the Turks.

There has also been a gradual “abandonment” of Diodorus' work since Byzantine times, which is explained by Cordiano (2010, p. 390). He says that chronographs, such as Malalas and Syncellus, used Diodorus less and less directly, and quoted him more and more through the chronologies of Eusebius of Caesarea. A similar process also took place, not in relation to chronographs, but to lexicographers and authors of epitomes, such as *Suda* and Tzetzes, who also used the indirect version of the *Excerpta*. Thus, at least two centuries before the fourth crusade, there was a gradual disinterest in reading the Library of History in its entirety, especially from the work of Constantine VII, which, according to the same Cordiano, had an impact on the manuscript tradition.

The 15 books preserved in the Library of History were preserved in 59 manuscripts (Bertrac, 1993, p. LXXVIII). In total, the first five books of the work have 28 manuscripts, four of which are those that we can consider to be prototypes (Stronk, 2017, p. 18). Diodorus' first manuscript is the *Neapolitanus suppl. gr. 4* (referred to with the acronym D),²² made on parchment at the beginning of the tenth century and restored in the thirteenth century,²³ while the other two oldest are the *Vaticanus Graecus 130* (with the acronym C) and the *Vaticanus Graecus 996*,²⁴ with the acronym V (Cordiano, 2010, p. 372). Finally, there is also the manuscript *Laurentinianus 70, 1* (with the acronym L), from the fourteenth century, which contained books I to III and V of Diodorus, without, however, having the mythological passages, considered to be lies by the copyist (Bertrac, 1993, p. LXXXI). These four manuscripts formed the main families (D, C, V, and L) of the later apographs and

²² On this manuscript, although it is in Naples, and having belonged to the Calabrian humanist Aulus Giano Parrasio (Lucà, 1990, p. 34), Cavallo (1995, p. 267, n. 11), using the study of Lucà (1990), deduces a Greco-Eastern origin from the manuscript, which may have been written in Constantinople and with possible links to a Syrian-Palestinian tradition.

²³ For this reason, the acronym D is subdivided into Da, indicating the old version, and Db, indicating the restored part (Bertrac, 1993, p. LXXIX).

²⁴ Probably written in Constantinople, between the end of the eleventh century and the beginning of the twelfth, it contained the first five books (Bandini, 2019, p. 274).

manuscripts. Thirty-four would be the manuscripts of books XI to XX, three of which contained books I to V, totaling the 59 mentioned above. Of these, four are the prototypes: the manuscript *Marcianus Graecus 375* (with the acronym M), dated from the middle of the tenth century and with books XI to XV; the *Patmiacus 50* (acronym P), from the tenth and eleventh centuries, containing books XI to XVI; the *Parisinus Graecus 1665* (with the acronym R), from the tenth century and with books XVI to XX; and, finally, *Laurentinianus 70, 12* (acronym F), dated from the second half of the fifteenth century, which had books XI to XX (Bertrac, 1993, p. CI-CV; Stronk, 2017, p. 20-22).

The fact that this order of books was preserved can be explained, according to Canfora (1995, p. 198), not only by the fact that Diodorus' work was divided into eight codices containing five books each, with the other groups of five books being lost in the codices²⁵ and, therefore, being a material cause, but also because the second codex, that would range from books VI to X, as it dealt with the archaic history of Greece, would have caused less interest, while the two other groups, from books XI to XV and from XVI to XX, comprised the period between 480 and 301 of Greek history, arousing greater interest for its preservation.

Casevitz (2002, p. 453) also seeks to explain why a work like Diodorus' is preserved. She observes that, in the eyes of a copyist and for the interested public, the historian, unlike the poet and the philosopher, can become obsolete. This would be the reason why Diodorus would be preferred over other universal historians, such as Ephorus, Timaeus, and Ctesias of Cnidus, or not. The author of *Agyrium* would still have an advantage over Ephorus by including mythology in his universal work, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

For scholars and for the transmission of the texts that interested them, the most recent universal – the Universal Library, compilation and collection of all works on all times and all places – soon killed the particular (local histories,

²⁵ In the case of Diodorus, they are the groups of books VI-X, XXI-XXV, XXVI-XXX, XXXI-XXXV and XXXVI-XL. The same choice happened to Polybius, of whom only the first codex with the first five books has been preserved, and to Dionysius of Halicarnassos.

particular monographs) or the ancient universal, before this totalizing work itself suffered the outrages of partial loss. (Casevitz, 2002, p. 353, our translation).²⁶

Both arguments, both from Canfora and Casevitz, have interesting points, but do not answer why the codices containing books XXI to XXX and from XXXI to XL, which would comprise the Hellenistic (post-Alexander) and Roman periods, were not copied. There is also a manuscript, called the *Excerpta Hoescheliana*, which was copied by the Englishman R. Thompson between 1597 and 1603, and edited in 1603 by the German David Hoeschel (1556-1617), in which there are some Diodorian fragments from books XXI to XXVI. However, the fragments would not have been chosen with a specific theme (Bertrac, 1993, p. CXXXVII), but with criteria that were sometimes lexicographical, sometimes geographical, sometimes moralizing, using a form of writing different from that of Diodorus and with numerous errors in Greek (Pittia, 2011, p. 175-176).

In the western Mediterranean, however, the Library of History would only be rediscovered in 1397 in Florence, when Manuel Crisoloras (1350-1415), a Byzantine humanist invited by Coluccio Salutati to teach Greek at the *Studium*, took some manuscripts that, in 1405, had their first translation from Greek to Latin by Leonardo Bruni, a disciple of Crisoloras, even if it was only the excerpt from Book I (Sideri, 2022, p. 1). Robathan (1932, p. 84), however, already contested this attribution to Bruni, and attributes to Poggio Bracciolini²⁷ the first translation of Diodorus into Latin, under the commission of Pope Nicholas V, in 1449, of the first five books of the Diodorian work. The use of Diodorus in the school of Crisoloras is also noted in the codex *Vaticanus Graecus* 877, in which there are mottos from the Library of History, most likely

²⁶ «Pour les érudits et la transmission des textes qui les intéressèrent, l'universel le plus récent – la Bibliothèque universelle, compilation et réunion de tous les ouvrages sur tous les temps et tous les lieux – a tût tué le particulier (histoires locales, monographies particulières) ou l'ancien universel, avant que cet ouvrage totalisant ne subisse lui-même les outrages de la perte partielle.»

²⁷ On the work and translation technique of Bracciolini, who also translated Lucian of Samosata's *Iuppiter confutatus* and Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, see the recent work of Pittaluga (2022).

copied by Crisoloras' disciple, Roberto de' Rossi (Bandini, 2019, p. 273). Bracciolini would have used, through his contact with the diplomat Cristoforo Garatone, the manuscript *Vaticanus Graecus 995* (Pittaluga, 2022, p. 19), from the fifteenth century and belonging to the *Laurentinianus 70, 1* family (Bertrac, 1993, p. XCV).

Another group of documents, however, had already been taken by Giovanni Aurispa who, according to Sabbatini (1905, p. 47-48), undertook two trips to the East: the first between 1405 and 1413, where he obtained codices by Euripides, Sophocles and Thucydides; the second, between 1421 and 1423, would be much more productive, as it obtained an even greater number of manuscripts by ancient authors, among them Xenophon, Pindar, Strabo and Diodorus Siculus. Sideri (2022) asserts that Aurispa left the manuscripts in Ferrara, where he had moved and died in 1459, making this city, along with the afore mentioned Florence, and Rome, with two popes, Eugene IV and, especially, Nicholas V, who encouraged translations of the work, to be the first reception centers for Diodorus. After Bracciolini's translation, Nicholas V also commissioned the translation of books XI to XV for Iacopo San Cassiano (Pittaluga, 2019, p. 18) and books XVI to XX for Pier Candido Decembrio (Zabeo, 2016, p. 113). Both were not completed. The first, because of the translator's premature death, while the second translation was interrupted by the death of Pope Nicholas V himself, in 1455 (Giallombardo, 1998, p. 490, n. 15, n. 17).²⁸

From the second half of the fifteenth century and, especially, in the sixteenth century, a movement of translations into vernacular languages began in Europe, and no longer into Latin. In the French case, the first translation of the Library of History, made from the Latin version by

²⁸ In addition to the translations, Diodorus' work was used by the Florentine architect Antonio Averlino "Filarete" (1400-1469) in his treatise on architecture, in which he recommends reading Diodorus for questions related to Egypt (in I, XX he calls Diodorus "Siracusan", as Pliny had done, then in I, XXII he calls him "Sicolo"). In addition to the passages in which Diodorus is explicitly cited, there are also those, analyzed by Grassi (1987), in which Filarete follows the information provided by Diodorus very closely, especially in the first three books. The author (1987, p. 56) therefore puts forward a hypothesis that, having written his work at the court of the Sforzas in Milan between 1460 and 1464, Filarete must have consulted Diodorus' work directly in the Sforza library or even before.

Giano Lascaris (Sideri, 2022, p. 6, n. 21), was carried out by Claude de Seyssel, which contained, however, only books XVIII to XX, and had the title of *L'histoire des successeurs d'Alexandre le Grand*. This first translation was published in Paris in 1530 (Pettegree et al. 2007, p. 481). A few years later, Antoine Macault would translate the first three books of the Library based on the Latin version of Poggio Bracciolini (Sideri, 2022, p. 6, n. 21), not only into French but also into Italian (Orriols, 2015, p. 338), the first published in 1535 and the second in 1526. Finally, Jacques Amyot, in 1554, would translate from books XI to XVII, with the difference that this translation would be directly from Greek, from the codex *Marcianus Graecus 375* (Bertrac, 1993, p. CLI-CLII).

As far as England is concerned, the humanist John Skelton was the main exponent, having been the first to translate the Library into English, in 1486 (Orriols, 2015, p. 337). As with Macault, Skelton also used the Latin version of Poggio Bracciolini, which contained the first five books, and not the Greek work (Griffiths, 2006, p. 38). In his study, Griffiths (2006, p. 41-42) highlights how Skelton highlighted and altered parts of Bracciolini's preface, seeking to exalt the work of the writer and historian to society and, in Skelton's case, to the court environment of fifteenth-century England (Green, 1960, p. 44-47). The first translation into German was published later, only in 1827-1840, with Julius Friedrich Wurm (Alasà, 2001, p. 123).

In 1559, the humanist and Hellenist Henri Estienne donated the first complete version of the Greek text to the Library of Genevra (Chamoux, 1993, p. LXVIII), which considered the *Editio princeps* of Diodorus' work (Stronk, 2017, p. 28), praising the Diodorian work in the preface to this same edition (Botfield, 1861, p. 534, our translation), stating that "just as the sun shines among the stars, also among all the historians who have come down to our times (if one considers utility rather than pleasure), it can be said that our Diodorus stands out."²⁹ One might also think that, for Estienne, Diodorus might not have been so agreeable in his writing style, but his value lay in his practical usefulness for consultation or use.

²⁹ Original Latin text: "*Quantum enim solis lumen inter stellas, tantum inter omnes quotquot ad nostra tempora pervenerunt historicos (si utilitatis potius quam voluptatis aurum habenda sit ratio) noster hic Diodorus eminere dici potest*".

Nevertheless, Diodorus was already known in the Germanic world, with Johannes Boemus (1485-1535) being one of the authors who attests to the influence of the author of *Agyrium* in this context, given that, after the discoveries, with new peoples and human populations having been contacted for the first time, new ideas and reevaluations of the classical tradition were conceived. In his work *Omnium Gentium Mores, Leges et Ritus*, a pioneer for ethnographic studies, published in 1520, Johannes, in his preface, cites Diodorus among a large number of important historians of Greek and Latin antiquity. Boemus also wrote, in the first two chapters of the work, about the origin of human beings (Boemus, 1588).

The first chapter had a theological view, based on biblical stories, while the second, entitled *De origine hominum opinio ethnicorum falsa* (On the false opinion of the origin of the ethnicities of men), had an interpretation based, in his words, on the “*veteres vero illi philosophi*” (those ancient philosophers). However, this second chapter is very similar to Diodorus (I, 6-8), as far as the beginning of it is concerned, with which Boemus certainly had contact. According to Nothaft (2016, p. 728), Boemus sought to complement the biblical stories with those parts not present in *Genesis* (1-11), in which there is no mention of the cultural and technological progress of humanity, something that was present in Diodorus and his contemporary Lucretius.

Finally, an interesting testimony about Diodorus’ fortune is the forgeries or works falsely attributed to him, especially in the seventeenth century in Sicily. According to Militello (2001, p. 15), the writing of “pseudo-historical” works was part of a competition between cities and even between families, seeking to substantiate their privileges. Diodorus did not escape this fate. An author belonging to the nobility of Catania, named Ottavio d’Archangelo, also known for other forgeries, such as the *Istoria delle cose insigni e famosi successi di Catania* (History of the insigneous things and famous successes of Catania), which aimed to give a prominent role to his hometown, as opposed to Palermo and Messina (Contarino, 1986), would have translated the supposed *Epistles of Diodorus Siculus*. This translation would also have been made from another translation, made from Greek to Latin, by Bessarion, a Byzantine humanist (Preto, 2006, p. 12-13; Militello, 2001, p. 16). Despite being

a fake work, it may give a clue as to how Diodorus would have been a sign of prestige in the seventeenth-century Sicilian environment.

2 The period of “crisis” and the new approaches (eighteenth centuries to the present day)

To understand the reception of Diodorus in the Renaissance and at the beginning of the modern era, quantitative research, which shows the number of editions of ancient authors published from the invention of the printing press, can enhance the present study. The work carried out by Burke (1966, p. 137), shows how Diodorus was published three times between 1450-1499, seven times between 1500-1549, ten times between 1550-1599, four times between 1600-1649 and, finally, once between 1650-1700, thus totaling 25 editions (14 in Greek or Latin and 11 in vernacular languages) in a period of almost 250 years. If compared to other historians on the same list, especially the Romans, these are minimal numbers. By comparison, Sallust, the highest in the ranking of the number of editions of the same time frame, has 282. Of the 11 vernacular editions, Burke (1966, p. 139) points out that five were in Italian, three in French, and two in English.

A more recent article, however, written by Jensen (2018, p. 564-565), which aims to update Burke’s article, points out that the number of editions alone does not indicate the number of printings and how popular the book was in a period, focusing more on the analysis of book printings. Thus, Jensen (2018, p. 577) counted 56 printings by Diodorus, in the period between 1450 and 1599, with the years between 1510 and 1519 being the period with the highest number of printings (9). Of this total, 34 were prints in Greek or Latin, and 22 in vernacular languages. However, Jensen (2018, p. 588) attests that many authors who originally wrote in Greek, including Diodorus, circulated more in vernacular languages, because “given the difficulties of Greek printing, and the disproportionate risks for even the most illustrious printers of producing books in Greek, a translation would make the production of such a text easier and cheaper, as well as marketable to a broader readership”. It is also interesting to note how some editions contained only some parts of Diodorus’ work, such as the Trojan War or the Life of Alexander (Jensen, 2018, p. 593),

such as the afore mentioned one by Seyssel. This data can also illustrate which parts of the work were most appreciated by readers and according to the evaluation of the editors during this context.

With the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we approached the critical phase of the nineteenth century, but already with omens in this period, thanks to the gradual insertion of comparison methods for the study of sources (Orriols, 2015, p. 339). A work that can be considered the first observation of an unoriginal Diodorus is the *Lectiones Polybiana*e by Johann Heinrich Boeckler (1611-1672), especially in the chapter entitled *Diodori Siculi imitatio Polybiana* (the Polybian imitation of Diodorus Siculus), in which the author says at the beginning that “Diodorus, in extraordinary work, imitates Polybius, not only in judging deeds, but also in the manner of speaking itself (Φράσσει)”³⁰ (Boeckler, 1670, p. 172, our translation). Then, in the rest of the chapter, the author compares several passages from Polybius and with his correspondent in the Library of History, not always a faithful imitation of the author of Megalopolis,³¹ but always aiming to show a dependence on the Sicilian.

During this period, new editions of the work also appeared, such as that of Laurent Rhodoman, from 1604, the second translation into English, made by G. Booth in 1700 and, most importantly, the editions of Pierre Wesseling, in 1745. Rhodoman’s edition was based on the text of Henri Estienne’s *Editio Princeps* and was published in two volumes in Hannover (Stronk, 2017, p. 28). This edition contained the Greek text together with a Latin translation, published separately in 1611. This Greek text used parts of the *Hoeschelian Excerpta*, for book XX, with some personal notes by Rhodoman (Bertrac, 1993, p. CLIV). In 1700, after almost 200 years since Skelton’s translation, the second translation into the English language appeared, made by G. Booth in two volumes. This translation uses the text of Rhodoman’s edition, as the same translator cites (1700, p. V). Booth also has a positive view of Diodorus, especially

³⁰ “Diodorus mirifico studio Polybium imitatur, non in iudicio tantum de rebus gestis exponendo, sed etiam in ipsa Φράσσει”.

³¹ In Boeckler (1670, p. 174), for example, Diodorus partly used imitation and partly spoke more simply than Polybius. On the next page, the German author would also praise Diodorus, even in his imitation of Polybius.

because “amongst other excellencies of this author, he is peculiarly observable to have a regard and respect to the providence of God in the affairs of the world; and is the only ancient author that takes notice in the course of his history of the times wherein the most famous historians, philosophers, and poets flourished” (1700, p. IV).

Finally, of great importance for the transmission of the text was Wesseling’s edition. It was made in 2 volumes in 1745, and is important because, in addition to having Rhodoman’s text, it also added Constantine’s *Excerpta de Legationibus* and *de Virtutibus*, as well as other fragments (Bertrac, 1993, p. CLIV). He did not see the manuscripts, but he did use the help of collaborators to carry out their edition, citing them in the preface (Wesseling, 1793, p. CLXXII-CLXXIII). About the author, Orriols (2015, p. 339) points out that he would have shared Boeckler’s opinions, cited above, about the similarity between Diodorus and Polybius.

Between 1782 and 1785, the German classicist Christian Gottlob Heyne (1729-1812) wrote three treatises that were called *De fontibus et auctoribus Historiarum Diodori et de eius auctoritate* (On the sources and authors of the histories of Diodorus and his authority). In these treatises, which also appear in the introduction to Ludwig Dindorf’s 1866 work of Diodorus, Heyne (1866, p. XXXIX, our translation) states that “thus Diodorus, wanting to write an ecumenical history that would comprehend all times in one work, could not be considered the author of the things narrated, since, if he took the things told from others, their honesty and authority, which he narrates, returns to them, from where his had remained”.³² Heyne (1866, p. XXXVIII) also states that Diodorus was often compared to Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon, which may indicate that Diodorus was still, at the end of the eighteenth century, among the main Greek authors. Heyne already considered that, to understand the value of Diodorus as a historian, one should analyze the value of the sources used in each part of the work.

³² “Omnino Diodorus, historiam catholicam condere omniumque temporum res uno opere comprehendere vellet, rerum narratarum auctor haberi nequit, nisi quatenus eas ab aliis traditas accepit; fides et auctoritas eorum, quae narrat, redit ad eos, unde sua hausit.”

To speak of the reception of Diodorus in the nineteenth century, it is inevitable to speak of the *Quellenforschung*. The term can be translated as “research on the origin of the source”, and was a specific technique of philology, mainly German, in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, which aimed to find “inconsistencies” in the text of an ancient author, through a deconstruction of it (Alasà, 2001, p. 18). Most (2016, p. 935) summarizes the *Quellenforschung* method as follows:

How can one be sure that some passage in a surviving ancient text B was not invented by that text’s author but was taken over by him from some other, earlier text A? Obviously, matters are simpler if text A is still available to us, so that we can determine by inspection whether the two passages in question are identical.⁶ But suppose that text A has been lost. The standard technique of *Quellenforschung* philological involves comparing that surviving passage in one text B with some other similar passage in another surviving text B1 (and with any other similar passages in surviving texts B2, B3, etc., if these are available) and arguing that since (1) the degree of similarity between these passages in B and in B1 (and Bn) is too great to be explained by mere chance and (2) the two surviving texts seem to be independent of one another, in the sense that neither of them was the direct cause of the other, they must consequently both derive from some third text A, earlier than both of them but subsequently lost, which can be reconstructed on the basis of this comparison.

This method, according to Orriols (2015, p. 340-341), saw that the search for the authority and veracity of the source was essential to arrive at the “truth”, with a certain distance between the researcher and the object. The first work that would bring this method, until then closer to critical studies of the Bible, to pagan texts of classical antiquity, would be the *Prolegomena ad Homerum*, from 1795, written by Friedrich August Wolf (Most, 2016, p. 937) who, like Heyne, had studied at the University of Göttingen. Through this technique of analysis, the *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* (Fragments of Greek Historians), edited by

Karl Müller and Theodor Müller in 1841, and Jacoby's *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, in 1926 were possible (Rubincam, 2018, p. 17). Gradually, this method was used with Diodorus, because the fact that he survived, but not the authors he used, made there a greater interest in reading and "discovering" these authors who have not survived to our days, than trying to understand the Library as a cultural product of a given context (Rubincam, 2018, p. 15).

An early testimony of Diodorus' reception in the nineteenth century comes from Theodor Mommsen, in his *Die Römische Chronologie bis auf Caesar* (The Roman Chronology to Caesar) of 1859. In it, the author writes that "the fasts of Diodorus are of great importance, for they undoubtedly come from the Annals of Fabius; unfortunately, they are so shaken by the incredible simplicity and still more incredible lack of conscience of this most miserable of all scribes, as the following table clearly shows them" (Mommsen, 1859, p. 125, our translation).³³ Years later, in 1878, the same Mommsen published an article, entitled "Fabius und Diodorus" (Fabius and Diodorus), arguing that Fabius Pictor would have been Diodorus' source for archaic Roman history. Wilamowitz (1848-1931), in a letter to the Egyptologist Heinrich Schäfer, would also say that Diodorus was "such a miserable scribe" (Chamoux, 1993, p. XXI, our translation).³⁴

Nonetheless, Nissen (1863, p. 82-83) already disagreed with the idea of considering Diodorus a mere compiler and, thus, despised the Library of History, even though his work was not centered on Diodorus. However, in 1868, Christian August Volquardsen (1840-1917) published a doctoral thesis entitled "Untersuchungen über die Quellen der griechischen und sicilischen Geschichten bei Diodor, Buch XI bis XVI" (Investigations into the sources of Greek and Sicilian histories in Diodorus, from book XI to XVI). In it, the author criticizes Diodorus right at the beginning of his work, stating that:

³³ "Die Fasten Diodors sind von grosser Wichtigkeit, da sie ohne Zweifel aus den Annalen des Fabius herkommen; leider sind sie indess durch die unglaubliche Einfalt und noch unglaublichere Gewissenlosigkeit dieses elendesten aller Scribenten so zerrüttet, wie die folgende Tabelle sie übersichtlich darlegt."

³⁴ "Ein so miserabler Skribent."

The importance of Diodorus' Library of History for the study of Greek history cannot be measured by the judgment that must be made about its author as a historian. What Diodorus achieved as such in the composition of his work, bears the stamp of total ignorance, narrow-mindedness, and a frivolity bordering on unscrupulousness in the treatment of his material (Volquardsen, 1868, p. 1, our translation).³⁵

In the first chapter, the author also criticizes Heyne's method, stating that he considered all those authors cited by Diodorus to be sources of Diodorus, and that Heyne's work was a mere compilation of the names cited by the author of *Agyrium*. Volquardsen's thesis, starting with chapter VII, also seeks to find sources that Diodorus would have copied, such as Ephorus of Cumae and Theopompus of Chios for the Greek histories, and Timaeus of Tauromenius for the histories related to Sicily.

A few years later, in 1869, Wilhelm Collmann published his *De Diodori Siculi fontibus* (On the sources of Diodorus Siculus), seeking to demonstrate that Diodorus, to narrate the Peloponnesian war, had used Ephorus, and that Ephorus used Thucydides. Collmann (1869, p. 29) also established that Eusebius would not have used Diodorus in his chronology of Rome, but Dionysius of Halicarnassos, in addition to the fact that Diodorus would have used the work of Castor of Rhodes (1869, p. 39). Finally, in his chapter IV, he argues that Diodorus used Polybius' work from books XXIII to XXVII. It is also appropriate here to insert in this context new editions of the Diodorian text that were published, among them those of Dindorf, both those of 1826 and 1828-1831, still dependent on the edition of Wesseling; the Teubnerian of Immanuel Bekker, from 1853-1854; the five volumes of Dindorf, between 1866 and 1868, mentioned above, which underwent some changes; and the Teubnerian edition in six volumes by Vogel, who edited the first three (books I-XV),

³⁵ "Die Bedeutung der historischen Bibliothek Diodors für die Erforschung der griechischen Geschichte kann nicht nach dem Urtheil bemessen werden, welches über ihren Verfasser als Historiker gefällt werden muss. Was Diodor als solcher in der Abfassung seines Werks geleistet hat, trägt den Stempel der äussersten Unwissenheit, Beschränktheit und einer an Gewissenlosigkeit grenzenden Leichtfertigkeit in der Behandlung seines Stoffs."

and Fischer, who edited the last three (books XVI-XX), between 1888 and 1906 (Stronk, 2017, p. 29; Bertrac, 1993, p. CLVII-CLXII).

From 1880 is Schneider's work, entitled *De Diodori fontibus*, in which the author seeks to find the sources for the first four books of the work. Regarding the first, in which Diodorus talks about Egypt, the author initially³⁶ seeks to see parallels with Herodotus, and establishes that a good part of Diodorus' first book was taken from Hecataeus of Abdera (Schneider, 1880, p. 27), comparing this to the fragments of the latter collected by Karl Müller (1813-1894). As far as the second book is concerned, it separates authorship by peoples, from the Amazons,³⁷ to the Arabs, in which Schneider believes that Diodorus' source was a geographer, not a historian (Schneider, 1880, p. 53). In this sense, Schneider follows the line of other historians of the period.

However, Adolf Holm, in his *Geschichte Siciliens im alterthum* (History of Sicily in antiquity), published in three volumes,³⁸ refutes Collmann's theory, demonstrating differences between the structures of the works of Diodorus and Ephorus, but agrees with Volquardsen on the use of Timaeus' work for the history of Sicily, adding that there was also a use of Polybius (Holm, 1965, II, p. 136-137). Overall, Holm's criticism is more about the fact that it was thought that Diodorus used only one source per theme, while he thought that Diodorus used more than one source to talk about the same theme.

In the third volume, Holm praises Diodorus for accomplishing an arduous task such as that of writing a universal history, for which Diodorus "in what concerns the first point [the organization of the material], we must recognize that the material is distributed with great

³⁶ Thus he writes "*Si libri spectantur universi, eos valde discrepare luce clarius est. Tota enim ratio ac via describendi prorsus alia est; res aliter digestae sunt ac minus elaboratae ab Herodoto*" (Schneider, 1880, p. 13). In free translation it would be "If the books are analyzed completely, it is clearly seen that they differ a lot. Every technique and the way of writing is different; things are explained or less elaborated by Herodotus."

³⁷ Clitarchus may be the source, see Schneider, 1880, p. 51.

³⁸ The first in 1869, the second in 1874 and the third in 1897. Here we use the Italian translation of 1965, made by Giuseppe Kirner in the third volume, and by dal Lago and Graziadei in the second.

discernment” (Holm, 1965, III, p. 410, our translation).³⁹ He (1965, III, p. 412) also recognized that the rediscovery of lost ancient authors, in the light of new evidence, in the works of others who survived, was an illusion, and that writers did not renounce their individuality, even using sources for the composition of their work, then stating that “Diodorus did not use his authors in such a servient way, copying them almost verbatim; but, on the contrary, he assimilated what they referred to and wrote it largely in his own language, with his own considerations” (Holm, 1965, III, p. 414, our translation and emphasis).⁴⁰

In 1890, a work published by Rudolf Neubert, entitled *Spuren selbständiger Tätigkeit bei Diodor* (Traces of independent activity in Diodorus), would mark the beginning of the so-called “Diodorian question” (Ambaglio, 1995, p. 9). This article is the first work focused on Diodorus that contests the compiler’s view, even though Neubert was not the first author to think differently, as seen above. In it, Neubert considers the introductions or proemions, and other passages, especially those that would present the moral opinions of the Sicilian author, as originally Diodorian, as well as attributing to Diodorus the planning of the structure of the work in his chapters.

Nonetheless, the majority opinion was the idea of a copyist Diodorus. In this context, Eduard Schwartz wrote an article in 1903, entitled “Diodoros”, which later became a chapter in the book *Griechische Geschichtschreiber* (Greek Historians), from 1959, in which he clearly writes that “Diodorus’ compilation - this book cannot be called a work [...]” (Schwartz, 1959, p. 35, our translation).⁴¹ He then adds that “Diodorus is obviously a particularly low-ranking example of these bookmakers in the emerging world capital” (our translation).⁴²

³⁹ “Per quello che riguarda il primo punto, dobbiamo riconoscere che la materia è in essa ripartita con molto discernimento”.

⁴⁰ “Diodoro non si è valso tanto servilmente dei suoi autori, da ricopiarli quasi alla lettera; ma piuttosto si è assimilato ciò ch’essi riferivano, e poi lo ha riferito in gran parte in quel linguaggio che gli era proprio e colle sue proprie considerazioni”.

⁴¹ “Diodors Kompilation- ein werk kann man das buch nicht nennen.”

⁴² “Diodor ist freilich ein besonders tief stehendes exemplar dieser Bücherfabrikanten der werdenden welthauptstadt.”

Finally, he lists (p. 45-97) the authors that Diodorus would have used in his work,⁴³ according to the same author, in a compilatory way.

In 1933, began one of the greatest undertakings on Diodorus' work, which would be his complete translation (including the fragments) published by Loeb, initiated by C. H. Oldfather, a translation considered by the author himself (1989, p. XXV) as "the first in English for more than two hundred years". In all, this edition was published in 12 volumes, using the Greek text of the Teubnerian edition of Vogel and Fischer (1888), cited above (Oldfather, 1989, p. XXIV). Oldfather himself would die before seeing the work finished, having translated books I to XIV, between 1933 and 1954 (Rubincam, 2018, p. 16), and other scholars⁴⁴ continued the editions and translations until the last volume came out, in 1967. It is interesting to note Oldfather's (1989, p. XVII) account of how Diodorus was being received:

The earlier view was that Diodorus took a single author and copied him for many chapters and even books of his history. From that position criticism soon was forced to recede, and it is generally held now that while Diodorus probably leaned very strongly upon a single author for one or another section of his work, he used at the same time other writers as well.

Oldfather further concludes in the same paragraph that "It is the feeling of the present translator that there is much more of the individuality of Diodorus in his Library of History than has been generally supposed." Thus, a change, albeit gradual, in the perspective concerning the work can be perceived. Therefore, even though there were already signs of a new paradigm and not being unanimous, in the nineteenth century, the opinion of Diodorus as a compiler, it was only in the post-war period that what we called the third and final phase began.

As Orriols (2015, p. 342, our translation) attests, "the excessive use of philology had not considered aspects that, from a historical-cultural

⁴³ For a direct look at the list, see Chamoux (1993, p. XXIII-XXV).

⁴⁴ Namely, C. L. Sherman, for the seventh volume; C. B. Welles, for the eighth; R. M. Geer, for volumes 9 and 10; F. R. Walton, for volume 11; and Geer and Walton for the last volume.

point of view, could be explained from the human and temporal dimension of its author”.⁴⁵ Alasà (2001, p. 32, our translation) also asserts that, while the *Quellenforschung* was concerned with ascertaining which author Diodorus copied and in which passage, what really matters is “why this or that passage was freely placed there among a massive collection of previous historiographical material”.⁴⁶ Then, with new investigations and methods, also taking into account the author’s context, we can trace some inflection points that helped to change the paradigm of the nineteenth century. Palm’s work, published in 1955, with the title “Über Sprache und Stil des Diodorus von Sizilien” (On the language and style of Diodorus of Sicily), he managed, by analyzing the language used, not only to better understand the form of writing in the Hellenistic period, but also understood “that the Library, before being a mere copy of other authors, had an internal construction, giving Diodorus the confection of his own historiographical conception” (Morais, 2008, p. 24, our translation).⁴⁷ Similarly, Palm (1955, p. 55) rejected a “slavish” use by Diodorus of the work of Agatharchides of Cnidus, analyzing Diodorus’ Books V and III, since Diodorus modified passages according to his own criteria.

Another relevant work that helped change the paradigm of Diodorian studies is Laqueur’s article, published in 1958, with the title “Diodorea”. In this article, the author begins by outlining the general idea that existed around Diodorus, claiming that the author of *Agyrium* would be used as a mere formality and as a mediator for quotations from lost authors such as Ephorus and Jerome of Cardia. The author was also criticized for not having a clear understanding of these authors, which can be defined as “stupid, but consequential” (Laqueur, 1958, p. 259, our translation).⁴⁸ Next, he analyzed the anacoluthons of the work, which authors of the

⁴⁵ “La excesiva utilización de la filología no había considerado aspectos que desde un punto de vista histórico-cultural podían explicarse desde la dimensión humana y temporal de su autor”.

⁴⁶ “Por qué tal o cual pasaje ha sido posto ai en una elección libre entre un acervo monstrooso de material historiográfico anterior”.

⁴⁷ “Que a Biblioteca, antes de ser uma mera cópia de outros autores, possuía uma construção interna, conferindo a Diodoro a confecção de uma concepção historiográfica própria.”

⁴⁸ “Dumm, aber consequent.”

Quellenforschung used to highlight the errors made by Diodorus, but which Laqueur, connecting them in the order that, in his view (1958, p. 259-271), the author of the Library himself had planned, saw that the selected sentences would be grammatically correct. Next, Laqueur analyzed possible factual errors, such as certain names, and realizes that (1958, p. 271-281), as well as the anacoluthons, these supposed mistakes of Diodorus would in fact be errors of additions made by nineteenth-century editors.

In a sense, it is less independent than previously assumed; it has not created something new independently of the mentioned sources, but rather has already adopted a certain structure. However in its elaboration, he is much more independent than was supposed, since he incorporated excerpts from other authors into this basic source (Laqueur, 1958, p. 290, our translation).⁴⁹

Walter Spoerri's doctoral thesis, entitled "Spaeterhellenistische Berichte ueber Welt, Kultur und Goetter, Untersuchungen zu Diodor von Sizilien" (Late Hellenistic Accounts of the World, Culture, and the Gods: Studies on Diodorus of Sicily) (1959) is also an important source. In it, "Spoerri shows the influences of the syncretic thought of the Hellenistic period, common to the cultured men of Diodorus' time" (Morais, 2008, p. 24, our translation).⁵⁰ For this reason, according to Rubincam (2018, p. 19), Spoerri would have gone further than Palm, as he analyzed not only the language, but also the ideas that permeated Diodorus' context. For example, Spoerri refutes a 1912 article written by Karl Reinhardt,⁵¹ which claimed that the passages in which Diodorus, at the beginning of his work, talks about the origin of the universe, were taken from Democritus

⁴⁹ "In gewisser Weise ist er also weniger selbständig, als man bisher angenommen hat; er hat nicht aus den genannten Quellen etwas selbständig Neues geschaffen, sondern er hat bereits einen gegebenen Rahmen uibernommen. Aber in der Ausarbeitung ist er viel selbständiger, als angenommen wurde, indem er in diese Grundquelle die Exzerpte aus anderen Autoren hineinarbeitete."

⁵⁰ "Spoerri mostra as influências do pensamento sincrético do período helenístico, comum aos homens cultos da época de Diodoro".

⁵¹ Entitled "Hekataios von Abdera und Demokritos" (Hecataeus of Abdera and Democritus).

through Hecataeus of Abdera. Spoerri counters by stating that what was presented by Diodorus was the result of the eclectic conceptions typical of the first century B.C. (Chamoux, 1990, p. 248). From that moment on, as Tuero (1994, p. 8) states, issues such as universalism and some moralizing elements became part of a rehabilitation of Diodorus as a historian.

In 1962, another article, of paramount importance for Diodorian studies, entitled “Diodorus and his sources” and written was published by Robert Drews. In this brief contribution, Drews (1962, p. 389) analyzed and contested attributions made to Ephorus of passages that he originally considers Diodorian. Moralizing passages are considered essentially Diodorian. Later in the text, Drews (1962, p. 389-392) also investigated the passages in which Diodorus would have used Ephorus’ son, Demophilus, who may have continued his father’s work after his father’s death. Finally, the author of the article (1962, p. 392) concluded by claiming that the inclusion of myths and dialogues by Diodoro would be closer to problems related to the organization of the work than to the use or not of the sources.

Years later, in 1972, Anne Burton’s doctoral thesis, defended in 1968, under the title *Diodorus Siculus, Book I, A commentary*, would be published as a book. Precisely in the beginning of her thesis, Burton (1972, p. 1) states that, in the period in which she wrote, it was a current opinion that Diodorus, even though he had written using a single author as a basis, would have incorporated other authors into his narrative, as already proposed above by Laqueur (1958). However, she sees this perspective as problematic if applied to the entire work, especially to book I, which is the object of the author’s study. Thus, in the first chapter, she demonstrates that the idea that Diodorus would have copied Hecataeus of Abdera, a theory that appears for the first time in Schneider (1880), cannot be proven, and argues that Diodorus, despite his originality, would have used a greater variety of sources.

Even though there was a gradual shift to a new paradigm, opinions in agreement with the ideas of the nineteenth century still remained. In 1958, in a volume entitled *Ricerche sulla storiografia siceliota* (Investigations on Sicilian historiography), the transcriptions of the lectures of the Italian historian Gaetano de Sanctis (1870-1957), taught in his last year of teaching, were published. In the chapter that

refers to Diodorus, de Sanctis first does not see or sees little presence of historiographical autopsy in the author, even though he believes that Diodorus had actually undertaken the journeys he refers to in his introduction (1958, p. 80). De Sanctis (1958, p. 83, our translation), however, states that “Diodorus, as previously stated, is nothing but a miserable compiler. It is not even worth criticizing the truly painful architecture of his work, and it is merely necessary to say that his History is nothing but an aggregate of news with no nexus”.⁵² De Sanctis also agrees with the idea put forward above by Volquardsen, that Diodorus had copied his Greek and Sicilian histories from Ephorus and Timaeus, respectively.

In his *History of Greek Literature*, published in 1962, Austrian scholar Albin Lesky (1896-1981) states that Diodorus would have gathered materials without great stylistic pretensions, and that his work was a mere compilation (Lesky, 2010, p. 504). Woodhead (1922-2008), in his book *The Greeks in the West*, also published in 1962, describes Diodorus’ work in the following terms:

More than two centuries later, Diodorus of Agyrium began to write a Library of Universal History in forty volumes, a veritable compilation of the materials of his successors. He wrote for an audience that apparently wants no more than historical summaries without regard to style or literary quality, but the importance of Diodorus lies above all in the fact that he, like Abbé Siéyès, survived (Woodhead, 1972, p. 147, our translation).⁵³

⁵² “Ma Diodoro, come s’è già detto, non è che un miserabile compilatore. Non vale neppure la pena di criticare l’architettura della sua opera, e c’è appena bisogno di dire che la sua Storia non è che un aggregato di notizie senza nessun vero senso.”

⁵³ We originally used the translation into Portuguese, made in 1972. The translation states: “Volvidos mais de dois séculos, Diodoro de Agírio começou a escrever uma Biblioteca da história universal em quarenta volumes, verdadeira compilação dos materiais dos seus sucessores. Escreveu para um público que aparentemente não deseja mais do que súmulas históricas sem olhar ao estilo ou à qualidade literária, mas a importância de Diodoro reside sobretudo no facto de ele, tal como o abade Siéyès, ter subsistido.”

In the 1970s, he also began a new venture of translation of Diodoro's complete work, made by Les Belles Lettres, in the Budé series. The first volume, dated 1972, and republished in 1993, has, in its introduction, written by François Chamoux and Pierre Bertrac, the statement that "the accusation of servility towards his predecessors, which was formulated against Diodorus, lacks a solid foundation: almost all the models he followed have disappeared, and we cannot detect the limits of his influence except by conjecture" (Chamoux, 1993, p. XXVII, our translation).⁵⁴

However, even with some opinions still anchored to *Quellenforschung*, the new "orthodoxy" of Diodorian studies would gain strength in the following years. Initially, it is worth highlighting Sacks' 1982 article entitled "The lesser proemia of Diodorus Siculus". In it, the author sought to analyze the authorship of the minor proems of the Library of History since the proface of book I was already attributed to Diodorus. In the end, he concludes that "therefore, when Diodorus puts in his own words, and introduces of his own will the historical-philosophical thought of his predecessors, this is certainly more than mere plagiarism" (Sacks, 1982, p. 442). Hence, Diodorus was influenced by the sources he employed, but his contradictions in the proems do not take away his authorship.

Of paramount importance was the colloquium held in Italy in 1984, which would later be published as a book with the title *Mito, storia, tradizione: Diodoro Siculo e la storiografia classica*, in 1991. In it, a series of academics discussed various topics in relation to the work, no longer focusing only on the authorship or not of those who wrote it, but also analyzing the Library as such. In this sense, Agostinetti's chapter can be highlighted, in which he speaks of the female presences in books XVIII-XX, or Galvagno's study on the figure of Ducetius and the rhetoric employed by Diodorus. During this same period, in Italy, new Italian translations of the complete work were published. One from Sellerio, between 1984 and 1988, and the other from Rusconi, between 1985 and 1988.

The same Sacks, mentioned above, would publish a book in 1990 that consolidated the new paradigm. *Diodorus Siculus and the first*

⁵⁴ L'accusation de servilité à l'égard de ses devanciers qu'on a formulée contre Diodore manque de fondement solide: les modèles qu'il a suivis ont presque tous disparu et on ne décèle les limites de leur influence que par conjecture».

century manages to synthesize what had already been discussed in the previous three decades. In the first chapter, Sacks resumes his article, and expands the discussion on the proems of the Library of History. In chapter 2, he investigates issues concerning Diodorus' ideas, such as the role of Fortune within the work and what the author understood by successions of empires, confronting more incisively the theory of Diodorus as a compiler of Ephorus, and, through the analysis of the Diodorian model of empire, he concludes that there was in fact an independence of thought in Diodorus (Sacks, 1990, p. 51). In the third chapter, Sacks speaks of the aspect that is part of the Library's leitmotif, the progress of culture, especially through important historical figures, as the author's moralizing and pedagogical form, in addition to analyzing the issue of the universalism of the work. Chapter 4 investigates issues concerning writing, such as the insertion of discourses and the way Diodorus cites different authors to present different perspectives on an event (Sacks, 1990, p. 109). The book ends by analyzing Diodorus' position in relation to Rome and its power, also analyzing the author's historical context in the late Roman republic.

In the same year as Sacks' publication, Chamoux would publish his article "Un historien mal-aimé: Diodore de Sicile" (An unloved historian: Diodorus of Sicily). Throughout the article, which begins by questioning why a historian so praised until the mid-sixteenth century is so criticized from the nineteenth century onwards, he treats about the original plan of the work and the division made by Diodorus (Chamoux, 1990, p. 244-245). Subsequently, Chamoux praises Diodorus, comparing him to Thucydides, as he appears to have realized that the conquest of Gaul, -on Caesar's part, would present an event that would mark a new era in history, analogous to Alexander's conquests in Asia. Finally, the article makes a survey of the recent *Status Quaestionis* of studies on Diodorus.

A few years later, in 1994, the colloquium of the University of Granada took place, which would also become a book, with the title *Estudios sobre Diodoro de Sicilia*, organized and edited by Lens Tuero. The themes of the articles varied even more in relation to the contributions of the Italian colloquium. There were articles that discussed moralization and *Týche* (Fortune), such as the articles by Camacho Rojo. There were also a large number of publications by Lens Tuero, which would cover

such topics as the nature of the Library, the mythification of Seleucus I, Roman imperialism, among other topics, as well as other publications by other authors. What can be seen is that, little by little, as inevitable as it may be for studies on Diodorus, the question of authorship was being passed over for other themes that concerned only the Library of History. Tuero, together with Jesús M. García González and Javier Campos Daroca, also produced the first Spanish translation of Diodoro's work, published in 1995. A few years later, in 2001, Gredos produced the second translation into Spanish thanks to the work of Francisco Parreu Alasà.

Also in 1995, Delfino Ambaglio published a book entitled *La Biblioteca Storica di Diodoro Siculo: problemi e metodo*. In the introduction, the author (1995, p. 9, our translation) already establishes the following:

Thus, the present contribution on the Sicilian historian will not escape his fate and will be on the side of those who sustain some modest Diodorian originality: there is a good part of the truth in this. I cannot, however, fail to warn in the introduction that Diodorus' role as defender never captivated me: we are not even sure that he thought for himself originality, that which the moderns variously desire, as a value.⁵⁵

In view of this, the author agrees that there were excesses in the analyses of *Quellenforschung*, but he does not see the method as an evil in itself. However, for him, the method of source criticism did not lead to any real interest in Diodorus, remaining only in the search for fragments of lost authors. In all, his work investigates several aspects, such as geography and ethnography, moralism and the relationship with Rome, among others, which are a new and important contribution to Diodorian studies. In a work published in 2002, organized by Vattuone on the Greek historians of the West, Ambaglio wrote the chapter on Diodorus. In it, the author refutes Sacks' book, claiming that his arguments would be

⁵⁵ “Così anche il presente contributo sullo storico siciliano non sfuggirà alla sua sorte e sarà schierato accanto ai sostenitori di qualche modesta originalità diodorea: c'è in questo una gran parte di vero. Non posso però fare a meno di avvertire, in sede introduttiva, che il ruolo di difensore di Diodoro non mi ha mai affascinato: non siamo neppure sicuri che egli pensasse per se stesso all'originalità, quella che variamente i moderni auspicano, come a un valore”.

imaginary, even though he did not argue his personal opinion (2002, p. 333). In the present chapter, however, he argues about the regionalist traits of the work (2002, p. 320), a theme that he would further explore in a later contribution, held at a colloquium in 2005, entitled “Diodoro Siculo tra storia locale e storia indigena” (Diodorus Siculus between local history and indigenous history).

Catherine Rubincam also made important contributions to the studies of Diodorus. His 1998 article entitled “Did Diodorus Siculus Take over Cross-References from His Sources?”, was quite original for the object of analysis, the cross-references, based on previous articles published by the same author in 1987 and 1989.⁵⁶ At the end of the article, the author concludes that there is no definitive answer to the question, since some cross-references would be original to Diodorus and others would not (Rubincam, 1998, p. 82).

Since 1746, with Wesseling, there has not been a complete commentary on Diodorus’ work on all books, and there has been, in the words of Rubincam (2018, p. 16), a fragmentation in Diodorian studies since the nineteenth century. In the same year of 2008, we have the first study on Diodorus in Brazil, with the doctoral thesis of Cynthia Cristina de Moraes Mota, entitled “The lessons of universal history of Diodorus of Sicily’s: an educational process of humanity”, published by the University of São Paulo (USP). The work encompasses specific terms of Diodorus and Hellenism in general, such as *parádoxa*, *týche* and *koiné historía*, as well as more general aspects of the Diodorian *oikouménē*, and the moralization of historical figures. This last aspect would be explored by the same author in the article “The moral and political portrait of great figures in history in the Library of History of Diodorus Sicily”, published in 2018.

In recent years there has been a growing number of conferences and dialogues about the work that should be cited. The *Dialogues d’histoire ancienne*, from 2012, whose main theme was *Diodore d’Agyrion et l’histoire de la Sicile*, with the contribution of several authors. Lisa Irene Hau’s publications, both the 2009 article and her 2016

⁵⁶ “The organization and composition of Diodoros’ *Bibliothēke*” and the “Cross-references in the *Bibliothēke Historike* of Diodoros.”

book, in which both address the moralizing aspects of Diodorus⁵⁷ are also important sources. Charles Muntz's recent book, published in 2017, entitled *Diodorus Siculus and the world of the late roman republic* also enters the new publications of studies on Diodorus, as does; as well as the book, edited by Hau, Meeus and Sheridan in 2018, entitled *Diodoros of Sicily: Historiographical theory and practice in the Bibliothke*, which featured chapters written by different specialists in the field.

3 Conclusions

In conclusion, when analyzing the recent studies on Diodorus and his work, one can observe a completely different aim in the analyses, focusing more on the Library itself and in its historical context, something that had been ignored or minimalized by the scholars of the 19th century. However, even during that period, which we could define as a period of crisis for Diodorus and his Library, the opinions were divergent among the philologists and the historians. Finally the approach of the *Quellenforschung* has been overcome, giving a new life and new lectures concerning the Library, now seen as an important source, especially for Greek history in the Hellenistic period.

Our study also analyzed how the context influenced, as in all historiographical works, the reception and use of the author, from the first Christians, even including an author outside the Greco-Roman world, such as the Armenian Movses, which can expand our horizons when we read an author like Diodorus during late Antiquity, up to the modern and contemporary scholarship. It was also deemed important to mention and include the manuscripts in this analysis, given that the number and the manner in which the work was copied can testify to important informations regarding the context of the copy itself and the copyist. Moreover, the number of the manuscripts can also exemplify how important a work was considered in a determined period. Likewise, the number of editions and book printings, in a modern context, were

⁵⁷ The article is entitled "The burden of good fortune in Diodoros of Sicily: A case for Originality?". The book, which does not only talk about Diodorus, is "Moral History: from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus".

considered to be important witnesses. Ultimately, this article aimed to be a brick in the building of the studies on the reception of Diodorus, attempting to complement both older and more recent studies, as well as to offer an overview of the *Status Quaestionis* for the studies on Diodorus.

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