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Irwin L. Merker Lysimachos – Thessalian or Macedonian?

aus / from

Chiron

Ausgabe / Issue **9 • 1979**

Seite / Page **31–36**

<https://publications.dainst.org/journals/chiron/1360/5709> • urn:nbn:de:0048-chiron-1979-9-p31-36-v5709.2

Verantwortliche Redaktion / Publishing editor

Redaktion Chiron | Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Amalienstr. 73 b, 80799 München

Weitere Informationen unter / For further information see <https://publications.dainst.org/journals/chiron>

ISSN der Online-Ausgabe / ISSN of the online edition **2510-5396**

Verlag / Publisher **Verlag C. H. Beck, München**

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IRWIN L. MERKER

Lysimachos – Thessalian or Macedonian?

There are two scholarly views on the subject of the origin of Lysimachos – one treats him as a Macedonian, while the other, more widely held view, sees him as the son of a Thessalian who migrated to Macedonia and was ennobled by Philip II. The typical expression of this view may be found in WILAMOWITZ' statement, «Lysimachos war von Geburt Thessalier, aber durch Eintritt unter die ἑταῖροι des Philippos Makedone geworden.»¹ This question is of capital importance for an understanding of Lysimachos and his activity, for we would expect his actions to reflect his position, either as a member of the old Macedonian nobility, or as a parvenu to it.

The evidence for this Thessalian origin is very specific, but comes from the later chronological writers who are ultimately derived from the same source, Porphyry of Tyre. Eusebius in his *Chronicles*, in his treatment of the kings of Macedonia which he attributes to Porphyry, states that Lysimachos, the son of Agathokles, was a Thessalian from Krannon. The same statement appears in both the Greek fragment and the Armenian version.² Georgios Synkellos' *Chronographia* reports the same thing,³ Λυσίμαχος δὲ ὁ Θετταλὸς Ἀγαθοκλέους παῖς. Clearly the two statements go back to Porphyry; in the normal course of events such a late piece of evidence would be ignored by modern scholars, were it not buttressed by what some interpret as earlier evidence. Theopompos tells of Agathokles who had been a slave and a penest from Thessaly, and a flatterer and drinking companion of Philip II of Macedon.⁴ Philip sent Agathokles against Perrhaibia and put him in charge of the conquest. This Agathokles has been identified with Lysimachos' father. On the basis of this evidence, many scholars have accepted the Thessalian origin of

¹ U. VON WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos*, 1924, I, 11.

² SCHOENE I, 233/4 = KARST 110. FGrHist 260 (Porphyrios v. Tyros) F3 (8) gives the German translation of the Armenian version. FGH III, p. 698, frag. 4,4 gives the Greek fragments of Eusebius and a Latin translation of the Armenian version.

³ W. DINDORF (ed.), *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, Bonn 1829, I, p. 506, P266A (repeated in FGH III, p. 695 as frag. 3, 4 of Porphyry).

⁴ FGrHist 115 F81 = Athenaios 6, 76, p. 259F–260A.

Lysimachos, although they sometimes deny the fact that Agathokles had been a penest.⁵

The first piece of evidence in favor of his Macedonian origin is in Arrian, *Indike* 18, 3–10 = Nearchos, *FGrHist* 133 F 1, 18, 3–10, in a passage enumerating the trierarchs appointed by Alexander in 326 B. C. for the fleet on the Hydaspes River.⁶ Lysimachos the son of Agathokles is listed here among the Macedonians from Pella. Supporters of a Thessalian origin have dealt with this passage by seeing in it evidence for the granting of citizenship in a Macedonian city, as part of the process by which a Greek could enter the King's service.⁷ But a closer analysis of the passage in Arrian weakens this view considerably.

Thirty-three trierarchs are listed, in addition to Onesikritos of Astypalaia the steersman of Alexander's ship and Euagoras son of Eukleon of Corinth the registrar of the whole fleet. Nearchos son of Androtimos, born in Crete but an inhabitant of Amphipolis, was in charge of the whole fleet, but was also one of the trierarchs. Of the thirty-three trierarchs, twenty-four Macedonians are listed first, then six Greeks, two Cypriote princes and Bagoas the Persian. Of his Macedonian trierarchs some, such as Hephaisstion, are known from other sources to have been prominent members of the Macedonian hierarchy; others, such as Pantauchos, have Macedonian names or patronymics. There can be no doubt that these men were Macedonians. A few are not otherwise known, but are presumably Macedonian, as Arrian states, since there is no evidence to the contrary. The twenty-four Macedonians are grouped according to their place of origin as follows: nine from Pella, three from Amphipolis, two each from Orestis, Eordaia and Pydna, and one each from Tymphaia (Attalos), Mieza (Peukestas), Alkomenai (Peithon), Aigai (Leonnatos), Aloris (Pantauchos) and Beroia (Mylleas). Of the last six individuals, all are clearly Macedonians. The pairs from Orestis (Krateros and Perdikkas) and Eordaia (Ptolemy and Aristonous) are known to be Macedonian. The two from Pydna (Metron and Nikarchides) are not definitely known from any other sources, but probably were Macedonians as Arrian indicates. The three Macedonians from Amphipolis are Nearchos son of Androtimos, who was originally from Crete, Laomedon son of Larichos, an Aeolian from Mytilene, and Androsthenes son of Kallistratos from Thasos.⁸ It is important to note that all three of the Amphipolitans listed among the Macedonian trierarchs were originally from Greek cities outside of Macedonia. Of the nine Macedonians from Pella, leaving Lysimachos aside, five (Hephaisstion,

⁵ *Infra*, notes 18–26. Perhaps this Agathokles was from Krannon as is suggested by the passage in Eusebius, note 2 *supra*.

⁶ J. G. DROYSSEN, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*², 1877, I, 2, 170, and Arrien, *L'Inde*, ed. P. CHANTRAINE, 2nd ed., 1952, 47–48 n. 2. Cf. H. HAUBEN, *The Expansion of Macedonian Sea Power under Alexander the Great*, *Ancient Society* 7, 1976, 91–92.

⁷ K. J. BELOCH, *Griechische Geschichte*, III² 1, 1922, 578.

⁸ Cf. F. HAMPL, *Der König der Makedonen*, *Diss. Leipzig* 1934, 23–25.

Leonnatos, Archon, Asklepiodoros and Ophellas) are clearly of Macedonian origin, while two (Demonikos and Timanthes), about whom nothing further is known, probably were Macedonians as well. The remaining Pellian trierarch, Archias son of Anaxidotos τῶν ἐν αἰνῇ ὄν Μακεδόνων, later accompanied Nearchos on his expedition from India to Mesopotamia,⁹ and commanded a triakontor which sailed along the Arabian coast as far as Tylis, modern Bahrein.¹⁰ What is most striking about the list of Macedonian trierarchs is that all three from Amphipolis are of Greek origin, while from the other places in Macedonia, there is not a single one who is a Greek. This evidence seems to suggest that at this time new Macedonian citizens were granted their citizenship in Amphipolis, rather than in any other town in Macedonia. Since Lysimachos is listed among the Macedonians from Pella, this passage offers no proof that he was a naturalized Macedonian or the son of one, rather than a native Macedonian. For further evidence of his origins, we must examine the passages in Justin, Pausanias and Plutarch.

Justin 15, 3 is a passage of immoderate praise for Lysimachos. It introduces Lysimachos when he comes forward in the wars of the diadochoi before the campaign of Ipsos, 303–301 B. C., and the whole section deals with Lysimachos in the service of Alexander the Great. The section begins, *erat hic Lysimachus inlustri quidem Macedoniae loco natus* (15, 3, 1). A similar statement appears in Pausanias 1, 9, 5, ὁ δὲ Λυσίμαχος οὗτος γένος τε ἦν Μακεδῶν καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου δορυφόρος. Both passages clearly state that Lysimachos was a Macedonian. HÜNERWADEL points out that the passage in Justin would be technically accurate if Lysimachos had been born in Macedonia, although his father had migrated from elsewhere.¹¹ He also points to the continuation of Pausanias who says that Alexander τά τε οὖν ἄλλα ἤδη διετέλει θαυμάζων καὶ Μακεδόνων ὁμοίως τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἦγεν ἐν τιμῇ, and claims that it suits a non-Macedonian raised to Macedonian status, rather than a native Macedonian. However, Pausanias' statement would just as well fit any Macedonian who was not originally in the charmed inner circle of the court nobility around the King.

⁹ Arrian, Ind. 27, 8; 28, 3; 28, 7; 34, 7–12; 35, 1–5; = FGrHist 133 F1.

¹⁰ Arrian, Anab. 7, 20, 7.

¹¹ W. HÜNERWADEL, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des Königs Lysimachos von Thrakien*, Diss. Zürich 1900, 12. But to take *loco* in the physical sense is just perverse. The meaning is clearly that of «position in society, rank or station» (Oxford Latin Dictionary s. v. *locus* 17, p. 1040). Caesar, B. G. 5, 25, 1, *erat in Carnutibus summo loco natus Tasgetius*, is trying to tell us that Tasgetius was born of a noble family, not that he was born on the highest elevation in the territory of the Carnutes. Cf. inter alia Livy 1, 34; Cicero, pro Flacco 11, 24; pro Plancio 25, 60; Caesar, B. G. 6, 19, 3. This passage of Justin is invariably translated in this sense, by WATSON, «Lysimachus was of a noble family in Macedonia,» CHAMBRAY and THÉLY-CHAMBRAY, «Ce Lysimaque était issu d'une illustre famille macédonienne,» ARNULFIUS, «Era questo Lisimaco originato da nobile famiglia della Macedonia,» and SEEL, «Dieser Lysimachos entstammte zwar auch von Geburt einer angesehenen makedonischen Familie.»

Still more significant is the passage in Plutarch, Demetrios 44, 4 reinforced by Pyrrhos 11, 3-4. In 287/6 B. C. when Seleukos, Ptolemy and Lysimachos allied themselves against Demetrios Poliorketes, they won over Pyrrhos to their side. Demetrios moved against Lysimachos in Thrace, while Pyrrhos invaded Macedonia at his rear. When Demetrios' troops became restive, unwilling to fight against Lysimachos whom they considered one of themselves, he turned away from Lysimachos against Pyrrhos. In Demetrios 44, 6, Plutarch describes Demetrios' reasoning, τὸν (i. e. Λυσίμαχον) μὲν γὰρ ὁμόφυλον εἶναι καὶ πολλοῖς συνήθη δι' Ἀλέξανδρον, ἔπηλυν δὲ καὶ ξένον ἄνδρα τὸν Πύρρον οὐκ ἂν αὐτοῦ προτιμῆσαι Μακεδόνας – for Lysimachos was a fellow countryman and congenial to many because of Alexander, and Pyrrhos was a stranger and a foreigner and the Macedonians would not prefer him (Pyrrhos) to himself. In Pyrrhos 11, 7-8, Lysimachos is described as βασιλέως Μακεδόνης καὶ δόξαν ἔχοντος – a Macedonian king of renown – while Demetrios considers Pyrrhos ξένον καὶ μισούμενον ὑπὸ τῶν Μακεδόνων – a foreigner and hated by the Macedonians. All told, the passages in Plutarch add heavily to the probability that Lysimachos was a Macedonian.

To return to the passage in Theopompos which has been used as evidence for Lysimachos' Thessalian origin, there is nothing in the text to indicate that Agathokles the former Thessalian penest and Agathokles the father of Lysimachos were the same person. In fact, it is very unlikely that the two can be connected. Lysimachos was born in 361 B. C., as is reported by Hieronymos,¹² who states that Lysimachos was eighty years old when he died; since he died in 281 B. C., his date of birth would be 361. Appian, Syr. 64 gives his age at death as seventy, in which case his date of birth would have been 351 B. C. Justin 17, 1, 10 writes that he died at age seventy-four, indicating that he was born in 355 B. C. The evidence of Hieronymos ought to be accepted before that of Appian or Justin.¹³ There is reference to another son of Agathokles, Alkimachos, who may be an older brother of Lysimachos.¹⁴ He was sent by Philip to Athens after Chaironeia on an embassy with Antipater,¹⁵ and would thus have been a significant figure during Philip's reign; he was probably born before 370 B. C. for a younger man would not have been sent on this embassy. Neither Alkimachos nor Lysimachos is in any way differentiated from members of the Macedonian nobility. If Agathokles the Thessalian had been their father, Philipp II could not have raised him to the Macedonian nobility before he came to the throne in 359 B. C., and the difficulties of the earlier years of

¹² FGrHist 154 F10 = [Lucian] Macrob. 11.

¹³ H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, 1926, II 239. BELOCH, *Griech. Gesch.* IV² 2, 1927, 129, gives the three figures and accepts Justin as the average.

¹⁴ BERVE, *op. cit.*, 23 no. 47, but BELOCH, *op. cit.*, IV² 2, 131, is very hesitant to accept this.

¹⁵ Hyperides frag. 77 (81) = Harpocration s. v. Ἀλκίμαχος and IG II² 239.

the reign make it unlikely that he could have done so before the end of the 350's, well after the births of Alkimachos and Lysimachos.¹⁶ Thus it seems that Agathokles the Thessalian penest and Agathokles the father of Lysimachos cannot have been identical. It is likely that a later author, perhaps Porphyry of Tyre, erroneously connected the two because they shared the same name, and this error was transmitted in the later chronological tradition.¹⁷

The modern history of the problem began with DROYSEN,¹⁸ who accepted the Thessalian origin of Lysimachos, and believed that his father Agathokles had been a penest. NIEBUHR much more equivocally pointed out the two possibilities, but did not decide between them.¹⁹ BELOCH,²⁰ NIESE²¹ and WILCKEN²² accepted a Thessalian origin. HÜNERWADEL attempted to combine the two traditions by postulating that Agathokles came from Krannon in Thessaly, but afterwards acquired the citizenship of Pella in Macedonia.²³ He believed that the father of Lysimachos and the Agathokles of Theopompos were identical, but wanted to tone down the glaring colors of Theopompos; he accepted that Lysimachos was born in 361, probably not in Pella. POSSENTI believed that Lysimachos was from Thessaly, but moved to Pella; his analysis of the sources attributed the statement of Thessalian origin to Hieronymos of Kardia, the tradition hostile to Lysimachos, and the statement of Macedonian origin to Duris of Samos, the friendly tradition.²⁴ However, I find it very difficult to understand why Hieronymos, a Greek historian from Kardia, writing in large part for a Greek audience at the court of the Antigonids, would emphasize Lysimachos' Greek or Thessalian origins in order to denigrate him, while Duris, another Greek historian, would emphasize his Macedonian origin in order to praise him. After all, the Argeads did proclaim their Greek origins. The general acceptance of Lysimachos' Thessalian origin was rejected by HOFFMANN, who asserted that he came from the Macedonian nobility.²⁵ He found it difficult to believe

¹⁶ Recently W. HECKEL, *The Somatophylakes of Alexander the Great: Some Thoughts*, *Historia* 27, 1978, 228, has suggested with some degree of probability that Lysimachos was chosen to be somatophylax while he was still a young man by Philip II because of his noble connections.

¹⁷ Cf. O. HOFFMANN, *Die Makedonen, ihre Sprache und ihr Volkstum*, 1906, 171–172.

¹⁸ DROYSEN, *Geschichte der Nachfolger Alexanders*, 1836, 154 n. 9; *Geschichte des Hellenismus*², 1878, II, 1, 147 n. 1.

¹⁹ B. G. NIEBUHR, *Vorträge über alte Geschichte*, 1851, III 93–94, translated as: *Lectures on Ancient History*, 1852, III 77.

²⁰ BELOCH, *Griech. Gesch.* II¹, 1897, 575 n. 1; III¹ 2, 1904, 86; III² 1, 1922, 578 n. 1; IV² 2, 1927, 129.

²¹ B. NIESE, *Geschichte der griechischen und makedonischen Staaten*, 1893, I 192.

²² U. WILCKEN, *RE Agathokles* 17 (1894) 757.

²³ HÜNERWADEL, *op. cit.* (supra n. 11), 11–13.

²⁴ G. B. POSSENTI, *Il re Lisimaco di Tracia*, 1901, 41–44.

²⁵ HOFFMANN, *op. cit.* (supra n. 17), 171–172.

that a Thessalian penest could have been taken into the inner circles of the Macedonian nobility. He rejected the identification of the Thessalian penest with the father of Lysimachos, and suggested that later chronographers conflated two sources. After this, most scholars simply accepted the Thessalian origin of Lysimachos without further discussion of the problem.²⁶

²⁶ W. W. TARN, *Antigonos Gonatas*, 1913, 183 n. 48; U. v. WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 2), 11 n. 1; F. GEYER, *RE Lysimachos* 1 (1928) 1. F. GRANIER, *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, 1931, 7 n. 32; A. B. NEDERLOF, *Plutarchus' Leven van Pyrrhus*, *Historische Commentaar*, Diss. Leiden 1940, 54; E. KORNEMANN, *Große Frauen des Altertums*⁴, 1952, 118; P. LÉVÊQUE, *Pyrrhus*, 1957, 154 n. 5. Others have accepted the Macedonian origin: BERVE, *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 13), II 239 no. 480; E. WILL, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique*, 1966, I 24; H. VOLKMANN, *Der kleine Pauly*, 1969, III 839 (*Lysimachos* 1); F. SANDBERGER, *Prosopographie zur Geschichte des Pyrrhos*, Diss. Munich 1970, 144–145 n. 1.