

## THE END OF AGIS' REVOLT

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IN RECENT years we have seen two major efforts to reconstruct the political and diplomatic history of Greece in the late 330's B.C. E. Badian has given a very full account of the career of Agis III of Sparta and his attempt to subvert the new order which Philip and Alexander had imposed on the Greek city states.<sup>1</sup> G. L. Cawkwell has viewed the period as it was reflected in Athenian politics and the law courts in the 340's and 330's.<sup>2</sup> It is not my intention to review the main arguments in these two important articles; each has made a valuable contribution to our understanding of the events of those years. But as some disagreement exists about the date of Agis' collapse, and as the chronology might affect our assessment of Alexander's policies both in Asia and in Greece, it has seemed best to re-examine the problem in light of the ancient evidence.

With the support of mercenaries gathered in Asia and Crete, aided by Persian money, and abetted by a number of sympathetic Greek states, Agis led his forces in open rebellion against Macedonian rule in Greece, probably in the early spring of 331.<sup>3</sup> Badian (pp. 173-84) has shown clearly that Agis' rebellion was the result of the most careful Spartan planning, not the foolish and vain adventure that Tarn and others have made it out to be. Alexander reacted by sending from time

to time what assistance he could spare to crush the rebellion.<sup>4</sup> When Antipater, who had been left behind to secure Alexander's interests in Macedonia and Greece, had freed himself from dealing with Memnon's rebellion in Thrace, the full force of Macedonian arms in Greece was brought against the Peloponnesian rebels.<sup>5</sup> In time, Agis was killed in battle and his army collapsed.

But when? The evidence follows:

1. *Curt. 6. 1. 21*: This tells us that Agis' revolt was put down before Darius' defeat at Gaugamela.<sup>6</sup> The passage appears at the end of Curtius' description of the final moments of Agis' life. Unfortunately most of Curtius' undoubtedly detailed account of the affair is lost. What survives appears in the narrative immediately following a somewhat broken description of Darius' death in midsummer of 330.

2. *Diod. 17. 62. 1-63. 4*: A long account of the cause of the rebellion, ending with Agis' death. Diodorus places these events in the same year as Gaugamela and the march to Babylon, Susa, and Persepolis, that is, in the year 331-30 by our chronology.<sup>7</sup> He ends his narrative of the events of this year by referring to the attempts of the Hellenic League *syndrion* to deal with the Spartans after their defeat; failing to resolve the issue, the Greeks agree to send Lacedaemonian envoys to Asia to ask Alexander's pardon (17. 73. 5 f.).

3. *Justin 12. 1. 4*: Letters received by Alexander from Antipater tell of Agis' rebellion, as well as the wars of Alexander, king of Epirus, in Italy, and of Zopyrion, Alexander the Great's own governor, in Scythia. There follow more detailed accounts of all three events. As in Curtius, the

1. "Agis III," *Hermes*, XCV (1967), 170-92, hereafter cited as Badian.

2. "The Crowning of Demosthenes," *CQ*, N.S. XIX (1969), 163-80, hereafter Cawkwell. In considering the resurrection of the attempt to honor Demosthenes in 330, Cawkwell reviews the chronology of the Agis revolt in some detail because of its bearing on the vulnerability of certain Athenian politicians during this period.

3. Alexander hears of the revolt in late spring at Tyre, although Arrian (*Anab.* 3. 6. 3) uses a curious phrase.

4. Arr. 3. 6. 3; Curt. 4. 8. 15; Arr. 3. 16. 10; Diod. 17. 64. 5.

5. For this revolt of Memnon, Alexander's governor in Thrace, and its coincidence with Agis' disturbance in the south, see Badian, pp. 179-80.

6. "Hic fuit exitus belli, quod repente ortum, prius tamen finitum est quam Dareum Alexander apud Arbela superaret." Gaugamela (Arbela) was fought at the very end of September 331.

7. Diodorus' own chronology using eponymous archons and consuls is, as usual, confused. It is typical of his work that his relative chronology, i.e., the order of events within a year, is more secure, while his absolute chronology is incorrect.

account of Agis' rebellion is inserted in the narrative immediately following Darius' death.

It is commonly held that Curtius' version is likely to be the correct one, that the rebellion ended a short time before Gaugamela.<sup>8</sup> It is this view which Cawkwell has challenged most recently.<sup>9</sup> Cawkwell has argued for a revolt which was not concluded until well into 330, thereby lending support to his thesis that the collapse of Agis' rebellion can be connected with the resurrection of Ctesiphon's attempt to honor Demosthenes in Athens.<sup>10</sup> Dismissing Curtius' dating as an error,<sup>11</sup> Cawkwell fixes much of his case on the evidence in Justin 12. 1. 4, which tells of Alexander's having received word of Agis' defeat shortly after the death of Darius in July 330.<sup>12</sup> Cawkwell has refused to follow Niese and others who have thought that Justin's insertion of this passage at this point (as in Curtius) reflects the source which he followed and is a digression.<sup>13</sup> Rather, the appearance of the story at this point, Cawkwell argues, gives rise to a "reasonable inference" that the rebellion had ended not long before Darius' death;<sup>14</sup> the account is not a digression, as Badian has argued is true for Curtius.<sup>15</sup>

One major difficulty with this argument is that it assumes that Justin and Curtius necessarily conflict with one another and that we must, therefore, choose between them. I hope to show that it is equally possible (if not actually more likely) that there are no necessary and irreconcilable differences among our sources on the date of Agis' downfall.

Cawkwell has not put the Justin passage in its proper perspective. Darius is dead.

Messages arrive from Antipater telling Alexander of the wars of Agis in Greece, Alexander of Epirus in Italy, and the governor of Thrace, Zopyrion, in Scythia. There then follow more detailed presentations of all three events, in which the account of Agis' revolt (12. 1. 6–11) is about one-third as long as the details of the Epirote Alexander's adventures in Italy (12. 2. 1–15), although longer than the narrative of the ill-fated expedition of Zopyrion (12. 2. 16–17). Can we not accept Justin (or Pompeius Trogus, whom he epitomized) at face value here? It is not in the least improbable that Antipater had taken time to compose full reports on affairs in the west and had sent them on to Alexander. That these reports reached Alexander in the summer of 330, after the death of Darius, need not indicate anything about the chronology of the revolt for two reasons. First, in the weeks following his departure from Ecbatana, Alexander moved with great speed, and the breathless account of his pursuit of Darius can be read in the sources.<sup>16</sup> That the reports of Antipater reached Alexander after Darius' death only shows how quickly Alexander moved in the late spring and early summer of 330 B.C. It would have been virtually impossible for anyone to catch the king, save the swiftest messenger. The very nature of those letters would suggest that they were detailed reports to be delivered in reasonable time, but without urgency.

Second, there are other events besides Agis' rebellion described in detail. Almost nothing can be said with certainty about Zopyrion's war against the Scythians.<sup>17</sup> But we know something about Alexander

8. Badian, however (p. 191), while accepting a 331 date for the revolt, suggests that Curtius' attempt to be precise may only be his own conjecture.

9. Even though he once espoused the traditional dating of the revolt; see Cawkwell, p. 172, n. 2.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 173 ff.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

12. Darius died in the month Hecatombaeon; Arr. 3. 22. 2.

13. Various views cited in Cawkwell, p. 170, n. 8.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

15. Badian, p. 191.

16. Especially Arr. 3. 20. 1–21; also see R. D. Milns, "Alexander's Pursuit of Darius Through Iran," *Historia*, XV (1966), 256.

17. Just. 12. 2. 16–17 describes Zopyrion as Alexander's governor of Pontus who set off on an unauthorized expedition

of Epirus' war in southern Italy.<sup>18</sup> The Epirote may have been killed in late 331 or early 330. Livy (8. 24. 1–2) reports that Alexander of Epirus was killed in the same year in which Alexandria in Egypt was founded (331 B.C., although one must always be cautious about Livy's chronology in these early books). His description of the Epirote's last campaign occurring during heavy rains (8. 24. 7: *imbres continui*) suggests a winter campaign in southern Italy.<sup>19</sup> Since the outcome of Alexander of Epirus' war was reported along with Agis' defeat, can one argue for a "well into 330" chronology for the events in Italy? That is, would one be willing to argue the chronology of the Epirote Alexander's war (or that of Zopyrion, for that matter) on the basis of when Alexander received news of those conflicts? One simply cannot take the account of Antipater's message concerning Agis out of the context of the other reports that Alexander received at that same moment.

Indeed, it is perfectly possible that the news of Agis' defeat reached Alexander much earlier, perhaps before Ecbatana, as Badian argues,<sup>20</sup> or even earlier while the king was at Persepolis, as I believe.<sup>21</sup> Antipater's messages in no way negate this view. It is reasonable to suppose that the bare news of Agis' defeat was sent im-

mediately following the disaster at Megalopolis (the tidings were, after all, important to Alexander); later, at his ease during the high winter months, Antipater compiled full reports of the preceding season's activities—not only the complete story of the Agis affair, but also other events of interest to the king, such as Alexander of Epirus' Italian campaigns, and, perhaps, the ill-starred Scythian war of Zopyrion. These letters were then passed on as soon as conditions of travel permitted, but with no sense of urgency, since presumably Alexander already knew the outcome of the critical matter in the Peloponnesus.

The pattern used by Diodorus to describe these events accords with the annalistic procedure of his method of composition. At either the beginning or end of his archon year, he often interrupts the narrative of Alexander's expedition to recount events elsewhere. Thus his chronology of events in Greece does not intend to be absolutely precise; he makes no attempt to integrate European affairs into the Asian narrative. The initial account (17. 48. 1) of Agis' hiring the mercenaries who survived Issus occurs at the end of the year 333/32,<sup>22</sup> the year in which Issus was fought and those mercenaries became active in the eastern Mediterranean. Agis' revolt itself is described (17. 62. 1–63. 4) from start to

against the Scythians and met complete defeat (also Just. 12. 1. 5). Justin puts the defeat in 331 (12. 2. 16), although Curtius (10. 1. 44) has Alexander learn of it upon his return to Susa in early 324. See H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich* (Munich, 1926), II, Nr. 340, who suggests 325 as the date of Zopyrion's expedition. I am inclined to accept the earlier date.

18. For the evidence see Kaerst, *s.v. Alexandros*, *RE*, I (1893), 1409–10.

19. See J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*<sup>2</sup>, III. 1 (Berlin and Leipzig, 1922), 598, n. 1, who argues the matter fully. Aeschines (*Contra Gies.* 242) treats the Epirote king's death as a rather recent event. But it cannot be too recent; if it were, how would Alexander, operating in the area south of the Caspian Sea, have received word of his brother-in-law's demise at about the same time as Aeschines' oration (July 330)? There is no proof either way, but it can be just as well argued that Alexander of Epirus was killed during the winter as during the spring, especially if Livy's chronology is to be taken seriously, and if Alexander was to receive word of it by

July. On the founding of Alexandria, see C. B. Welles, "The Discovery of Sarapis and the Foundation of Alexandria," *Historia*, XI (1962), 284 and 298, who dates the event to April 7, 331. If Livy is to be trusted, the Julio-Gregorian year 331 B.C. saw the foundation of Alexandria in the spring and the death of Alexander of Epirus in the late autumn or early winter.

20. Badian, pp. 189–90.

21. U. Wilcken suggested this many years ago, but offered no evidence to support the notion; see *Alexander the Great*, trans. G. C. Richards (London, 1932; reprinted, with preface, notes, and bibliography by E. N. Borza, New York, 1967), p. 145. My views on this question are treated fully in an article, "Fire from Heaven: Alexander at Persepolis" (forthcoming, *CP*), in which I attempt to show that Alexander knew of Antipater's victory before he left Persepolis for Media in mid-May of 330.

22. All dates are by a corrected chronology. Diodorus is often a whole year off.

finish at the beginning of 331/30, the year *after* Gaugamela, according to Diodorus. He is, of course, hopelessly confused on Gaugamela (actually fought in late September 331, not in 332/31, as Diodorus has it), and it would be a waste of time to attempt to correlate Diodorus' relative chronology of that battle with Agis' rebellion. Diodorus fails to make correct chronology, although the reasons he gives for the revolt's occurring when it did fit reasonably into the period between Issus and Gaugamela (November 333–September 331).<sup>23</sup> Finally, at the end of the year 331/30 (17. 73. 5–6), Diodorus again interrupts his Asian narrative to recount the deliberations of the Hellenic League council and the passing of Spartan envoys over into Asia.

The arrangement of this material leads one to suspect strongly that it is Diodorus' own doing; it is his attempt to fit in the affairs of Greece while retaining his basic annalistic scheme. The errors are almost certainly his own, although if we knew something about his sources we could speak to this point with more confidence.<sup>24</sup>

Curtius (6. 1. 1–21) and Justin (12. 1. 4–11) refer to the rebellion only once each, and in both authors it occurs in the narrative of events following Darius' death. Cawkwell (p. 171) has tried to show that there is no reason why the digression on Agis should occur in these authors at this point except that they found it in their sources there, and that the "reasonable inference" is that the revolt had ended not long before. I have attempted to show, however, that our information about the revolt depends mainly on the letters which Alexander received from Antipater after

Darius' death, and that in fact the rebellion had ended before Gaugamela.<sup>25</sup> Antipater wrote a long account describing the act of rebellion and its failure. He may also have narrated the plight of the Hellenic League and its inability to make a decision about the punishment of the Spartan rebels. The Greeks finally agreed to permit Lacedaemonian envoys to plead their case before Alexander personally. One may suppose that Antipater, Alexander's agent in Greece, fully informed him of these matters.

Now let us see how our extant sources use this material. Justin only epitomizes the matter, treating the Agis revolt strictly in the context of Antipater's letter. This probably reflects the arrangement of Justin's source, Pompeius Trogus. Curtius' account is much longer, treating the battle at Megalopolis in some detail. Like Justin-Trogus, Curtius may have come across the basic story in his source at a point following Darius' death, but he then takes the opportunity to expand it by inserting a detailed description of the final phases of the revolt, an account derived from some other source.<sup>26</sup>

Diodorus also may have found that his source told the story after the account of Darius' death, although the complex nature of his composition makes it dangerous to propose this with confidence. It is true that he inserts his description of the Hellenic League deliberations and the envoys at a place just after Darius' death, but we have also seen that this switch to Greek affairs is sometimes a feature of his annalistic style.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, one is tempted to suggest that Diodorus' source,

23. See Badian's treatment of this passage, p. 191.

24. No source is mentioned by Diodorus anywhere in Book 17. On the allegation that Cleitarchus is the main source, see E. N. Borza, "Cleitarchus and Diodorus' Account of Alexander," *PACA*, XI (1968), 25–45, where I argue that there is no proof that Diodorus' source was either Cleitarchus or any historian hostile to Alexander.

25. Curt. 6. 1. 21.

26. I cannot guess at Curtius' source. But, judging by the balanced view of rebels and Macedonians in the final struggle (if Curtius is an accurate reflection), it is at least not the same tradition as the one which made Alexander, upon hearing of Antipater's victory, announce in jest, "It seems, men, that while we have been conquering Darius here, over there in Arcadia there has been a battle of mice" (Plut. *Ages*. 15. 4).

27. Cawkwell, p. 171, n. 4, has failed to appreciate this.

too, had an account of Agis inserted in the period following the murder of Darius, but Diodorus, unlike Justin, who epitomizes, and Curtius, who expands, tries—and fails—to make some chronological sense of the affair by splitting it. He inserts a rather straightforward account of the rebellion itself in the year, according to his best judgment, where it belongs (17. 62. 1–63. 4). And he allows the narrative of the diplomatic aftermath of the revolt to remain where he found it (17. 73. 5), just after Darius' death.

It is hopeless to argue the question of the Spartan envoys. Curtius (6. 1. 20) tells us only that the Lacedaemonians received permission to send envoys (*oratores*) to Alexander. Diodorus (17. 73. 6) mentions fifty Spartiate hostages (*homêrous*) taken by Antipater, and Spartan envoys (*presbeis*) actually sent to Alexander in Asia. Early in 330/29 Aeschines, in his attack on Demosthenes' crown, refers to the Spartans who were about to be sent off to Alexander as hostages.<sup>28</sup> This is confirmed in a fragment found in Harpocration under *homêreuontes*: "Used by Aeschines in his speech against Ctesiphon and pertaining to the Lacedaemonians sent forth to Alexander. Cleitarchus in his fifth [?] book says that the hostages given by the Lacedaemonians numbered fifty."<sup>29</sup>

How do we decide between Aeschines' hostages and the envoys of Diodorus and Curtius? One may postulate a misunderstanding on the part of Curtius or of his source, but that is sheer guesswork. Does Diodorus know of both hostages and envoys, and, in order to reconcile two traditions, assign hostages to Antipater and envoys to the king? More speculation. Is there a connection between Diodorus

and the Cleitarchus fragment; that is, does the mention of fifty hostages by both have any significance for source studies?<sup>30</sup> There is no way to solve the dilemma by the internal evidence, and external information is lacking entirely, since we do not know if these Spartans (envoys or hostages) ever reached Alexander.

This matter has significance insofar as Cawkwell (p. 171) has attempted to move the date of Agis' defeat up to a time shortly before Aeschines' speech in early 330/29. Aeschines' reference to the Spartan hostages about to leave for Asia suggests to Cawkwell that the revolt was barely over; the Greeks were not likely to have waited nine months to send off hostages, which would be the case if the rebellion had ended before Gaugamela. Three observations may be made about Cawkwell's argument. First, because of a conflict in the evidence, we are not certain whether these were hostages or envoys or even both, sent out at different times. Second, given the somewhat strained nature of the diplomatic situation involving Alexander, Antipater, and the Greeks (this strain is alluded to by Diodorus and Curtius), a long delay is understandable. All sides may have feared to act on an important matter while the king was so far from the scene. Finally, who knows what rhetorical devices Aeschines himself employed, and how knowledgeable his audience was concerning the facts of the situation?<sup>31</sup> It seems fruitless to pursue the question of the hostages/envoys, and hopeless to base the dating of the collapse of Agis' rebellion on their disposition.

Lacking better evidence, we must rely, somewhat reluctantly, on the tradition in Justin, Curtius, and Diodorus. Their

28. *Contra Ctes.* 133; the dating of Aeschines' oration is Cawkwell's, p. 166, n. 7.

29. Jacoby, *FGH*, II B, No. 137, F 4.

30. To be precise, the Cleitarchus fragment only points out that fifty were sent, but not to whom.

31. For example, were the hostages mentioned really to be sent to Alexander, or to Antipater, who was technically the conqueror of whom Aeschines speaks? Had the hostages already been sent? Who would know the truth?

accounts are not necessarily irreconcilable if we can understand that the basic information about the end of Agis' revolt may have come into their narratives through the tradition about Antipater's letters in midsummer of 330. The differences in the versions of Justin, Curtius, and Diodorus exist to the degree that each used his information differently, depending

upon his own predilections or those of his immediate source. Who the original source was we can only guess, although it seems likely that it was someone who had access to official documents or at least was privy to high-level court talk during this part of the campaign.

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