

## NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

### LYSANDER AND DIONYSIUS (PLUT. *LYS.* 2)

In the second chapter of his *Life of Lysander* Plutarch gives a brief account of the character of Lysander. The most interesting feature of his character is that, although he himself was throughout his life poor and indifferent to the attractions of luxury, he was responsible for undermining the Spartan character by introducing into his homeland wealth and the desire for riches.<sup>1</sup> In illustration of this, Plutarch provides two anecdotes:<sup>2</sup>

Διονυσίου δὲ τοῦ τυράννου πέμψαντος αὐτοῦ ταῖς θυγατράσι πολυτελεῇ χιτῶνια τῶν Σικελικῶν, οὐκ ἔλαβεν, εἰπὼν φοβείσθαι μὴ διὰ ταῦτα μᾶλλον αἰσχυραὶ φανῶσιν. ἀλλ' ὀλίγον ὕστερον πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν τύραννον ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως ἀποσταλεῖς πρεσβευτῆς, προσπέμψαντος αὐτῷ δύο στολὰς ἐκείνου, καὶ κελεύσαντος ἦν βούλεται τούτων ἐλόμενον τῇ θυγατρὶ κομίζειν, αὐτὴν ἐκείνην ἔφη βέλτιον αἰρήσεσθαι, καὶ λαβὼν ἀμφοτέρας ἀπῆλθεν.

There are several difficulties with this apparently straightforward passage, some of which have been noted before. First and most obviously—although this is *not* one of the difficulties that have been noticed—these two anecdotes are mutually inconsistent. For, while the first illustrates the character of Lysander as Plutarch has described it in the immediately preceding sentence, the second shows us a Lysander who has suddenly (ὀλίγον ὕστερον) become a paradigm of covetousness. Plutarch does not, it is true, give an entirely favorable account of Lysander, but personal greed is not one of the vices that Plutarch elsewhere ascribes to his subject. Although Lysander has just been described as melancholic (2. 5), and although greed was recognized even in Plutarch's day as a symptom of the melancholic disposition,<sup>3</sup> still the lifelong poverty of Lysander, which Plutarch insists upon (see n. 1), would seem to refute the implication contained in this anecdote. There are other difficulties that tend to cast doubt upon this anecdote. Only one daughter is mentioned, whereas we know from the previous sentence that Lysander had more than one. We know also, from the final chapter of the *Life*, that more than one unmarried daughter survived Lysander. Only R. Flacelière seems to have noticed this inconsistency, but he exhorts us not to attach any importance to it.<sup>4</sup> That same scholar does, however, appear to attach some importance to

This note has benefited greatly from suggestions made by my colleague John Buckler and by the anonymous referee for this journal.

1. *Lys.* 2. 6. Lysander was born poor (2. 2) and died poor (30. 2, 30. 6). For the tradition according to which Lysander was a *mothax*, see D. Lotze, "Μόθᾱκες," *Historia* 11 (1962): 427–35.

2. 2. 7–8. I reproduce the text of Ziegler's second edition (Leipzig, 1973). There are no important manuscript variants.

3. Aretaeus of Cappadocia 3. 5 (= *CMG*, 2:39–41 Hude). That Aretaeus is now to be dated to the first century, rather than the second (as previously thought), is shown by F. Kudlien, *Untersuchungen zu Aretaios von Kappadokien*, Akad. Wiss. Lit.: Abh. Geist. Sozialwiss. Klasse 11 (Mainz, 1963), pp. 7–32. Avarice is characteristic of the melancholic according to the later writers Pseudo-Soranus and Vindician as well; see R. Klibansky, E. Panofsky, and F. Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy* (New York, 1964), pp. 62–63.

4. *Plutarque*, "Vies" VI (Paris, 1971), p. 317.

Permission to reprint a note in this section may be obtained only from the author.

another difficulty with the anecdote—so much so, in fact, that he resorts to alteration of the text. Specifically, the phrase ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως is, in the words of an earlier commentator, “fairly obscure.”<sup>5</sup> Flacelière’s solution, to delete αὐτῆς, is clearly no improvement. Another problem with the anecdote is the historical difficulty of placing chronologically Lysander’s embassy to the court of Dionysius, an embassy that is nowhere else attested. It can only have occurred, as Flacelière points out,<sup>6</sup> between 406 and 395 B.C., the years, respectively, of Dionysius’ accession to power and of Lysander’s death. Efforts to date this incident more precisely have been unsuccessful.<sup>7</sup> The reason is that, as everything we have so far noticed has conspired to indicate, the anecdote as we have it is defective.

Lysander never went to Syracuse as ambassador. The anecdote Plutarch tells is, or in its original form was, about some other Spartan. Only thus can the inconsistency involving the number of daughters be conveniently resolved. Only thus can sense be made of the phrase ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως. For Plutarch is illustrating by means of these two anecdotes (1) Lysander’s personal abstention from luxury and (2) the acquisitiveness that, paradoxically, Lysander engendered in Sparta. Leaving aside for the moment the question of the truth of the two stories, we can see that now they illustrate perfectly Plutarch’s assertion: when Dionysius sent costly Sicilian dresses to Lysander for his daughters, in characteristic Spartan fashion he refused them, but not long thereafter X, who was sent as ambassador to the same tyrant from the same city (sc. as Lysander), behaved in a decidedly un-Spartan manner in almost identical circumstances. Fortunately, apart from a trifling matter of orthography, we are able to identify this X with surprising confidence. He was a man whose name is variously given as Aristus and Aretes and whose sole claim to fame is that he was sent by Sparta in 404 B.C. to assist Dionysius in securing his power over the Syracusans.<sup>8</sup> This is established by the only other passage in which the anecdote of the embassy to Dionysius is found: in a section of the Plutarchian *Apophthegmata Laconica*, which is in other respects nearly identical with the passage (*Lys.* 2. 7–8) quoted above,<sup>9</sup> the manuscripts read, not the

5. J. Smits, *Plutarchus’ “Leven van Lysander”* (Amsterdam, 1939), p. 79, “Tamelijk onduidelijk. Wellicht bedoelde Plut.: uit die zelfde stad der soberheid (Sparta),” a suggestion which is itself no less obscure. I. Scott-Kilvert, the most recent English translator of the *Life* (1960), was so embarrassed by the phrase that he simply omitted it.

6. See n. 4. Another believer in the historicity of this embassy is D. J. Mosley, *Envoys and Diplomacy in Ancient Greece*, Historia Einzelschriften, 22 (Wiesbaden, 1973), p. 51, who, however, goes beyond the evidence in calling Lysander “the friend of Dionysius.” Similarly G. Glotz, *Histoire ancienne*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1936), p. 404, refers to Lysander’s visit to Syracuse as evidence of his support of Dionysius’ regime.

7. Between 403 and 399: P. Poralla, *Prosopographie der Lakedaemonier* (Diss. Breslau, 1913), p. 90, and (apparently) U. Kahrstedt, s.v. “Lysandros,” *RE* 26 (1927): 2506. Spring 402: C. D. Hamilton, *Sparta’s Bitter Victories* (Ithaca, 1979), pp. 96–97. The time of the Elean War (401–400): R. E. Smith, “Lysander and the Spartan Empire,” *CP* 43 (1948): 154. But see Smits, *Plutarchus’ “Leven van Lysander,”* p. 202, n. 1, whose objections, however, may not be decisive if we choose to believe that the stories regarding Lysander’s fall from power are fabrications: W. K. Prentice, “The Character of Lysander,” *AJA* 38 (1934): 37–42.

8. Diod. 14. 10. 2 (“Αριστος) and 14. 70. 3 (“Αρέτης). He is not elsewhere mentioned: Poralla, *Prosopographie*, p. 29; J. Kirchner, s.v. “Aristos,” *RE* 3 (1895): 1010. For his activities in 404, see K. F. Stroheker, *Dionysios I* (Wiesbaden, 1958), pp. 55–56.

9. 229A no. 1. I rely upon the text of the *Apophthegmata Laconica* edited by W. Nachstädt (Leipzig, 1935). The following are the variants between the version in the *Life* and that in the *Moralia*: τοῦ τυράννου L: τοῦ τῆς Σικελίας τ. M, πολυτελῆ χειῶνια τῶν Σικελικῶν L: ἱμάτι M, πολυτελῆ M (causing hiatus with the following οὐκ), φοβεῖσθαι L: δεδιέναι M, δύο στολὰς ἐκείνου L: τοῦ Διονυσίου δύο στολὰς M. I omit the variant referred to in the body of my discussion.

πρεσβευτής found in the manuscripts of the *Life*, but ἀρίστας, which Bernardakis, followed by subsequent editors, “emended” to πρεσβευτής. It is as certain as such things can be that this ἀρίστας is to be connected with the name of the Spartan ambassador mentioned by Diodorus and that we should be spared the emendation—inherently improbable in any case—of Bernardakis.<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to determine which, if any, of the (now) three forms of his name is correct. But, if the form preserved in the manuscripts of Plutarch was original, we can easily account for the others as corruptions of it. Ἀρίστος is the most common of the three forms and is therefore the least likely to have suffered corruption; Ἀρέτης seems to have arisen from a mechanical confusion of uncial sigma and epsilon. We may for convenience, then, and with some diffidence, refer to the ambassador by the name Aristas.<sup>11</sup>

A number of questions remain. Two are related, namely, the relationship between the *Apophthegmata Laconica* and the *Life of Lysander* and the question of whether we have to do here with manuscript corruption in the *Life* or a conscious alteration on the part of Plutarch or his source. Another question (and one that cannot with certainty be resolved) is the historical question of the veracity of the two anecdotes, the first about Lysander and the second about Aristas. The historical question is irrelevant as far as our interest in Plutarch is concerned, but impertinency has rarely proved a hindrance to the proffering of conjectures. If we are irrevocably committed to the historicity of the accounts preserved in Plutarch, we can without too much difficulty defend this sequence of anecdotes. We may suppose that, say, in 406, when Lysander was the most prominent figure in Sparta, Dionysius sent presents to his daughters as a gesture of goodwill, in connection with a Syracusan embassy (Diod. 13. 81. 2) seeking alliance with the Spartans. “Not long thereafter,” in 404, Dionysius characteristically exhibited the same kind of generosity toward Aristas when the latter visited the former to strengthen their alliance. The anecdote about Lysander, however, is such a typical Spartan-story that its fictional character is fairly apparent.<sup>12</sup> The case of the story about Aristas, however, is not

10. It should be pointed out that ἀρίστας has never appeared in a printed text of the *Moralia*. Of the eleven manuscripts that Nachstädt uses for his edition of the *Apophthegmata Laconica* five omit the words Διονυσίου . . . ἀρίστας; in other words, giving only the second of the two anecdotes, under the name of Lysander. Of the remaining six manuscripts three omit the words πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν . . . ἀρίστας (or . . . ἀρίστας προσ-); in other words, giving both anecdotes but leaving out mention of the embassy in the second. Only three manuscripts, therefore, preserve mention of the embassy, none of which was used in the constitution of the text of the *Apophthegmata Laconica* before the edition of Bernardakis (Leipzig, 1889). For these omissions, see Nachstädt, pp. xvii–xviii. For a similar situation (overlapping omissions due to mechanical lipography) in the manuscripts of Plato, see J. Burnet ad *Euthyphr.* 8D4.

11. Ἀρίστας is attested as the name of an Arcadian in Pausanias (8. 24. 1). As J. Buckler has pointed out to me, none of the three forms is found in Laconian inscriptions, but the name Ἀριστέας is common (*IG*, 5<sup>1</sup> Index).

12. The same story is told of Lysander by Plutarch at *Praec. coniug.* 141D and in the Plutarchian *Reg. et imp. apophth.* 190D. It turns up again, with four instances of hiatus in three lines, at *A pophth. Lac.* 218D–E, this time told of Archidamus II, who died within five years of Dionysius’ birth. A very similar story (about an eminent Spartan rejecting the gift of extravagant comestibles sent by luxury-loving foreigners) is found in Ael. *VH* 3. 20 (Lysander and unspecified Ionians), *A pophth. Lac.* 210B–C and Theopomp. *FGrH* 115 F 22 (Agesilaus and the Thasians), Plut. *Ages.* 36. 10 and Nepos *Ages.* 8. 4 (Agesilaus and the Egyptians). Cf. Hdt. 9. 82 (about Pausanias) and Xen. *Cyrop.* 1. 3. 4–7 (about Cyrus, an honorary Spartan). For the exalted status of fiction in ancient biography, see A. Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), pp. 56–57; J. Fairweather, “Fiction in the Biographies of Ancient Writers,” *Ancient Society* 5 (1974): 231–75; A. Swift Riginos, *Platonica* (Leyden, 1976); M. R. Lefkowitz, “The Poet as Hero: Fifth-Century Autobiography and Subsequent Biographical Fiction,” *CQ* 28 (1978): 459–69.

so clear. The historicity of his embassy to Dionysius cannot be doubted, but we know almost nothing else about him. What is reported of him is that he disappointed the hopes of, and betrayed his promises to, the people of Syracuse (Diod. 14. 10. 3). This would seem to accord with the vicious character of the man as illustrated in our anecdote, but consistency may be significant as well of single-minded contrivance as of the truth. Specifically, the source for both Diodorus and the anecdote in Plutarch is almost certainly Ephorus, who seems to have been responsible for the stories hostile to Lysander that Plutarch repeats.<sup>13</sup> Ephorus probably held Lysander responsible for causing Sparta to abandon her ancestral *ἀγωγή*,<sup>14</sup> for which abandonment the story about Aristas served as illustration. For no sooner had Lysander brought the war with Athens to a successful conclusion and begun to enrich his native city (*Lys.* 2. 6) than Spartan character began to change. We can with some probability trace this attitude to Ephorus' teacher Isocrates, who condemns Sparta's overtures to Dionysius as a symptom of her greedy desire for empire. In particular, in *On the Peace* 98–99, Isocrates refers to Lysander's activity in Chios in 404 B.C. and, in almost the same breath, the Spartan effort to establish tyrannies in Italy and Sicily.<sup>15</sup> This association is reproduced in Diodorus (14. 10. 1–2, from Ephorus), who reports Lysander's establishment of harmosts in the cities after the Peloponnesian War and, immediately afterwards, the embassy of Aristas to Syracuse. If we assign the story of Aristas and his daughter's dresses to the invention of Ephorus, we should probably not do the same with the anecdote about Lysander. For this anecdote portrays Lysander in a favorable light, and Ephorus seems to have been hostile to Lysander. It is apparent, therefore, that the association of the anecdote about Aristas with that about Lysander (or with a story about some other Spartan that has been appropriated to Lysander) is the work either of Plutarch himself or of a source intermediate between Ephorus and Plutarch.<sup>16</sup> But Plutarch needed no intermediary, as he quotes Ephorus frequently and directly, both elsewhere and in the *Life of Lysander*.<sup>17</sup> It therefore seems likely that it is Plutarch who was responsible for the collocation of these two (probably fictional) accounts, the one which he knew to be attributed to Lysander (*Praec. coniug.* 141D) and perhaps knew to be attributed to others as well (*Apophth. Lac.* 218D–E), and the second, about Aristas (*Apophth. Lac.* 229A), which he read in Ephorus.

We know, then, that the name of Aristas belongs in the text of *Apophthegmata Laconica* 229A; the question remains whether it should be introduced into that of *Lysander* 2. 8. Now, either the *Apophthegmata Laconica* are to be regarded as one of the sources for Plutarch's *Lives* or they were excerpted from the *Lives*. If the latter is the case, it is clear that the name of Aristas appeared originally in this anecdote in the *Life*, for the manuscript reading at *Apophthegmata Laconica* 229A

13. E. Meyer, *Theopomps "Hellenika"* (Halle, 1909), p. 82, n. 4; W. K. Prentice, "The Character of Lysander," pp. 37–42; R. E. Smith, "Lysander and the Spartan Empire," p. 149, n. 40.

14. A. Momigliano, "La Storia di Eforo e le Elleniche di Teopompo," *RFIC* 63 (1935): 196.

15. Cf. *Paneg.* 125–26; P. Cloché, "Isocrate et la politique lacédémonienne," *REA* 35 (1933): 129–45. See also Diod. 15. 23. 5; Ephorus, *FGrH* 70 F 211.

16. That intermediary will not, of course, be Diodorus, whose work, which Plutarch never cites, survives entire for this period.

17. W. C. Helmbold and E. N. O'Neil, *Plutarch's Quotations* (Baltimore, 1959), p. 27; K. Ziegler, s.v. "Plutarchos," *RE* 41 (1951): 912; K. B. J. Herbert, "Ephorus in Plutarch's *Lives*" (Diss. Harvard, 1954), of which I have seen only the summary in *HSCP* 63 (1958): 510–13; P. A. Stadter, *Plutarch's Historical Methods* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), pp. 128, 140.

could not otherwise be explained. (We will then, of course, have to assume that this anecdote was copied before the corruption of the manuscript(s) of the *Lives*.) But it is far more likely that the collection of anecdotes represents Plutarch's raw material for the *Lives*, whether composed by himself or someone else.<sup>18</sup> Thus, when he composed the *Life of Lysander*, he had before him the two anecdotes in the form in which they now appear in the correct manuscripts of the *Apophthegmata Laconica*, that is, with Aristas' name. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that Plutarch intended the second of our anecdotes in the *Life* to be referred to Aristas, and that the ambassador's name has fallen out of our manuscript tradition. Most likely Plutarch wrote ἀποσταλὲς ἀρίστας, as in *Apophthegmata Laconica* 229A, and the word πρεσβευτής was written over the name by some scholar as explanation.<sup>19</sup> Then the explanatory word replaced the name, because πρεσβευτής makes sense whereas ἀρίστας, unless it is recognized as a proper name, does not. The error is understandable because Aristas is an uncommon name and the scribe is anyway not expecting to find another name in what ought to be an anecdote about Lysander.

DAVID SANSONE  
University of Illinois,  
Urbana

18. See the discussion, with the literature there cited, by K. Ziegler, s.v. "Plutarchos," *RE* 41 (1951): 865–67. (Note also *De tranquill. an.* 464F—a reference I owe to J. Buckler—where Plutarch speaks of using as a source notebooks on a specific topic that he had compiled for his own use.) This view finds confirmation in our examination of this anecdote for, if someone copied the anecdote from the *Life*, why would he change the wording so as to introduce hiatus (see n. 9) where there was none before? Rather Plutarch, in the *Life*, altered the wording of his model to avoid hiatus.

19. Alternatively, perhaps Plutarch himself wrote ἀποσταλὲς ἀρίστας πρεσβευτής. Considering the difficulties that the manuscripts of the *Apophthegmata Laconica* had with these anecdotes (see n. 10), it should not surprise us if a single word—and, apparently, a *vox nihili* at that—has been omitted here.

## PLUTARCH *LYSANDER* 2: AN ADDENDUM

Professor Sansone's analysis, in the present issue of *CP*, of the two anecdotes in *Lysander* 2. 7–8 as illustrating "(1) Lysander's personal abstention from luxury and (2) the acquisitiveness that, paradoxically, Lysander engendered in Sparta" (p. 203) is an acute piece of detective work. He seems quite correct in arguing that the second anecdote cannot refer to Lysander (as it does not in the full version of the *Apophthegmata Laconica*). He is also, I think, correct in regarding the *Apophthegmata Laconica* as the raw material for the *Lysander* rather than vice versa. His conclusion, however, that πρεσβευτής in *Lysander* 2. 8 should be replaced by a proper name, 'Αρίστας (*vel sim.*), assumes a not particularly easy corruption, however explained, and is perhaps unnecessary.

'Αποσταλὲς πρεσβευτής in this passage has apparently been universally taken as a reference to Lysander ("Lysander having been sent *as ambassador* . . ."), and it is a real merit of Sansone to have perceived the contextual difficulties in this. But the transmitted text admits of a different interpretation which gives the requisite sense. Construe πρεσβευτής not as appositional to an understood subject Λύσανδρος, but as itself the subject: "But a little later from the same city to the same tyrant