

## SCIPIO AEMILIANUS' EASTERN EMBASSY

The famous eastern tour of inspection undertaken by Scipio Aemilianus, L. Metellus Calvus and Sp. Mummius is now generally dated 140/39 B.C., where Diodorus seems to put it.<sup>1</sup> The accepted view, however, involves discounting an explicit statement by Cicero. It also presents historical difficulties. In 140 B.C. there was no need for such a high-powered Roman initiative, and scholars can discover only very minor political results.<sup>2</sup> Sherwin-White indeed criticised the envoys severely, especially Scipio; they were culpably blind to the new menace of Parthia, which was steadily dismembering the Seleucid Empire east of the Euphrates. This is fair criticism only on the 140/39 B.C. dating.<sup>3</sup> Did Scipio and his colleagues fail to see what is patent to us today? It is time to reexamine rigorously the underlying assumption.

In *Acad. prior.* 2.5 Cicero defends a Roman noble's love of Greek learning in the following terms:

ego autem cum Graecas litteras M. Catonem in senectute didicisse acceperim, P. autem Africani historiae loquantur in legatione illa nobili, *quam ante censuram obiit*, Panaetium unum omnino comitem fuisse, nec litterarum Graecarum nec philosophiae iam ullum auctorem requiro.

The date of the embassy must be 144/3 B.C., if we follow the logic of this passage. Scipio was censor with L. Mummius in 142/1 B.C. and their public quarrel was hardly less notable than the embassy, in which L. Mummius' brother shared.<sup>4</sup> Another Ciceronian passage – written some six years earlier – seems to contradict the dating offered in 45 B.C. In *de republica* 6.11 the elder Africanus prophesies his grandson's future greatness in the famous dream:

videsne illam urbem... ad quam oppugnandam nunc venis paene miles? hanc hoc biennio consul evertes... cum autem Karthaginem deleveris, triumphum egeris censorque fueris et obieris legatus Aegyptum Syriam Asiam Graeciam, delegere iterum consul absens bellumque maximum conficies, Numantiam excindes.

<sup>1</sup> For an earlier generation of scholars see F. Marx, *RhM* 39 (1884), 68–71 and *Lucilius* (Leipzig, 1905), ii.171–4; G. F. Unger, *Philologus* 55 (1896), 97–9; F. Münzer, *Klio* 5 (1905), 135–9. For the most thorough recent study along lines laid by these men see A. E. Astin, *CPh* 54 (1959), 221–7. Only Justin (38.8.8) gives the envoys' names, but Cicero (*de rep.* 3.48) confirms Sp. Mummius.

<sup>2</sup> See A. E. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 127, 138f. and 177; E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (Berkeley, 1984), pp. 280, 669 and 714f. Recognising rightly the importance of the embassy Astin can show only that Scipio probably helped somehow with the accession of Antiochos VII and Attalos III.

<sup>3</sup> *Roman Foreign Policy in the East* (London, 1984), pp. 57f. and 82f. For Parthian expansion see G. le Rider, *Suse sous les Seleucides*... (1965), pp. 369f. (Ekbatana was lost c. 147, Seleukeia c. 144, Babylon in 141 and Mesopotamia soon after 140).

<sup>4</sup> Scipio and Sp. Mummius were both away or busy in 146/5 and Scipio was still in Rome at the beginning of 144 (Val. Max. 6.4.2); L. Metellus must have been back in Rome in summer or autumn 143, when he was elected consul for the following year. See on all this Broughton, *Magistrates* i.467–76. On these grounds Astin (op. cit. (n. 1), 221 and 226) rightly rejected E. Cavaignac's 143/2 dating for the embassy (*RN Ser. V*, 13 (1951), 131–8). Cavaignac's case otherwise deserved more respect than it has received, since he handled the numismatic evidence impressively. I here acknowledge my own debt. For Panaitios' presence see also 'Plutarch', *Apophth. Scipionis Min.* 13. Polybios visited Ptolemy VIII in Alexandria on another occasion without Scipio. See Walbank, *Commentary* i.5 n. 11 and iii.630 and 749f. In 144 he must still have been busy helping to stabilise and organise Greece after the Mummian settlement.

The order looks chronological and would thus support the accepted modern dating of the embassy.<sup>5</sup> But Cicero, of course, could both make chronological mistakes and correct them. Around 45 B.C. indeed he was frequently consulting Atticus on such questions of the 140s B.C., frankly admitting past errors or ignorance.<sup>6</sup> Thus the emphatic *ante censuram* may represent Cicero's deliberate correction of a careless earlier passage – as Astin fairly concedes – and not be itself a piece of carelessness.<sup>7</sup>

If Cicero really did change his mind, he will have had good reasons. Modern scholars will not in the end allow this because of strong convictions on the order and dating of the Diodoran excerpts. Astin for instance has insisted that Diodoros narrated the coup of Tryphon against his young ward Antiochos VI under 140/39 or 139/8 B.C., a dating shared by the Livian tradition – though not in fact historically correct.<sup>8</sup> Now in the Constantinian excerpts *de legationibus* Scipio's embassy follows a narrative recording the reaction of the Roman Senate to Tryphon's overtures immediately after the coup. The earliest possible date for the embassy in Diodoros would then appear to be 140/39 B.C.<sup>9</sup> Now Diodoros' main source for eastern affairs after Polybios failed him was presumably Poseidonios, and this is why scholars still prefer the 'Diodoran' dating to Cicero's precise *ante censuram*.<sup>10</sup>

Much hinges on Poseidonios' narrative methods, since Diodoros would hardly have changed the order of his source significantly. Poseidonios evidently tended to reserve blocks of material until some critical point and then deploy them at length. Thus the early career of Galaistes under two successive kings was first narrated in the context of his coup against Ptolemy VIII in 140/39 B.C.<sup>11</sup> Similarly the performance of Attalos III as king was held back until 134 B.C., when it could help explain his growing unpopularity.<sup>12</sup> Poseidonios then may have narrated Tryphon's usurpation

<sup>5</sup> For the date of the *Academica* see Cic. *ad Att.* 13.13–14; 19.1; 25.3 and 32.3. For the *de republica* (summer 51 B.C.) see *ad Att.* 5.12.2 and *Ad fam.* 8.1.4 (Caelius). F. D. Gerlach pressed the *de republica* passage rather too far for chronological sequence (*Hist. Stud.* 1884, p. 222); he assumed from *absens* that Scipio was still abroad on the embassy in summer 135, when elected to his second consulship! He was followed by K. J. H. Neumann, *Hist. Rom.* (1881), p. 151 and Marx, *Stud. Lucil.* (1882), p. 81. Marx wisely changed his mind later, *RhM* 39 (1884), 70.

<sup>6</sup> See *ad Att.* 13.30.2 and 32.3 with 33.3 (also letters 4.1, 5.1 and 6.4) on the *decem legati* at Corinth in 145; 12.5b and 16 with 16.13 a(b).2 on the two C. Fannii and other figures in the 140s; *ad Att.* 12.23.2 for the Athenian philosophers' embassy to Rome in 155 B.C. (needed for the *Academica* itself). For good discussions of Cicero at work in this way and of Atticus' reliability see E. Badian, *Hommages à M. Renard* i.54–65; D. R. Shackleton-Bailey, *Cicero's Letters to Atticus* v. 320 (on 12.23.2), 349, 359f. and 400–3 (the Fannii); G. V. Sumner, *Orators in Cicero's Brutus* (1973), pp. 161–76 (all kinds of facts could be dug out).

<sup>7</sup> Astin, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 226 n. 10.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.* (n. 1), 223–6. In the excerpts *de insidiis* Tryphon's coup comes after the murder of Viriathus during Q. Caepio's proconsulship (Diod. 33.21 and 28). For the Livian tradition see *Epit.* 55, 'Alexandri filius, rex Syriae, a Diodoto, qui Tryphon cognominabatur, tutore suo, per fraudem occisus est...'; *Oxyrh. Epit.* 55, 'Diodotus Tryphon An[tioch]um [regem occi]dit Suriaque potitus est'. Josephos also (*Ant. Iud.* 13.218) put Tryphon's coup *after* the capture of Demetrios II by the Parthians in 140.

<sup>9</sup> See Diod. 33.28a and 28–9. Scholars reasonably agree that within each series of the Constantinian excerpts episodes are drawn in strict order from the full text of Diodoros. See Astin, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 222–5.

<sup>10</sup> On Poseidonios' quality see F. Jacoby, *FGH Hist* 87 T 1–19 with *Kommentar*, pp. 154–61; *RE* xxii, coll. 563–75, 623–41 (K. Reinhardt).

<sup>11</sup> See Diod. 33.20 and Astin, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 224. In the excerpts *de insidiis* the coup immediately precedes the murder of Viriathus and in the *de virtutibus et vitiis* its failure follows that event. The date is secure.

<sup>12</sup> Diod. 34/5.3. This follows in the excerpts a long passage detailing the outbreak of the Sicilian Slave War (ch. 2.42–8).

at length only under 140/39 B.C., after the capture of Demetrios II by the Parthians. But he could not possibly have dated it that year.<sup>13</sup> The true chronology is assured by the coinage and supported by the reliable narrative of *I Maccabees*. Tryphon seized the throne late in 142 B.C. on the death of Antiochos VI.<sup>14</sup> From that point on, based on Antioch and Ptolemais, he held his own against Demetrios II and then against the generals and Demetrios' wife, who controlled Seleukeia. In 139/8 B.C. Antiochos VII landed there, married Kleopatra and defeated the usurper within the year.<sup>15</sup>

When Poseidonios came to deal with the coup of Galaistes, he first narrated the coup itself with some background on its author and then, in a later context, its suppression.<sup>16</sup> This may have involved some recapitulation. Certainly we find this feature in Polybios' treatment of Andriskos. Both in Diodoros and the Livian tradition his early career is treated twice – first in 154/3 B.C., when Demetrios I sent him to Rome, and then in 149 B.C., when his Thraco-Macedonian adventure began. The excerptor of Diodoros noted the repetition of much of this material.<sup>17</sup> Poseidonios could have dealt with Tryphon similarly. He certainly narrated in the correct place under 146/5 B.C. how Tryphon fetched the infant Antiochos VI from Arabia, crowned him king and drove Demetrios II out of Antioch, and Diodoros preserved a note of foreboding in *his* narrative – treachery was already in the air.<sup>18</sup> Under 140/39 B.C. Poseidonios clearly retailed much about Tryphon the usurper. There was first of all the *manner* of Antiochos VI's death. At the time the doctors declared that he had been suffering from painful kidney-stones, which had necessitated an operation; it unfortunately proved fatal. This story may have been believed for quite a long while. Whenever the truth finally came out, we may be sure that it was vigorously used in

<sup>13</sup> Diod. 33.28 (from *de insidiis*). Note the back-reference to Demetrios' captivity. Josephos (*AJ* 13.218) and the Livian tradition (my n. 8) were misled and wrongly dated the coup itself.

<sup>14</sup> Coins of Antiochos VI are known from Byblos and Ptolemais of Seleucid Year 171 (Oct. 142 – Sept. 141 B.C.). See Stella Ben-Dor, *Pal. Expl. Quart.* 1946/7, 43f.; le Rider, op. cit. (n. 3), p. 370 n. 2. The latest dated Antioch coins are of Sel. 170 = 143/2 B.C., but undated drachms with TRY and Tryphon's horned helmet reverse could go with the rare Phoenician pieces as Antioch's final issue (Newell, *Seleucid Mint of Antioch* (1918), p. 70). *I Maccab.* 13.31–42 dates Tryphon's coup Sel. 170 = Year I of Simon as High Priest (see also Joseph. *AJ* 13.213). Jews, however, used the Babylonian year for Jewish events and so Sel. 170 here = April 142 – March 141 B.C. See on this E. J. Bickerman, *Der Gott der Makkabäer* (1938), pp. 155–8 and *Chronology of the Ancient World*<sup>2</sup> (1968), p. 71; le Rider, op. cit. (n. 3), pp. 361f. Rare tetradrachms of Herakleia by Latmos and Lebedos were found counter-marked with Tryphon's helmet in a hoard from Aleppo (*IGGH* 1562: see Newell, *NNM* 82 (1938), pp. 21–4). This should represent Tryphon's very first money, as Newell argued, and the hoard should be dated 142 B.C. by comparison with the hoard from Kirikhan (Cilicia) of very similar composition (see *Coin Hoards* i.87 and ii.90).

<sup>15</sup> See Diod. 33.28. On the coinage and the overall chronology see H. Seyrig, *NNM* 119 (1950), pp. 3–11: Antiochos VII struck at both Antioch and Tyre in 139/8 B.C. *I Maccab.* 14.1–3 and 15.1–14, 25 and 37 with 39 fit the numismatic chronology very well. Tryphon, abandoning the Seleucid era, has four dated years of coinage (142–139 B.C.). H. Baldus tried valiantly to reconcile the numismatic evidence for Tryphon with the literary evidence as a whole (*JNG* 20 (1970), 217–39): he postulated a prolonged joint reign of Tryphon and Antiochos VI from 142 B.C., marked by the drachms with the helmet reverse type. T. Fischer has, I think, demonstrated that this solution of the problem is not viable (*Chiron* 2 (1972), 201–13).

<sup>16</sup> See Diod. 33.20 and 22 with my n. 11; Astin, op. cit. (n. 1), 224.

<sup>17</sup> See Polyb. 36.9.1 and 10 with Walbank, *Commentary* iii.668–70; Diod. 31.40a and 32.15 (note *περὶ αὐτοῦ πάλιν ἄλλως ἢ διήγησις*); Livy, *Epit.* 48 (*Andriskus... Romam missus*) and 49 (*Andriskus quidam, ultimae sortis homo...*).

<sup>18</sup> See Diod. 33.4a; *I Maccab.* 11.39f. and 54–6; Jos. *AJ* 13.144. Diodoros noted that the restoration of the young king was a mere cover for Tryphon's bold ambition.

the propaganda war against Tryphon in 140/39 B.C. Its relevance to that context is obvious.<sup>19</sup> Secondly it would make sense to survey as a whole the mainly successful struggle of Tryphon against the generals of Demetrios II (before and after his captivity) until the decisive entry on the scene of Antiochos VII. Athenaios preserves the vivid details of one battle near Ptolemais against Sarpedon.<sup>20</sup> Between these two blocks of narrative about Tryphon in Poseidonios stretches a gap of five full years. I find it hard to believe that he said nothing about Tryphon in this interval.

Tryphon's embassy to Rome, which Diodoros narrated before Scipio's eastern journey, was clearly sent soon after Antiochos VI's death. It will have been late in the consular year 142 B.C. By dedicating the Victory in the name of Antiochos VI the Senate neatly kept its options open.<sup>21</sup> Rome's reaction to Tryphon's accession must have been news at the time and Poseidonios should have recorded it in its proper place, even though planning to keep the main saga of Tryphon's rise and fall to the turning-point in his fortunes.<sup>22</sup> The preceding episode in the excerpts *de legationibus* probably refers to events at the very beginning of the Numantine War – namely to 144 or 143 B.C., as Astin frankly concedes.<sup>23</sup> Both Tryphon's embassy and Scipio's journey could then have been narrated by Diodoros, following Poseidonios, under the archon-year 143/2 B.C., and that can be squared with the 144/3 B.C. dating that logically emerges from Cicero, *Acad. Prior.* 2.5.<sup>24</sup>

I would support this finally by one further point that has not yet been used in this argument. In the excerpts from Diodoros *de insidiis* an account of tyranny overthrown in Pisidian Boubon comes between the accession of Antiochos VI in 145/4 B.C. and the coup of Galaistes in Egypt five years later. The tyrant Simmias was killed by the sons of his murdered brother Moagetes; they had been brought up in Termessos and had there waited their time.<sup>25</sup> Now a decree of neighbouring Lykian Araxa throws light on this. It recounts the remarkable career of a certain Orthagoras. At one point he championed his city in war and diplomacy against Moagetes, the powerful military leader of Boubon. It is very tempting to identify this man with the Moagetes of

<sup>19</sup> For the illness see Livy, *Epit.* 55, '...per fraudem occisus est corruptis medicis, qui illum calculi dolore consumi ad populum mentiti, dum secant occidunt'; Jos. *AJ* 13.218 (Tryphon gave out that the king died under treatment? The MSS are corrupt here).

<sup>20</sup> For the generals and Tryphon see Diod. 33.28 and Athen. 8.333b–d = *FGrHist* 87 F 29.

<sup>21</sup> Diod. 32.28a. Ariarathes V had likewise promptly sent an embassy to Rome on his accession in 163 B.C., which was much better received than Tryphon's. In autumn 160 B.C. another embassy brought his crown worth 10,000 gold staters, the same value as Tryphon's Victory. Demetrios I sent an embassy with a matching crown early in 159 B.C.: though established by 162 B.C. he had waited for strong encouragement from Ti. Gracchus in person before chancing his cause in Rome. Even then he was put on probation and was never, it seems, formally recognised by the Senate. See Polyb. 31.3 and 33 and 32.1–3.13 with Walbank, *Commentary* iii.468f., 516f., 518, 521; Diod. 31.28–30.

<sup>22</sup> Polybios certainly would have done so, if we may judge by the careful attention which he gives to the timing and contemporary effects of the royal embassies considered in n. 21.

<sup>23</sup> Op. cit. (n. 1), 223. Astin refutes A. Schulten's attempt to link Diod. 33.16 with Q. Pompeius in 140/39 B.C. (*Numantia* (1914), i.360 n. 3; *Geschichte von Numantia* (1933), p. 74). The Diodoran wording is close to the language of Florus 1.34.3f. (2.18) on the start of the war.

<sup>24</sup> Diodoros, reconciling various dating systems, was capable of putting two events at least eighteen months apart under the same archon year and not necessarily in the right order. See the shrewd comments of Astin (op. cit. (n. 1), 222f.), who regards it as clear 'that, if Diodoros' source placed Scipio's embassy at the earlier date, 144–143, he himself...cannot have placed passage C [his account] any later than under the archon year 143/2...and therefore that he cannot have placed passage B [Tryphon's embassy] any later than under that same year'.

<sup>25</sup> See Diod. 33.5 (Antiochos VI); 5a ('Molkestes', 'Molgetes': MSS. Editors emend to 'Moagetes', to general approval); 20–1 (Galaistes and Viriathus).

Diodoros.<sup>26</sup> Orthagoras also went on two important missions for his city to Roman embassies headed by 'Appius' and 'Publius'. Sherwin-White has convincingly identified 'Appius' as Appius Claudius Pulcher, leader of the embassy of 154 B.C. that finally ended the war between Prusias II and Attalos II on terms favourable to Pergamon. He further suggested that 'Publius' might well be Aemilianus on his famous eastern embassy. This is a most attractive idea, since the decree undoubtedly puts 'Publius' later than 'Appius'.<sup>27</sup> Now Araxa had been very active in a Lykian League war against greater Termessos, a city with which Attalos II had decidedly friendly relations. In the early 150s it may even have supported him as an ally in his war with Selge. Moreover the king will have needed positive Termessian goodwill in founding Attaleia on the Pamphylian coast.<sup>28</sup> We know that Scipio and his colleagues visited Rhodes on their way home from Syria and that they also called on Attalos II in Pergamon. Araxa may have been understandably anxious in 144/3 B.C. – as ten years earlier – to allay Roman suspicions of opposition to Attalos, Rome's premier friend in the east. They could again have gone to Pergamon, but it would have been more convenient to take advantage of the stay in Rhodes.<sup>29</sup> The envoys from Araxa did good service for their city and the Lykian League. Rome had been sympathetic to the Lykians since the 170s and had freed them from the unpopular Rhodian yoke in 167 B.C. Lykian gratitude for Rome's interest was shown in the founding of a great four-yearly festival for the manifest goddess Roma, in which Orthagoras played a leading part.<sup>30</sup>

If Diodoros' Moagetes is the same as the man on the Araxa inscription, it could explain why the odd story about the overthrow of tyranny at Boubon came into Diodoros' narrative at just that point. It would have been part of the account of Scipio's embassy in Rhodes and southern Asia Minor, a piece of local background history – in which Panaitios of Rhodes may have been rather interested. In the excerpts *de insidiis* the Moagetes story comes between 145 and 139 B.C., as we have seen. It could easily have fallen under the archon year 143/2 B.C. in Diodoros. Certainty may be unattainable, but I would now claim some degree of probability for the earlier date for Scipio's embassy. Elsewhere I hope to explore the embassy's aims and achievements in a new historical context, where it makes much better sense.

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<sup>26</sup> The decree was first published by George Bean in *JHS* 68 (1948), 46–56, no. 3; it later appeared as *SEG* xviii.570. For the Moagetes identification see Bean (pp. 52 and 55); Gruen, op. cit. (n. 2), pp. 732f. n. 9; Sherwin-White, op. cit. (n. 3), pp. 49–51. Others, putting the decree c. 180 B.C., see its Moagetes as the tyrant of Kibyra who treated with Manlius Vulso. See J. A. O. Larsen, *CPh* 51 (1956), 155–68; L. Moretti, *Riv. Fil.* 98 (1970), 326–50; J. and L. Robert, *Bull. Epigr.* 1950, no. 183, pp. 185–97; Walbank, *Commentary* iii.143 and 171.

<sup>27</sup> Op. cit. (n. 3), p. 50 with n. 114. For Appius Claudius' embassy see Polyb. 33.13.4–10 and Broughton, *Magistrates* i.450f. The phrasing in lines 62–6, as Sherwin-White argues, strongly suggests embassies sent on two distinct occasions – not two sub-groups of the *decem legati* of 189 B.C., a view popular with scholars in the past.

<sup>28</sup> The Termessos in Diodorus is probably lesser Termessos, a close neighbour of Boubon and Araxa. Attalos II built a stoa at greater Termessos (*TAM* iii.1.9 and 4.20). For the war of Eumenes II and Attalos with Selge see *Inscr. Perg.* i.25 and *Prologus Trogi* 34; for Attaleia see Strabo 14.667. Prusias II had encouraged complaints from the Galatians and Selge against Pergamon in the 160s; see Polyb. 31.1.3 with Walbank, *Commentary* iii.456 and 461.

<sup>29</sup> For Rhodes see Cic. *de repub.* 3.48; for Attalos II and Pergamon see 'Lucian', *Macrob.* 12.

<sup>30</sup> For Rome and Lykia see Larsen, op. cit. (n. 26), 156ff.: *RE* xiii. coll. 2274f.; Polyb. 30.5.12 with Walbank, *Commentary* iii.183f., 277f. and 427; *SEG* xviii.570.69–77 (festival). Sherwin-White (op. cit. (n. 3), p. 50) dates the festival either c. 165 (thanks for liberation) or c. 132–129 (creation of the Roman province of Asia).