
After Pyrrhos: The Antigonids and the last Aiakids (272–230s BC)*

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ABSTRACT The paper examines the relations between the Antigonids and the Aiakids during the forty years after the death of Pyrrhos (272) until the fall of the Molossian monarchy in the late 230s. Alexander II and a few of his successors ruled in Epeiros at that time; Antigonos II Gonatas and his son Demetrios II reigned in Macedonia. The main concerns of this article are a supposed peace treaty between the Antigonids and the Aiakids in 272 (and who signed it from the Epeirote side), the military conflict between Alexander II and the Antigonids during the Chremonidean War, the recognition of the *asylia* of the Koan Asklepieion by Gonatas and Alexander II as well as by their subjects, and the marriage of Demetrios II to Phthia (its date, especially in the light of the Athenian decrees in honor of the grain-controllers, and the lengthy controversy concerning the identification of the mother of Philip V). Some other topics are also considered.

KEYWORDS Macedonia, Epeiros, Antigonos Gonatas, Alexander II, Demetrios II, Phthia.

In memory of P. J. Rhodes

1. INTRODUCTION

Macedonia and Epeiros had an uneasy history of relations –political, dynastic, military–, especially during the reign of Philip II, the epoch of the Diadochi and the time of Pyrrhos, but also later. This paper focuses on is a cluster of topics concerning the relations of the Antigonids –Antigonos II Gonatas and Demetrios II– with the heir of Pyrrhos Alexander II and his successors until the end of the Aiakid monarchy in the late 230s, as they are reflected in the very scattered sources.

During his last invasion of Macedonia in 274, Pyrrhos defeated Antigonos Gonatas, who had recently re-established the Antigonid dynasty there. However, even after a second defeat –by Ptolemy, Pyrrhos’ son, who had been left in charge of Pyrrhos’ Macedonian possessions– Gonatas kept some parts of his realm (in

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Macedonia and abroad)¹. When Pyrrhos left Macedonia and Epeiros for his Peloponnesian campaign, Gonatas regained control of the parts of Macedonia and of Thessaly he had lost. The final clash between Gonatas and Pyrrhos, which resulted in the death of the Molossian king, took place in Argos in 272.

Besides Macedonia and Thessaly, the realm (or empire, why not²) of Antigonos Gonatas also included some areas in Balkan Greece that he inherited from his father Demetrios I Poliorketes. The main strongholds of the Antigonids in Greece were Korinthos, as well as Demetrias in Magnesia (this city, founded by Poliorketes *c.* 294, was also one of the royal residences, along with Pella and Aigai in Macedonia), Chalkis in Euboia, and Piraeus (the Athenians had failed to regain control of Piraeus in 287 after their successful revolt against Poliorketes)³.

It would not be proper within the scope of this work to discuss the nature of the Macedonian kingdom, which was the nucleus of the Antigonid empire. It must be admitted that, under the Antigonids, the Macedonian state was a complex political structure, combining monarchic, *poleis* and even federal (or quasi-federal) elements⁴. The political dominance of the kings was, however, undeniable.

In the Hellenistic epoch, Macedonia and the Macedonians were fully integrated into the cultural space, political, and economic networks of the Hellenic *oikoumene*. The court of Gonatas included many representatives of the intellectual elite of the Hellenistic world⁵.

After Perdikkas I (or Karanos of the later version⁶), the mythical *ktistes* (founder) of the Macedonian monarchy, and Philip II, the king who united Macedonian lands in a single realm, and who can be considered as its second “founder”, Antigonos Gonatas undoubtedly was the third “founder” of the Macedonian kingdom⁷. The transitional period lasting from the expulsion of his father Demetrios I from Macedonia in 288, marked by temporary partition of the kingdom between Pyrrhos and Lysimachos, the Celtic invasion, the “anarchy” and struggle of the various pretenders for the kingship, as well as the final attack of Pyrrhos, had ended. The construction of the so-called Great Tumulus over some of the royal tombs at Aigai that had been plundered by the Celtic mercenaries of Pyrrhos *c.* 274-273⁸ possibly was an initiative of Gonatas⁹, had a symbolic meaning for him and the Macedonians¹⁰.

As for Epeiros and the Molossian monarchy, although Pyrrhos was a talented general, all his major military and foreign policy initiatives were marked by failures. The completion during the reign of Pyrrhos of unification of all the Epeirotes in a

¹ See e.g. LÉVÊQUE 1957, 557-571; HAMMOND–WALBANK 1988, 259-267.

² On the Antigonid realm as empire, see HATZOPOULOS 1996, 260.

³ The most recent discussion on the Antigonid occupation of Piraeus after 287 see in ROSE–WALLACE 2022, 167, 171-73.

⁴ The most important contribution to the study of the nature of the Macedonian state, with detailed historiographical analysis, is still HATZOPOULOS 1996.

⁵ See TARN 1913, 223-256; WATERFIELD 2021, 222-230.

⁶ On the Argead (Temnid) foundation myths, see MÜLLER 2020, 236-240.

⁷ M. B. Hatzopoulos reserved role of the third “founder” of the Macedonian state for Philip V for his recreation of the kingdom after defeat in the second war against the Romans and dissolution of the Antigonid empire (HATZOPOULOS 2001, 148; 2014, 120). The designation as the third “founder”, however, is better allotted to Gonatas. His grandson Philip V can be perceived as the “last” founder of the Macedonian kingdom.

⁸ D.S. 22.12; Plu. *Pyrrh.* 26.11-2.

⁹ ANDRONICOS 1984, 62; KOTTARIDI 2021, 72; WATERFIELD 2021, 128.

¹⁰ KOTTARIDI 2021, 72 has suggested that a number of remains of males found in some looted tombs in the area of Vergina (Aigai) can be attributed to the captured and punished Celts.

kind of alliance (or federation), and creation on its basis, together with a number of annexed territories, of the so-called “Great Epeiros,” should be recognized as the main achievement of the king¹¹. The descendants of Pyrrhos ruled about forty more years, and even after collapse of the Aiakid monarchy and loss of the external possessions of the Molossian kings, Epeirotes retained unity, but as a federation.

Recently, E. A. Meyer challenged the traditional understanding of the political development of Molossia and Epeiros presented in the works of P.-R. Franke, N. G. L. Hammond, P. Cabanes and a number of other scholars¹². She presents a point of view that Molossia, contrary to *communis opinio* (but different in details), was not a federation under the aegis of the monarchy either before or after the Thesprotas and later Chaones became allies of the kings of the Aiakid dynasty. Also, no federation headed by the Aiakids emerged around Molossia, as “Epeiros” (“Apeiros”), “the Molossians and their allies”, or “those of the Epeirotes who are allied”, during the last decades of the fourth century. In her opinion, the federation in Epeiros was formed only in the late 230s after the fall of the monarchy in Molossia¹³. With her works, E. A. Meyer caused a new discussion on political development of the Epeirotes (finding both supporters¹⁴ and opponents¹⁵), but it should be noted that the traditional conception of early development of federalism in Molossia and Epeiros is more persuasive.

During the Hellenistic epoch, integration of Epeiros into the Panhellenic cultural space intensified. First of all, this was due to the significance of Dodona and the local oracle. It is possible that during the reign of Pyrrhos an extensive construction program was launched in Dodona, which was continued under his successor Alexander II¹⁶. The Naia festival dedicated to Zeus was held in Dodona, likely at four-year intervals¹⁷. The Naia are mentioned on the famous “Antikythera Mechanism” along with the pan-Hellenic Olympic, Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean Games¹⁸. Apparently, Dodona functioned as the Epeirote federal sanctuary as Dion obviously was in Macedonia¹⁹.

2. THE ALLEGED PEACE TREATY BETWEEN THE ANTIGONIDS AND THE AIAKIDS AND THE HERITAGE OF PYRRHOS

After the defeat and death of Pyrrhos as well as the capitulation of his army, Antigonos Gonatas released Pyrrhos’ son Helenos²⁰, who had been captured in Argos, and sent him to Epeiros “to his brother Alexander”, with the ashes of their father²¹.

¹¹ On some aspects of the political, social, and economic development of Epeiros and the Aiakid monarchy in the time of Pyrrhos, see DOMÍNGUEZ MONEDERO 2022, 550-586.

¹² FRANKE 1955, 30-78; HAMMOND 1967, 525-593; CABANES 1976, 111-195; CABANES 1997, 83-85; FUNKE 2000a, 107-121; GEROGIANNIS 2022, 97.

¹³ MEYER 2013. See also MEYER 2015, 297-318.

¹⁴ E.g. NAKAS 2014, 508-510.

¹⁵ E.g. MACKIL 2016, 283-287; RAYNOR 2017, 243-270; DOMÍNGUEZ MONEDERO 2018, 1-40; PASCUAL 2018, 43-99; RAYNOR 2019, 307-328; LANE FOX 2021, 616-628.

¹⁶ CHAPINAL-HERAS 2021, 76-77.

¹⁷ See for details CABANES 1988, 49-84.

¹⁸ CABANES 2011, 249-260.

¹⁹ HATZOPOULOS-MARI 2004, 507, 509; GEROGIANNIS 2022, 105-106, 110.

²⁰ On Helenos see SANDBERGER 1970, 107-109; HECKEL 2021, 513 (no. 511).

²¹ Val. Max. 5.1, ext. 4. See also Plu. *Pyrrh.* 34.10-1; Just. 25.5.2.

Ptolemy, the eldest of Pyrrhos' sons, had fallen earlier in the Peloponnesian campaign.

It is possible that in the autumn of 272, at Argos, before his honorary release, Helenos, as the son of Pyrrhos and the member of the Aiakid dynasty, signed a peace treaty with Gonatas. It must be noted that no information about a such treaty has been preserved in the sources and its conclusion as well as its terms are only deductions and speculations. Usually, it is considered that the release of Helenos was a part of peace negotiations between Gonatas and Alexander II, who signed the treaty²². But Alexander II's invasion of Macedonia in the second half of the 260s (see below) allows us to suggest that he had no personal obligations to Gonatas. It has been suggested that by honoring Helenos Gonatas planned a conflict or waited for one between the surviving sons of Pyrrhos, Helenos, and Alexander²³. Helenos is no longer mentioned in the sources, though they are scarce²⁴. His half-brother Alexander II, whose mother was Lanassa, daughter of Agathokles, the famous Syracusan tyrant and king, became the heir of Pyrrhos²⁵.

Even though Alexander II reigned until the end of the 240s, only scattered information concerning his policies and actions survives. E. A. Meyer has proposed that a number of documents from Dodona dated to the reign of an "Alexander" be assigned to the reign of Alexander II²⁶ rather than to the first Aiakid king of that name, Alexander I the Molossian, the conventional attribution²⁷. Some of these inscriptions indeed obviously belong to the time of Alexander II (e.g. the grants of *isopoliteia* and *politeia* from the Molossians during "the reign of Alexander"²⁸) as is demonstrated by the letter-forms (e.g. *alpha* with the curved bar, form of *phi*, etc.) as well as some other peculiarities.

One of the first acts of Alexander II was the withdrawal of the garrison from Taras which Pyrrhos had left in the city in 275 before he departed from Italy, thereby indicating his abandonment of his father's western policy²⁹. Probably at the beginning of his reign, Alexander waged war against the Illyrian ruler Mytilos³⁰, defending the southern Illyrian territories previously conquered by Pyrrhos. Apparently, Alexander II preserved most areas of his father's Balkan realm³¹.

Later, Alexander initiated a more aggressive military policy (the invasion in Macedonia, the partition of Akarnania, etc: see below)³². Evidence suggests that under Pyrrhos and Alexander II, the Epeirote army or some part of it was armed at royal

²² E.g. BELOCH 1925, 578-579; CABANES 1976, 77. See also LÉVÊQUE 1957, 630; GEROGIANNIS 2022, 112.

²³ GRAINGER 1999, 117. The bad feeling between the mothers of Alexander II and Helenos—the Syracusan Lanassa and Illyrian Birkenna—mentioned by Plutarch (*Pyrrh.* 10.7), might also have later spilled over into the relationship between their sons (I owe this suggestion to W. Heckel).

²⁴ See also SANDBERGER 1970, 109. The statement that "Pyrrhus received a royal burial, and his surviving son Helenus was sent back to Epirus, where he reigned without interference from Antigonus" (GABBERT 1997, 31) has no evidentiary basis.

²⁵ On the early life and activity of Alexander II, see SANDBERGER 1970, 23-25; CABANES 1976, 75-76; HECKEL 2021, 33 (no. 54).

²⁶ MEYER 2013, 18-38. See also RAYNOR 2017, 245. CROSS 1932, 109-114, and some others had already proposed a similar idea concerning the dating of some Dodonian inscriptions.

²⁷ E.g., HAMMOND 1967, 535-536; CABANES 1976, 542.

²⁸ *SGDI* 1434-5 = *I. Molossie* 33-34.

²⁹ Euseb. *Chron.* 2.120-121 SCHOENE 1866-1875. See also CABANES 1976, 77, 81.

³⁰ Trog. *Prol.* 25; Front. *Strat.* 2.5.10.

³¹ CABANES 1976, 78-81.

³² According to Aelian Tacticus, Alexander, son of Pyrrhos, was even the author of a treatise on the military art (Ael. *Tact.* 1.2; see also Arr. *Tact.* 1).

expense, as was done in Macedonia and other Hellenistic states. A fragment of a metallic cover of the central part of a shield of the so-called “Macedonian type,” with a damaged inscription, was found in Dodona. The inscription can be restored as “of king Pyrrhos”, or, much more likely –based on the probable number of lost letters– as “of king Alexander” (Βασι[λέως Πύρ]ρου / Βασι[λέως Ἀλεξάνδ]ρου)³³. This inscription indicates not the name of actual owner or dedicator, but that the shield was made at the expense of the royal treasury for the state arsenal³⁴. But the question of whether the Epeirotes under Pyrrhos and his successor were trained to fight with sarissas in a phalanx of the “Macedonian type” remains a subject of debate, despite the support of a such view from some scholars³⁵.

3. THE ANTIGONIDS AND ALEXANDER II IN THE TIME OF THE CHREMONIDEAN WAR AND THE FATE OF AKARNANIA

After the death of Pyrrhos and the final approval of Gonatas in Macedonia, the king began an active military policy abroad. Apparently, in the early 260s, he captured Megara, Eretria on Euboia³⁶, as well as Kaunos in Karia, as is evidenced by the decree from this city dated to the “year 15 of the reign of Antigonos” (c. 269-268)³⁷. The expansion of Gonatas in Balkan Greece, the Aegean, and even into southwest Asia Minor led to the beginning of the so-called Chremonidean War (c. 268-262), when a broad coalition of Greek states (Athens, Sparta, and others) as well as Ptolemy II, challenged the Antigonid king.

In the period while Antigonos led military operations in Attika and Isthmos against the Athenians, Spartans and their Ptolemaic allies, Alexander II of Epeiros invaded Macedonia³⁸. Justin claims that this campaign was revenge for Pyrrhos, but he probably only echoes Alexander II’s propaganda³⁹. If Helenos really signed a peace treaty with Gonatas at Argos in 272 (see above), Alexander could not have considered himself bound by its terms. There is no reason to suppose cooperation between Alexander II and the anti-Macedonian coalition of Egypt, Athens, Sparta and their allies, though it has sometimes been suggested⁴⁰.

According to Justin, Antigonos had to hurry back to Macedonia, but his soldiers deserted to Alexander. After that Gonatas disappears from the narrative of Justin, and the war against Alexander is continued by the young son of the Macedonian king, Demetrios (the future king Demetrios II)⁴¹. Some historians deny the full accuracy of the story of Justin about the invasion of the Aiakid king into Macedonia and the desertion of Antigonos’ soldiers to Alexander⁴². The desertion of the Macedonians to

³³ BRINGMANN–VON STEUBEN 1995, 175, no. 109 (A1); *BE* 1974 318; *I. Molossie* 53.

³⁴ See HATZOPOULOS 2001, 42.

³⁵ E.g. SEKUNDA 2019, 38.

³⁶ *I. Rhamnous* 404, ll. 14-6 (Megara); D.L. 2.127 (Eretria).

³⁷ *I. Kaunos* 4. On the other hand, Gonatas could have inherited control over Kaunos from his father. On the dating of *I. Kaunos* 4 to the reign of Antigonos Gonatas, not that of his grandfather Antigonos I, and its historical background, see for details KUZMIN 2015, 73-85.

³⁸ Just. 26.2.9-11. See for the details CABANES 1976, 85-91.

³⁹ Just. 26.2.9. See also CABANES 1976, 86.

⁴⁰ E.g. BEVAN 1927, 67; HAMMOND 1967, 588; CABANES 1976, 86-87; WATERFIELD 2021, 172.

⁴¹ Just. 26.2.11.

⁴² E.g. TARN 1913, 303 n. 81; HEINEN 1972, 176; HAMMOND–WALBANK 1988, 285 n. 4 and 6; LANE FOX 2011, 512. *Contra*, HAMMOND 1989, 309-310.

Alexander II, who obviously did not have the authority of his father Pyrrhos or his father's earlier connections to Macedonia, really looks very improbable.

Justin likely exaggerates the misfortune of Antigonos and the success of Alexander. Gonatas, if he ever came back to Macedonia and really was defeated, apparently thought it possible to resume military operations in Attica while entrusting the continued war against the Epeirotes to his son (undoubtedly, Demetrios, who must have been *c.* twelve years old at the time⁴³, was assisted by experienced generals of Gonatas).

With his father away, Demetrios defeated Alexander and expelled him from Macedonia⁴⁴. According to Eusebius, Demetrios' victory over Alexander's army took place at a certain "Derdia" most likely somewhere in Elimiotis in Upper Macedonia⁴⁵, a region where, in the fifth and fourth centuries, there were several local rulers with the name of Derdas⁴⁶. Then, as Justin says, Demetrios headed the Macedonian army in its invasion of Epeiros, thus forcing Alexander to flee to neighboring Akarnania⁴⁷. The victory of Demetrios secured the safety of Macedonia and enabled Antigonos Gonatas to focus on crushing the anti-Macedonian coalition in Greece.

G. N. Cross has suggested that, after the Macedonian invasion, the Molossian monarchy was temporarily abolished and that, for a while, Epeiros was a kind of "republic"⁴⁸. This suggestion is mere speculation. Probably the Antigonids had no resources to occupy and control Epeiros. Their main goals lay in securing Macedonia and in defeating the anti-Macedonian coalition in Attica and elsewhere.

Justin asserts that a certain "allies," with the consent of the Epeirotes, later restored Alexander to his realm⁴⁹. They can be identified with the Akarnanians and Aitolians⁵⁰, who, probably around that time, were allies⁵¹. On the other hand, it is possible that Akarnania was already divided between Alexander and the Aitolians (see below) and that the king sought refuge in his external possessions. If so, the "allies" who helped in restoration of Alexander to Epeiros were only the Aitolians.

The abolition of the Akarnanian League and the division of Akarnanian lands with the Aitolians was another aggressive act of Alexander II⁵². The Aitolians got eastern Akarnania, and Alexander got its western part, as well as the island of Leukas⁵³. The time and circumstances of Akarnania's partition are disputed. It could have happened from the 260s until 243 (or 242), when Leukas is attested as part of Alexander's realm (see below). Alexander II's control over Leukas in the late 240s disproves suggestions that Macedonia could have been involved, or at least connived, in the partition of Akarnania, and that the partition could have been connected with an anti-Achaian alliance of Gonatas and the Aitolians arranged in 243 or sometime later⁵⁴.

Even after Alexander II's unsuccessful invasion of Macedonia and the temporary exile of the king, during his reign Epeiros remained an important regional power in

⁴³ On Demetrios' age, see EHRHARDT 1975, 198; KUZMIN 2019, 60-61.

⁴⁴ Just. 26.2.11.

⁴⁵ Euseb. *Chron.* 1.243 SCHOENE 1866-1875.

⁴⁶ E.g. Th. 1.57.3; X. *HG* 5.2.8. On the coinage in the name of Derdas, see LIAMPI 1998, 6-11. See also TARN 1913, 304; HEINEN 1972, 176.

⁴⁷ Just. 26.2.11-3.1.

⁴⁸ CROSS 1932, 113-114. *Contra*, CABANES 1976, 88.

⁴⁹ Just. 26.3.1.

⁵⁰ CROSS 1932, 92 n. 2; CORSTEN 1992, 195; SCHOLTEN 2000, 78.

⁵¹ *IG IX I*² 1 3A = *SVA III* 480.

⁵² *Pib.* 2.45.1; 9.34.7; Just. 28.1.1 = *SVA III* 485. See also *IG IX I*² 1 180.

⁵³ *IG XII 4* 1 220V, ll. 65, 69-70; Front. *Strat.* 3.4.5. See for the details DANY 1999, 87-97.

⁵⁴ HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 311; HAMMOND 1967, 589-590.

the Balkans. Furthermore, Alexander and his realm were acknowledged abroad from Sicily to the distant India (see below). The longstanding connections of the Molossian Aiakids and the Syracusans led to the marriage of Nereis, who according to Polybios was the daughter of the famous Pyrrhos⁵⁵, and thus a half-sister of Alexander II (although there are other hypotheses about her origin), to Gelon, the son of the Syracusan king Hieron II (probably in the 250s or 240s). Nereis became the mother of the last king of Syracuse, Hieronymos.

4. THE HELLENISTIC KINGS AND AŚOKA, GONATAS AND ALEXANDER II AND THE *ASYLIA* OF THE KOAN ASKLEPIEION

Antigonos Gonatas and Alexander II are mentioned together with some other Hellenistic rulers (Antiochos II, Ptolemy II and Magas of Cyrene) in the famous 13th Rock Edict of Indian king Aśoka from the Mauryan dynasty, issued during the 250s⁵⁶. The identification of Amtekina (*Antekina*) as Antigonos Gonatas is not disputed. Alikasudara (*Alikyashudala*) is certainly Alexander II of Epeiros⁵⁷, not Alexander of Corinth⁵⁸, the rebellious nephew of Gonatas, who became an independent ruler not *c.* 252, as many scholars have accepted, but probably *c.* 249⁵⁹, in the period when Magas was already dead. There is no evidence that a supposed Buddhist mission from Aśoka reached the Hellenistic kings⁶⁰.

In 243 (or 242), the Koans announced the establishment of a Panhellenic *penteteric* festival in honor of Asklepios; they appealed to many Greek states and Hellenistic rulers with an invitation to take part in it, as well as to recognize the sacred inviolability (*asylia*) of the Koan Asklepieion. Several dozen responses to the appeals of the Koan sacred ambassadors (*theoroi*) are known from inscriptions⁶¹.

The chronology of the activities of several groups of the Koan *theoroi* who in 243 (or 242), about a year before the celebration of the first Panhellenic Asklepieia, visited many states in the Mediterranean, from Asia Minor to Sicily and Italy, is based on the dating of three documents. The time of visit of the Koan *theoroi* to Macedonia is known because the decrees of Beroia and Amphipolis dated to the year 41 of the reign of Antigonos Gonatas and different days (2 and 19) of the month Gorpaios (i.e. a time period from the end of July to the middle of August)⁶². The second letter of the “king of the Bithynians Zigelas” (Ziaelas) dated to the year 39⁶³, a dating obviously according to the era attested later in Nikaia and some other Bithynian cities, which was counted from 282/1⁶⁴.

Antigonos Gonatas started to style himself *basileus* not after his establishment in Macedonia (*c.* 277-276), but earlier, obviously after the death of his father Demetrios

⁵⁵ Plb. 7.4.5; Livy, 24.6.7; EHRHARDT 1975, 176-183; HAMMOND–WALBANK 1988, 332.

⁵⁶ HULTZSCH 1925, 48. See for the details KARTTUNEN 1997, 266-267.

⁵⁷ CABANES 1976, 42, 93, 100, 530.

⁵⁸ For the most detailed arguments for Alexander of Corinth, see in BONGARD-LEVIN–BUKHARIN–VIGASIN 2002, 205-207, but this argument is primarily based on the incorrect assumption that Alexander II of Epeiros has died before 255 (see also KATTUNEN 1997, 266 and n. 80; VON HINÜBER 2010, 262 n. 11).

⁵⁹ See, for the details, HAMMOND–WALBANK 1988, 301.

⁶⁰ See, however, VON HINÜBER 2010, 261-266.

⁶¹ Publication: *IG XII 4 1 207-45*; BOSNAKIS–HALLOF 2020, 287-326. See also RIGSBY 1996, 106-153.

⁶² BOSNAKIS–HALLOF 2020, 291, AIII, ll. 26-27 (Beroia); *IG XII 4 1 220II*, l. 19-20 (Amphipolis).

⁶³ BOSNAKIS–HALLOF 2020, 293, BIII, ll. 74-75.

⁶⁴ BOSNAKIS–HALLOF 2020, 318-320.

I (283 or 282), or earlier, after his father alleged abdication of power while he was held captive by Seleukos. Until recent times the first regnal year of Gonatas usually was calculated as 283/2 and the missions of the Koan *theoroi* during his “year 41” were placed in 243/2⁶⁵. But some scholars, for various reasons, advocate for 284/3 as the first regnal year of Gonatas and thus date the appeal of the Koans for *asylia* to 244/3 (243)⁶⁶. The new dating looks more probable than that traditional dating.

Among the kings and queens who recognized the Koan *asylia* were Antigonos Gonatas and Alexander II of Epeiros. The decrees of at least eight Macedonian *poleis* survived in the archive of the Koan Asklepieion (Aigai, Beroia, Pella, Kassandreia, Amphipolis, Philippoi, and two cities whose names are destroyed in the inscriptions) as well as a few decrees of Thessalian cities belonged to the Antigonid empire. Gonatas himself could be the author of the one of the so-called “Letters by an unknown king”⁶⁷, who recognized *asylia*, but only of the Asklepieion, not the territory of the *polis* of the Koans as a whole⁶⁸.

The decision of Antigonos Gonatas to recognize the *asylia* mentioned in the decrees of Kassandreia, Amphipolis, and Philippoi (visited by the Koan *theoroi* during the last stage of their journey through Macedonia and probably after the personal meeting with the king), but not in the decrees of Aigai, Beroia, Pella, as well as the Thessalian cities. Thus, the recognition of the *asylia* independently, or at least without reference in the decree to the authority of the king, was apparently possible for the subjects of the Antigonids (at least in the case of the *asylia* of the Koan Asklepieion) because it was not genuine foreign policy⁶⁹.

The recognition of the Koan *asylia* by Alexander II is evidenced only by a decree from Leukas, which was part of Alexander’s realm⁷⁰. The decree is dated to “the reign of Alexander”, but the regnal year has been lost owing to the damage of the stone (ll. 65: βασιλεύοντος Ἀλ[εξάνδρου]). It seems important that the Koans, as in the case of Gonatas and his subjects, appealed also to the subjects of the Aiakid king, whose decision probably was mentioned in the damaged part of the decree of Leukas (ll. 69–70: [... καθάπερ καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος προαιρεῖται ...]⁷¹). The recognition of the Koan *asylia* is the last dated mention of Alexander II in the sources.

⁶⁵ E.g. CHAMBERS 1954, 385-394; HAMMOND–WALBANK 1988, 581-583; RIGSBY 1996, 107-108; COŞKUN 2021a, 49-58; 2021b, 29-46.

⁶⁶ GOUNAROPOULOU–HATZOPOULOS 1998, 93-94; BOSNAKIS–HALLOF 2020, 318-320. See also WHEATLEY 1997, 23-27.

⁶⁷ *IG* XII 4 1 208.

⁶⁸ RIGSBY 1996, 117-118.

⁶⁹ See also RAYNOR 2016, 253-262. *Contra*, HATZOPOULOS 2021, 204-206, 211-212.

⁷⁰ *IG* XII 4 1 220V, ll. 65, 69-70.

⁷¹ Restored by RIGSBY–HALLOF 2001, 345 on the base of the formulas in the decrees of some Macedonian cities on the Koan *asylia* (... καθάπερ καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς Αντίγονος προαιρεῖται: “... as is also the wish of king Antigonos”. *IG* XII 4 1 220II, l. 31, Amphipolis; 220III, ll. 48-9, Philippoi). See also HATZOPOULOS 2007, 273-274.

5. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER II AND THE MARRIAGE OF PHTHIA TO DEMETRIOS II

Alexander II died apparently in the late 240s. Since his sons Pyrrhos II and Ptolemy were still young⁷², the widow of the king Olympias stood as the functional head of government. After Alexander's death, the Aitolians made claims on the Epeirote part of the earlier divided Akarnania⁷³; this claim pushed Olympias towards rapprochement with the Antigonids. It was a radical change of the foreign policy of the Aiakid dynasty.

The Aitolian attacks on the Epeirote part of Akarnania obviously began after 241, the year when the Aitolians invaded the Peloponnese and were defeated by the Achaians at Pellene⁷⁴. This action of the Aitolians was possibly connected with an anti-Achaian pact signed by Antigonos Gonatas with the Aitolian League in 243 or sometime later, after the Achaians had captured Corinth, the main center of the Antigonid military presence in Greece⁷⁵. The relations between Macedonia and the Aitolian League were probably peaceful until the death of Gonatas in 239. The situation radically changed after the deaths of Alexander II and Gonatas, the beginning of Aitolian expansion in the Epeirote part of Akarnania, subsequent rapprochement between the Antigonids and the Aiakids, and formation of an alliance directed against Macedonia and Epeiros by the Aitolian and Achaian Leagues.

At the very beginning of his reign, the new Macedonian king Demetrios II (239–229), who had defeated Alexander II during the Chremonidean War, married the latter's daughter Phthia, after an appeal from Olympias⁷⁶. This marriage marked the alliance between Macedonia and Epeiros during the so-called Demetrian War (c. 238–229), against the coalition of the Aitolian and Achaian Leagues.

The marriage of Demetrios and Phthia cannot be dated prior to 246, contrary to the belief of many scholars⁷⁷. Justin mentions, in connection to the marriage of Demetrios and Phthia, that a certain former wife of the Antigonid king left Macedonia and went to her "brother Antiochos"⁷⁸. Following the usual viewpoint, the predecessor of Phthia, who could only have been the Seleukid princess Stratonike, the first spouse of the crown-prince Demetrios from the late 250s, went to Antiochos II, who died in Ephesos in 246⁷⁹. Thus, the marriage of Demetrios and Phthia would seem to date before 246. Stratonike, however was probably the daughter of Antiochos II, not his sister, and her "brother" is to be seen, most likely, in Seleukos II or Antiochos Hierax⁸⁰.

Since Justin calls Demetrios '*rex*' while mentioning his marriage to Phthia⁸¹, the scholars who date their wedding before 246 postulate that Demetrios was a co-ruler

⁷² I follow the version of Aiakid genealogy of Justin (28.1.1), that Pyrrhos II and Ptolemy were the sons of Alexander II, despite the modern speculations that they could be descendants of Pyrrhos' eldest son Ptolemy, who died in 272 (e.g. CROSS 1932, 125).

⁷³ Just. 28.1.1-2.

⁷⁴ Plu. *Arat.* 31-2.

⁷⁵ See *SVA* III 490.

⁷⁶ Just. 28.1.1-3.

⁷⁷ E.g. CABANES 1976, 60-64; CORSTEN 1992, 199-201; GRAINGER 1999, 134-135; OGDEN 1999, 179; FUNKE 2000, 212 n. 482; LANE FOX 2011, 516, 518; GEROGIANNIS 2022, 112, 115.

⁷⁸ Just. 28.1.2-4; Jos. *Ap.* 1.206-7.

⁷⁹ On the date of death of Antiochos II, see BOIY 2004, 147-149.

⁸⁰ On Stratonike, her return to the Seleukid realm as well as the circumstances of her uprising against Seleukos II and death (Jos. *Ap.* 1.206-7), see GABELKO-KUZMIN 2020, 202-224.

⁸¹ Just. 28.1.1.

with Antigonos Gonatas and held the royal title alongside his father⁸². The main basis for the theory of the co-rule of the future Demetrios II and Gonatas is an act of manumission from Beroia dated to “the year 27 of the reign of Demetrios”⁸³. The puzzling dating of this inscription and related contradictions are out of scope of the present paper, but it is probable Demetrios, though undoubtedly *de facto* co-ruler with father, did not hold the royal title during the life of Gonatas⁸⁴.

According to Justin, Demetrios married Phthia only after her father Alexander II’s death. The time of his death has been the subject of long debate⁸⁵. But in 2001, among the new documents on *asylia* of the Koan Asklepieion, a decree of Leukas was published. Leukas was part of Alexander II’s realm and the document is dated to the reign of Alexander (see above). The *theoroi* from Kos visited the Balkans in the summer of 243 (or 242), thus Alexander II was still alive in the late 240s, and there is no reason to date the marriage of his daughter and Demetrios II earlier.

On the other hand, one may suppose that the marriage of Demetrios and Phthia was arranged or at least conceived of at the end of the reign of Antigonos Gonatas, and after the death of Phthia’s father Alexander II⁸⁶. It is probable that, until the end of the life of Alexander, a form of “cold war” was in force between the Aiakids and the Antigonids. However, the death of Alexander and the subsequent encroachment of the Aitolians on the Aiakid possessions in Akarnania induced Olympias, the widow of Alexander, to resort to a rapprochement with Macedonia.

Recently, an attempt was made to establish the precise date of the marriage of Demetrios II and Phthia on the basis of the Athenian decrees in honor of the board of the *sitophylakes*, the grain-controllers⁸⁷. In 239/8, in the archonship of Athenodoros, the Athenian Council passed the first decree on the 23rd of Skirophorion. In the following year (238/7), in the archonship of Lysias⁸⁸, a document was re-issued on the 9th of Skirophorion in an expanded form, as a decree of the Council and the People. Both decrees were inscribed on the same stele.

Both the first and the second decrees attest that the *sitophylakes* performed sacrifices on behalf of the Council, the People and Demetrios II (since Athens was in the Macedonian sphere of influence after the end of the Chremonidean War). What is interesting is that the first decree attested the sacrifices on behalf of the “king Demetrios and queen Phila and his [descendants]”⁸⁹, and the second decree, sacrifices

⁸² E.g. CABANES 1976, 58-61; CORSTEN 1992, 198-201.

⁸³ *EKM I* (= *I. Beroia*) 45.

⁸⁴ See KUZMIN 2019, 64-6. Recently COŞKUN 2021, 55 n. 20, returned to the theory of GRZYBEK 1993, 521-527, that the manumission from Beroia dated to the reign of Demetrios I according to the so-called “Era of Monophthalmos.” This dating is unfounded. Such an era never existed. Indeed, some Babylonian and Idumaian documents are dated by the name of Antigonos I (from 317/6) and his years, probably as the “*strategos* of Asia,” but only before “the Year of the Kings” and coronations of the Diadochi (306-304). See for details KUZMIN 2015, 73-79.

⁸⁵ See the review in CABANES 1976, 39-58.

⁸⁶ SCHOLTEN 2000, 270.

⁸⁷ *IG II³* 1 1023.

⁸⁸ On the date of archonships of Athenodoros and Lysias, see OSBORNE 2012, 142-143; KRITZAS 2015, 131-132, 147-148.

⁸⁹ *IG II³* 1 1023, ll. 1-11: [ἐπ’ Α]θηνοδ[ώ]ρου ἄρχοντος, ἐπὶ [[τῆς Ἀντιγονίδος]] δω[δεκάτης] πρυτανείας, [ἦ]ι Ἄρκετος Ἀρχίου Ἀμαξαντεὺς ἐγραμμάτ[ευεν] Σκιροφοριῶ]νος ὀγδόει μετ’ εἰκάδας· τρίτη καὶ εἰκοστῇ [τῆς πρυτανείας]· ... ἐπειδὴ οἱ σ[ιτοφύλακες ο]ἱ ἐπὶ Ἀθηνοδώρου ἄρχοντος τὰς τε θυσίας ἔθυσαν τὰς καθηκού]σας ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ ὑπὲρ τε τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δή[μου] καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως Δημητρίου καὶ τῆς βασιλίσσης Φίλας καὶ [τῶν ἐγγόνων α]ὐτοῦ; “In the archonship of Athenodoros, in the twelfth prytany of Antigonis, for which Arketos son of Archias of Hamaxanteia was secretary. On 23rd of Skirophorion, the twenty-third of the prytany ... since the grain-controllers of

on behalf of “king Demetrios and queen Phthia and [their descendants]”⁹⁰. The readings of the names of the queens are certain, but Demetrios II had no wife named Phila; it was a name of his mother, the wife of Antigonos Gonatas⁹¹.

The decrees in honor of the *sitophylakes* have been used by C. B. Kritzas and M. D’Agostini to postulate that, at the beginning of his reign Demetrios II had no *basilissa*, and the *basilissa* representing the Antigonid dynasty in the first decree (239/8) was his widowed mother Phila⁹². In the following year (238/7), after her marriage to Demetrios, Phthia was thus referred to as *basilissa* in the second decree⁹³. If so, the names of the Antigonid queens preserved in the decrees in honor of the *sitophylakes* provide an opportunity to pinpoint the more precise date of marriage of Demetrios II to Phthia, rather than merely dating it vaguely to the beginning of his reign. According to the second decree, in Athens Phthia was included in the formula of sacrifice for the king’s family in the archonship of Lysias (238/7: from July 238 till July 237). This corresponds well with the birth in 238/7 of the son of Demetrios II, the future king Philip V⁹⁴. This is one more argument for the view that it was Phthia who was his mother (see below).

It is important to note that after the names of Demetrios and “Phila” in the first decree for the *sitophylakes* “his descendants” (... καὶ [τῶν ἐγγόνων αὐτοῦ]) are mentioned, not “their descendants” as was the case in other Athenian inscriptions mentioning in the same context Gonatas and his wife⁹⁵, and Demetrios II himself and Phthia⁹⁶. This observation should confirm that “*basilissa* Phila” was not the wife of Demetrios⁹⁷. However, one should understand the ἔγγονοι of Demetrios II as “the

the archonship of Athenodoros both performed the sacrifices pertaining to their year on behalf of the Council and the People and king Demetrios and queen Phila and his descendants)”.
⁹⁰ *IG* II³ 1 1023, ll. 26-34: ἐπὶ Λυσίου ἄρχοντος, ἐπὶ τῆς Πανδιονίδ[ος δωδεκάτης πρυτανε]ίας, ἦν Ἐπιχάρης Εὐδήμου Ἀφιδναῖος ἐγγ[ραμμάτευεν] Σκιροφορι]ῶνος ἐνάτει ἰσταμένον· ἐνδεκάτει τῆς [πρυτανείας] ... ἐπειδὴ οἱ [σιτοφύλακες οἱ ἐπ’ Ἀθηνο]δόρου ἄρχοντος τὰς τε θυσίας ἔθυσαν τὰς καθηκούσας ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ ὑπὲρ τε τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δή[μου καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως Δημη]τρίου καὶ τῆς βασιλίσσης Φθίας [καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων αὐτῶν]; “In the archonship of Lysias, in the twelfth prytany, of Pandionis, for which Epichares son of Eudemos of Aphidna was secretary. On 9th of Skirophorion, the eleventh of the prytany ... since the grain-controllers of the archonship of Athenodoros both performed the sacrifices pertaining to their year on behalf of the Council and the People and king Demetrios and queen Phthia and their descendants)”. On the base of other Athenian inscriptions mentioning kings from the Antigonid dynasty, their queens and descendants, C. B. Kritzas has suggested that the restoration of the damaged section of the text after the name of Phthia in the second decree should read as follows – καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων αὐτῶν (accepted in *SEG* 65 89). In the *IG* the phrase καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων αὐτοῦ, as in the first decree, is repeated in this place, but the restoration of C. B. Kritzas seems more preferable.

⁹¹ On Phila see CARNEY 2000, 182-183; D’AGOSTINI 2020, 77-80.
⁹² There are no firm grounds to suppose that in the Antigonid dynasty the “Queen Mother” could keep the title of *basilissa* after the death of the husband, whether her son did or did not have a wife, or whether this title could be applied to other female members of the royal house than the king’s wife (as was the case with Ptolemaic princesses and some women from other Hellenistic dynasties; see e.g. CARNEY 2000, 226). But it cannot be excluded (see below).
⁹³ KRITZAS 2015, 138-139; D’AGOSTINI 2019, 16; 2020, 80-81. See also *IG* II³ 1, p. 163; *BE* 2016 174; *SEG* 65 89.
⁹⁴ KRITZAS 2015, 153, 162-163; D’AGOSTINI 2020, 81. On dating the birth of Philip V, see WALBANK 1940, 9, 295-299; D’AGOSTINI 2019, 13, 16.
⁹⁵ E.g. *IG* II³ 1 1002, l. 25.
⁹⁶ *IG* II² 1299, ll. 10-11.
⁹⁷ KRITZAS 2015, 139.

descendants” in a broader sense, i.e., as in the continuation of the dynasty, not the king’s actual children at the time⁹⁸.

Despite the appeal and persuasiveness of the view that “*basilissa* Phila” in the first decree in honor of the *sitophylakes* was the widow of Antigonos Gonatas and mother of Demetrios II, as well as the historical and dynastic constructions resulting from it, it is possible that this interpretation depends on a mistake made by the Athenian letter-cutter (or even by a secretary or his assistant who worked on the original text of the document). What seems most important is that in the second decree, in which the *basilissa* is “Phthia,” sacrifices are mentioned for the royal family that had taken place a year before, in the archonship of Athenodoros (see the citation above). Under his successor Lysias the decree was republished in an extended version, this time as a decree of the Council and the People (as opposed to the Council only in the case of the first decree). Could it be that, in the first decree, the name of the former Macedonian queen Phila, who in previous years had been mentioned more than once in the Athenian inscriptions together with her husband Antigonos Gonatas, was included by mistake? In the second decree Phthia is correctly named as the wife and queen of Demetrios II. It is possible that Athenians misunderstood the dynastic situation in the Antigonid royal house at the very start of the reign of the new king Demetrios II and mistook the name of his wife.

Then there arises the question as to whether it was necessary to mention the king’s mother at all, along with the king and his descendants, in the context of the decrees in honor of the *sitophylakes*. This would have been appropriate in a special decree in honor of the royal family, but hardly necessary in the case of a formal mention in a decree addressed to the Athenian citizens.

Thus, the decrees in honor of the *sitophylakes* cannot with certainty date the marriage of Demetrios II to Phthia in the archonship of Lysias in Athens. Obviously, Phthia already was or had become the wife of the Macedonian king in the previous year during the archonship of Athenodoros. The record of Phthia as the queen of Demetrios II in the first years of his reign in these decrees corresponds well with other evidence from literary and epigraphic sources which connect their marriage with the start, during the archonship of Lysias in Athens, of the Demetrian War of Macedonia⁹⁹, with its allies and satellites, against the Aitolian-Achaian alliance¹⁰⁰.

Now it’s necessary also turn to the questions of another probable marriage of Demetrios II and the identification of the mother of his son Philip V. It is known from Eusebius that Demetrios “married one of the captives and named her Chryseis,” and that she gave birth to Philip¹⁰¹. Several sources affirm that the successor of Demetrios, his cousin Antigonos III, adopted his son Philip and married Demetrios’s widow, who, however, was not mentioned by name¹⁰². Moreover, it follows from Polybios that at least *c.* 227-225, after the great earthquake at Rhodes, the spouse of Antigonos III was none other than Chryseis¹⁰³.

⁹⁸ See for details DOW–EDSON 1937, 148-149 (the criticism of TARN 1940, 487-90 is inconclusive). See also *LSJ* s.v. ἔγγονος, with supplement.

⁹⁹ Just. 28.1.1-2; *IG* II² 1299, ll. 56-7: ... [καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐ]πὶ Λυσίου ἄρχοντος ἐν ᾧ ἐνιαυτῷ ὁ πόλεμος ἐνέστη; “... and after this in the archonship of Lysias, in which year the war has begun”.

¹⁰⁰ On the possible mistake with the names of the two Antigonid queens, Phila and Phthia, in the decrees in honour of the *sitophylakes*, see for the details KUZMIN 2022, 113-120.

¹⁰¹ Euseb. *Chron.* 1.238 SCHOENE 1866-1975 (... γήμας δὲ τινα τῶν αἰχμαλώτων, καὶ Χρυσείδα προσειπῶν ...). See also Sync. 282a, p. 535 DINDORF; *Etyim. Magn.* 294 s.v. Δώσων.

¹⁰² Plu. *Aem.* 8.3; Paus. 7.7.4; Just. 28.3.10.

¹⁰³ Plb. 5.89.6-7.

In the early and middle of the 230s, i.e. and after the birth of Philip, it is Phthia who is mentioned in Athenian inscriptions as the queen of Demetrios II¹⁰⁴. Nevertheless, many scholars think that Philip was born to Chryseis, who could have been a concubine of Demetrius during his marriage to Phthia and later even became a queen. This view was justified in most detail in the 1930s by C. F. Edson¹⁰⁵, who later, however, clearly accepted the hypothesis of W. W. Tarn that Chryseis is just a nickname of Phthia¹⁰⁶. Nonetheless, many scholars continue to accept the original theory of C. F. Edson¹⁰⁷, despite the fact that he himself revised his views.

It is most probable that the mother of Philip was none other than the Aiakid princess Phthia, whether it was she who had borne the nickname Chryseis, or Chryseis was some other woman. Probably, Antigonos III married Phthia, when he adopted Philip, but later she was overshadowed by Chryseis, who already was or became a new wife of the king some later time¹⁰⁸.

It must be noted that examples are known when Philip V, already a king, referred to Antigonos III as “father”¹⁰⁹, although the majority of sources, both inscriptions and classical authors, term him “son of Demetrios”¹¹⁰. It is possible that Chryseis, who might even not have been connected to Demetrios II in any way, but was the wife of Antigonos III (or one of his wives during his life and rule), was mistakenly recognized by the later authors as the real “mother” of Philip V, who was thus adopted by both Antigonos and by Chryseis¹¹¹.

6. THE LAST AIAKIDS AND THE FALL OF THE MOLOSSIAN MONARCHY

In the 230s, Pyrrhos II and Ptolemy, the sons of Alexander II and Olympias, ruled successively, but both died early. The sources preserve fragments of information about conflicts within the royal family (between Olympias and Pyrrhos II), the death of Ptolemy during a certain military campaign, the death of Olympias, and the uprising of the Epeirotes against the Aiakids¹¹².

¹⁰⁴ *IG* II³ 1029, ll. 16-7; II² 1299, ll. 10-11.

¹⁰⁵ DOW–EDSON 1937, 127-180.

¹⁰⁶ TARN 1940, 483-501 (WALBANK 1940, 9-10 n. 3, reports that in a personal letter C. F. Edson informed him that he accepted the identification of Phthia with Chryseis proposed by W. W. Tarn; see also EDSON 1949, 94 n. 40); HAMMOND–WALBANK 1988, 338 n. 1.

¹⁰⁷ ERRINGTON 1990, 288 n. 44; OGDEN 1999, 179-182; CARNEY 2000, 190-192, 230; LANE FOX 2011, 516, 518.

¹⁰⁸ See LE BOHEC 1981, 34-46, the paper which contains a basic historiography and solid arguments for Phthia as mother of Philip V, to which can be added the following considerations (first pointed out by my friend and colleague O. L. Gabelko). Phthia’s grandfather, Pyrrhos, as well as the Bithynian prince Prusias “Monodous,” the One-Toothed (the son of Prusias II), possessed a rare dental defect—*gemination*, or the merging of teeth (see e.g. Plu. *Pyrrh.* 3.6; Livy, *Per.* 50; Val. Max. 1.8.12; Plin. *NH* 7.69-70). This genetic and hereditary malformation had probably found its way to the Bithynian royal house *via* the Antigonids after Prusias I’s marriage to Philip V’s supposed sister Apama (Plb. 15.22.1; Strab. 12.4.3). If so, Apama, despite her Eastern name associated with the Seleukid dynasty, should be identified as the daughter of Phthia, not Stratonike, the first wife of Demetrius, as it usually considered (see for the details GABELKO–KUZMIN 2008, 159-162).

¹⁰⁹ In the letters of Philip V from Labraunda in Karia (see LE BOHEC 1993, 329-331). Probably it is Antigonos III who is mentioned as “father” of Philip V in the king’s letter from Amphipolis (*SEG* 27 245; 33 499). See also Plb. 4.24.7; 4.87.6.

¹¹⁰ E.g. *EKM* I (= *I. Beroia*) 17; II 2 400, 442; *IG* IV 427; IV² 590, ll. 1-2; Plb. 1.3.1; 2.2.5; 4.2.5; Paus. 1.36.5-6.

¹¹¹ See also D’AGOSTINI 2019, 21-22.

¹¹² Ath. 13.589; Polyæn. 8.52; Paus. 4.35.3; Just. 28.3.1-8; Ov. *Ib.* 304-308; Phot. 530a 27 BEKKER.

It's usually postulated that Ptolemy had died during the campaign against the Aitolians¹¹³, but it possible to suggest that he died fighting his rebellious subjects¹¹⁴. Deidamia, who may have been the sister of the last two Aiakid kings, was killed c. 232 during rebellion in Ambrakia, the royal residence of the Aiakids since the time of Pyrrhos.

These events marked the end of the Aiakid monarchy, while its exact cause can only be speculated about. Obviously, it could be associated with the weakening of the dynasty after the death of Alexander II, military pressure from the Aitolians and possibly Illyrians, as well as the unpopularity of the alliance of the Molossian royal house with the Antigonids at least among a certain part of the Epeirotes¹¹⁵. The citizens of Ambrakia were obviously trying to restore their independence.

After the collapse of the Aiakid monarchy, two representatives of the dynasty remained outside Epeiros: Phthia, the wife of Demetrios II, and Nereis, the wife of Gelon, the son and co-ruler of king Hieron II of Syracuse (who did not survive his father). At some point, Nereis probably dedicated in Delphi the statues of her relatives, who, apparently, were no longer alive (Alexander II, Olympias, Pyrrhos II and Ptolemy), if restoration of the inscriptions on the bases of these statues is correct (*Syll.*³ 453).

The theory that Phthia died in the mid-230s, based on the decrees in honor of the Athenian general Aristophanes dated to this time¹¹⁶, is not convincing. In these decrees, first, organized by Aristophanes sacrifices to Demeter and Kore, and other gods “on behalf of the Athenian People and of king [[Demetrios]] and queen [[Phthia]] and their descendants” are mentioned¹¹⁷, and later his goodwill “to the Athenian [People] and to king Demetrios and his descendants”¹¹⁸. Thus, some scholars suggested that Phthia died between the sacrifices in connection with which her name is mentioned and the passing of the first decree in honor of Aristophanes in which only Demetrios and his “descendants” are attested¹¹⁹. But it is obvious that in this case the formula is simply shortened.¹²⁰

The dedications of “*basilissa* Phthia, daughter of Alexander” (... βασιλίσσης Φθίας τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου) on Delos are attested in the later inventory lists (from the second century)¹²¹. The actual time of these dedications is disputed. The fact that the husband was not mentioned but the use of the royal title for Phthia is attested may indicate that the dedication was made after the death of Demetrios II (if so, Phthia kept the royal title in the time of her widowhood).

Sources do not preserve any reaction of the Antigonid court to the fall of the Aiakids. But in the last years of his reign, Demetrios II, in addition to the war against

¹¹³ E.g. CABANES 1976, 98-99; HAMMOND–WALBANK 1988, 332.

¹¹⁴ EHRHARDT 1975, 191; SCHOLTEN 2000, 271.

¹¹⁵ See the detailed analysis in CABANES 1976, 198-200.

¹¹⁶ *IG* II² 1299.

¹¹⁷ *IG* II² 1299, ll. 10-11: ...[ἔθυσεν] δὲ καὶ τοῖς Ἀλώοις τῆι τε Δήμητρι καὶ τῆι Κόρει καὶ τοῖς [ἄλλοις θεοῖς οἷς] πάτριον ἦν ὑπὲρ τε τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως [[Δημητρίου κ]]αὶ τῆς βασιλίσσης [[Φθίας]] καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων αὐτῶν. Wiping out of the names of the king and the queen in this part of the decree is the consequence of the *damnatio memoriae* of the Antigonids by the Athenians in 200 after the war was declared on Philip V (Livy, 31.44.2-9).

¹¹⁸ *IG* II² 1299, ll. 35-36: ... καὶ εὐνοίας ἦν ἔχων διατελεῖ εἰς [τε τὸν δῆμον] τὸν Ἀθηναίων καὶ τὸν βασιλέα Δημήτριον καὶ τοὺς ἐγγόνους αὐτοῦ.

¹¹⁹ E.g. SEIBERT 1967, 38; ERRINGTON 1990, 174, 288 n. 45; D'AGOSTINI 2019, 21-22.

¹²⁰ See also DOW–EDSON 1937, 145-149; GABELKO–KUZMIN 2008, 156-157.

¹²¹ *I. Délos* 407, l. 20; 442B, l. 213; 443B fr. B1, l. 137; 444B, l. 57; 461B fr. B1, l. 46.

Aitolians and Achaians, had been engaged in war against the Dardanians¹²², and may have had no ability to provide assistance to the Aiakids if it were ever requested¹²³.

In 1949 C. F. Edson published a funerary epigram from the vicinity of Pydna for a certain child Alkimachos, son of Neoptolemos, who was of the Aiakid origin through “Olyn<m>pias”¹²⁴. There is no space to discuss, in this paper, the theory of C. F. Edson about the tomb of the famous Olympias, the wife of Philip II and mother of Alexander the Great, near Pydna as well as other inscriptions from that area for support of his view¹²⁵. But his opinion that some members of the Aiakid family took refuge in Macedonia after the abolition of monarchy in Molossia is still valid¹²⁶. The epigram for Alkimachos is dated, on the basis of letter-forms, not earlier than the second half of the first century, but it may belong to an even later period. Thus, possibly some descendants of the Molossian Aiakids still lived in the Roman *Provincia Macedonia* under the Principate.

7. EPILOGUE: MACEDONIA, THE EPIROTE *KOINON*, AND THE COMING OF ROME

The end of the reign of Demetrios II was marked by the defeat of the Macedonians by the Dardanians¹²⁷. In the spring of 229, probably soon after his defeat, the king died and left the throne to his son, the nine-years-old Philip V¹²⁸. The death of Demetrios II led to an almost complete decline of the system of Macedonian influence and military presence in Greece. Also, the situation in Macedonia was not stable, and this induced the leading Macedonians to invoke as “guardian and *strategos*”¹²⁹ the late king’s cousin Antigonos. Soon he accepted the royal title while officially recognizing Philip V to be his heir. By the end of the 220s Antigonos III (229-221) succeeded in recovering and strengthening the positions of Macedonia in Greece and the Aegean. One of the main achievements of Antigonos III was establishment of the so-called Hellenic League¹³⁰, which was an instrument of the Macedonian control over the large part of Balkan Greece and lasted until the turn of the Third and Second Centuries.

As opposed to the Molossian Aiakids, the Antigonids were able to overcome the crisis of the late 230s and early 220s. Following the death of Antigonos III, Philip V (221-179) ascended to the Macedonian throne. During the first half of his reign –until the early second century– Macedonia was an empire encompassing the territories from

¹²² Trog. *Prol.* 28; Livy, 31.28.2.

¹²³ After the collapse of the Molossian monarchy, the Akarnanians from the former Aiakid realm partly restored their League and continued the fight against the Aitolians (see for the details CABANES 1976, 97-100; DANY 1997, 98-135). In 231, the citizens of the Akarnanian city of Medeon asked for help from Demetrios II, since their city was besieged by the Aitolians. The Antigonid king, who had had no possibility of providing assistance to the Akarnanians personally or by means of the Macedonian army, bribed Agron, the king of the Illyrian Ardiaei, who sent troops to Medeon and defeated the Aitolians (Plb. 2.2-3).

¹²⁴ EDSON 1949, 86; *SEG* 12 349, ll. 1-2: Αιακίδης γένος εἰμί· Νεοπτόλεμος δὲ πατήρ μου· οὄνομα δ’ Ἀλκίμαχος· τῶν ἀπ’ Ὀλυμπιάδος; “Aiakid is my stock, Neoptolemos is my father, Alkimachos is my name, of those <who descended> from Olympias”.

¹²⁵ See also *SEG* 32 644; *BE* 2019 262.

¹²⁶ EDSON 1949, 84-95.

¹²⁷ Trog. *Prol.* 28.

¹²⁸ According to Polybios (2.44.2), Demetrios II died at the time of the first crossing of the Romans to Illyria (on the date of the king’s death see WALBANK 1957, 238; LE BOHEC 1993, 99-101).

¹²⁹ Plu. *Aem.* 8.3.

¹³⁰ See *SVA* III 507.

the Adriatic to Karia. This ceased to be true when a confrontation with Rome, beginning in 215 after the conclusion of the alliance of Philip V with Hannibal and the Carthaginians, ensued and grew in importance. This conflict, culminating during the reign of Perseus (179-168), proved fatal for the Macedonian kingdom and the Antigonid dynasty.

In Epeiros, at the end of 230s, the Aiakid monarchy was replaced by the federation of the Epeirotes. The details on the formation of the Epeirote *koinon* are unknown, but it is obvious that during the previous period the ties of the various Epeirote *ethne* became so strong that they retained unity. The development of federalism under the Aiakid monarchy, despite the skepticism of E. A. Meyer (see above), also had an effect. The Epeirote *koinon* was organized like other contemporary Greek federations (with an assembly, a council, a *strategos* and other magistrates)¹³¹. The Epeirote *koinon* had regional political significance, but throughout its history it usually depended on more powerful external powers. During the late 230s and the first half of 220s, the Epeirotes balanced between their recent rivals, the Aitolian-Achaian alliance and the Illyrians¹³².

In 224, the Epeirotes, already allied with the Antigonids (the circumstances of this agreement are not reflected in the sources), were included in the Hellenic League of Antigonos III. The alliance with the Antigonids did not guarantee the safety of the Epeirotes. In 219, during the Social War (220–217) between the Hellenic and Aitolian Leagues, the Aitolians raided Epeiros and plundered Dodona¹³³. The first war between Macedonia and Rome (215-205) also affected the regions adjacent to Epeiros. The peace between Philip V and his allies and the Romans and their allies was concluded in Phoinike, the center of the Epeirote *koinon*, in 205.

At the beginning of the Second Macedonian War (200-197), some of the Epeirotes were already clearly burdened by the alliance with the Antigonids. In 198, the Thesprotian Charops the Elder, referred to in the sources as one of “the first of the Epeirotes,” informed the Romans about the positions of Philip V’s army on the Aoos River¹³⁴. The defeat of Macedonia at Kynoskephalai in the next year led to the liberation of Epeiros from the influence of the Antigonids¹³⁵.

Later, the Epeirotes, now allies of Rome, tried to maneuver between the Romans and their opponents. During the Third Macedonian War (171-168), the Epeirote *koinon* split apart. After the victory of Perseus over the Romans in Thessaly in 171, the Molossians and part of the Thesprotians sided with him, while the Chaones and most of the Thesprotians remained allies of Rome. In part, the split was due to rivalry within the political elite of the federation¹³⁶. In 168 the Romans defeated Perseus and his ally the Illyrian king Genthios. In the same year, the victor over Genthios, L. Anicius, invaded Epeiros, meeting resistance only in a few places, including Passaron—the old Molossian political and religious center—and Tekmon¹³⁷.

In 167, the Epeirotes were declared “free” by the Romans, but Molossia and southern Thesprotia, which had taken the side of the Macedonians, were plundered by

¹³¹ On the institutions, see CABANES 1976, 353-396; CABANES 1997, 85-89.

¹³² See for the details CABANES 1976, 200-223.

¹³³ Plb. 4.67.1-4.

¹³⁴ Plb. 27.15.2; Plu. *Flam.* 4.4-5.

¹³⁵ The findings of seal imprints at the *prytaneion* of Gitana in Thesprotia demonstrate official contacts with Macedonia (especially the Fourth Macedonian district) under the last Antigonids in the first third of the second century, before the destruction of Gitana by the Romans in 167 (see PREKA-ALEXANDRI-STOYIAS 2011, 680-681).

¹³⁶ Plb. 27.15.

¹³⁷ Livy, 45.26.3-10.

order of the Senate by the army of the victor against Perseus, L. Aemilius Paullus, on their way from Macedonia to Italy. The sources speak of the destruction of about seventy “cities,” many of which, as evidenced by the excavations, were only large settlements that had fortifications, and the enslavement of 150 thousand Epeirotes¹³⁸. In the course of archaeological works, traces of destruction were revealed at Dodona, Passaron, Pandosia, Gitana and many other places. A group of the Epeirotes whom Charops the Younger (the grandson of Charops the Elder), the stronger supporter of the Romans, declared adherents of Perseus, were deported to Italy, along with other Greeks and Macedonians. In 146 after the end of the Achaian War Epeiros became part of the Roman *Provincia Macedonia*¹³⁹.

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¹³⁸ Livy, 45.34.5-6: *oppida*; Plu. *Aem.* 29.4-5: πόλεις. On the system of the fortified settlements in the different regions of Epeiros, see GEROGIANNIS 2022, 31-62, 121-126.

¹³⁹ On the history of Macedonians and Epeirotes under the Roman rule, see ZAHRT 2010.

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