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AGATHOPOLIS AND DOULOPOLIS

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1. Agathopolis

In 1840 Borrell assigned a bronze coinage to a city Agathopolis, their appearance suggesting to him a location in the Thracian Chersonese or nearby. The obverses have a young male wearing a fillet, some reverses an owl, sometimes with two bodies. The date of these few issues appears to be ca. 300 B.C.; their inscription is ΑΓΑ or ΑΓΑΘ or ΑΓΑΘΟ. Borrell urged that the city was a foundation of Lysimachus' son Agathocles, who died in 282 B.C. A generation ago Louis Robert responded that the medieval town Agathopolis is on the Bulgarian coast (today Ahtopol), whereas the ancient coins represent a city Agathocleia, which he believed was a temporary renaming, under Lysimachus' rule, of Miletoupolis in Mysia.¹

Robert did not live to complete the study he was preparing, and his thesis cannot be said to have prevailed. In his valuable survey of Hellenistic civic foundations, Getzel Cohen called Robert's case "weak" and "speculative", but included both cities, accepted as foundations of Agathocles: almost certainly Agathopolis in Bulgaria, possibly Agathocleia or Agathopolis in Mysia.² The excavators of the Bulgarian site have continued to treat the Hellenistic coins as issues of their Agathopolis.³ Most recently, W. M. Stancomb, without citing Robert, has listed some specimens of the coins and dismissed the idea that they derive from a place other than Agathopolis in Bulgaria.⁴ A fuller examination seems warranted.

To summarize Robert's essential point, there is an Agathopolis on the Bulgarian coast, but no mention of it in our evidence before the tenth century A.D.,⁵ even in the ancient periplous literature;⁶ whereas the Hellenistic coins, as Borrell thought, resemble issues of the Thracian Chersonese and vicinity.

¹ H. P. Borrell, *NC* 4 (1841) 1–2. L. Robert, *RevPhil* III.33 (1959) 172–179 (OMS V 202–209), cf. *Bull. ép.* 1960, 236 (locating medieval Agathopolis on the Bulgarian coast but attributing the ancient coins to Mysia); *Hellenica* XI–XII (1960) 556 n. 5, cf. *Bull. ép.* 1969, 85; *A travers l'Asie Mineure* (Paris 1980) 89 n. 572 (the name Agathocleia, attribution to Miletoupolis); followed by C. Franco, *Il regno di Lisimaco* (Pisa 1993) 166–167.

² Getzel M. Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Europe, the Islands, and Asia Minor* (Berkeley 1995) 82–83, 163–165.

³ V. Velkov, *Thracia Pontica* 5 (1994) 105–112; J. Jouroukova, in *Studies on Settlement Life in Ancient Thrace* (Jambol 1994) 261–265. Robert considered that one excavated coin would settle the question; he was not able to consult E. G. Vaffeus, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἀγαθοπόλεως* (New York 1948). Velkov p. 110 and Jouroukova p. 262 invoke Vaffeus as citing such a find from the site of Bulgarian Agathopolis; in fact Vaffeus makes no such claim, but merely lists 26 specimens from museum collections and says nothing about find-spots (pp. 61–67). P. G. Hadjigeorgiou, *Ἀγαθούπολις τῆς βορειοανατολικῆς Θράκης* (*Hetair. Thrak. Mel.* 114 [Athens 1963]), offers a brief survey that relies largely on Vaffeus; at pp. 38–39 the same coins are listed from Vaffeus, and with no claim about find-spots.

⁴ W. M. Stancomb, in *Studies in Greek Numismatics in Memory of Martin Jessop Price* (London 1998) 335–338. E. Schwertheim, *I.Kyzikos* II (1983) 117 n. 118, leaves the attribution open and continues to speak of "Agathopolis".

⁵ To update the earliest mention: J. Darrouzès, *Notitiae episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (Paris 1981) 7.623 (p. 286), early tenth century. Jouroukova p. 262 claims the name as early as 812, citing V. Beshevliev, *Die protobulgarischen Inschriften* (Berlin 1963) no. 34. In fact this text is undated and gives only κ[άστρο]ν Ἀ - - - Ν; and Beshevliev rightly dismissed Uspenskij's Ἀ[γαθοπόλεως].

⁶ No Agathopolis was known to Stephanus of Byzantium in the sixth century A.D., who however claims to have read of three places named "Agathe" (two towns in Celtic Europe and an island somewhere).

The Bulgarian site visibly was an urban center in antiquity; it has long been linked to Aulaiouteichos, which reportedly was near here (Arr. *Peripl. P. E.* 24.6). But two further considerations apparently need to be stated plainly.

First, morphology: the personal name Agathocles does not generate a geographical name Agathopolis. A toponym of that type would be Agathoclopolis (Ἀγαθοκλοῦς πόλις, to be exact). Such a monster would have a precedent in Philippopolis, founded in 341 B.C. But this formation is more typical of Roman usage, from Pompeiopolis to Marcianopolis, including Constantinople. Hellenistic usage was normally Antiochus/Antiocheia, Lysimachus/Lysimacheia, Nicomedes/Nicomedeia, with the ethnic Ἀντιοχεύς etc. Hence Agathocles/Agathocleia, the ethnic on the coins Ἀγαθο(κλέων).⁷

Second, tone: the toponym Agathopolis, whether we parse it as “Good City” (Ἀγαθὴ πόλις, like Μεγάλη πόλις) or “City of the Good” (Ἀγαθῶν πόλις, like Σκυθῶν πόλις)⁸ is a moralizing affectation, and very strange for an ancient city. Certainly there is self-praise, though of a different sort, in the toponym Nicopolis, for example; we are told that the Sicilian tyrant Agathocles repopulated the destroyed Segesta with those who had deserted to him and gave it the self-satisfied name Dicaeopolis (Diod. 20.71.5). We hear more often of fabricated abusive names.⁹ Theopompus knew of those who referred to Φιλίππου πόλις as Πονηρῶν πόλις (*FGrHist* 115 F 110); on Doulopolis see below.

But a city calling itself Agathopolis, with this asserted moral superiority, would be an odd-sounding conceit in pagan antiquity. To be exact, it sounds medieval and Christian: so Apollonia Pontica south of Bulgarian Agathopolis became Sozopolis in late antiquity, as did Pisidian Apollonia; Aphrodisias became Stauropolis. With toponyms of this sort, we are in the world of the pious and hopeful names that various cities gave themselves in a late age. Eletheroupolis in Palestine was so called by 200 A.D., but this was seen in antiquity as a translation of the Aramaic name of the inhabitants;¹⁰ Eletheropolis in Macedonia was so named only in medieval times.¹¹ It is no accident that Agathopolis in Bulgaria is not heard of before 900 A.D.

Thus, the idea that there was, anywhere in the ancient world, a city named Agathopolis should be dismissed: the name is both unattested and improbable. The Bulgarian city acquired the name only in a Christian age. The coins must be construed Ἀγαθο(κλέων) and have no connection with medieval Ahtopol.

We may turn then to Agathocles. Most scholars, including Robert, have agreed that Lysimachus' son Agathocles was the founder, and indeed they regard him as the person represented on the obverses of these coins. During the years of Lysimachus' greatest power, when he ruled both

⁷ Louis Robert perhaps thought this too obvious to need saying. Note too the simple dismissal by B. Head, *Historia Numorum*² (Oxford 1911) 258: Borrell “suggests that it may have been named after Agathocles, son of Lysimachus, but his arguments are not convincing” (Borrell’s arguments were that Lysimachus named other cities for his relatives). Hadjigeorgiou (pp. 12–13) also considered that Lysimachus may have renamed Aulaiouteichos for the Agathon who commanded Alexander’s Thracian cavalry (Berve, *Alexanderreich* no. 8); against this, the morphological objection is equally fatal, as are other objections.

⁸ Indifferently Ἀγαθόπολις and Ἀγαθούπολις in the bishop lists (tenth century and later) and the authors (thirteenth century and later). The second form, I assume, reflects thoughtless imitation of the common ancient morphology (Ἡλίου πόλις, Φιλίππου πόλις), rather than a conscious theory of a founder named “Agathos”.

⁹ On these see K. Buraselis, in *Τιμαὶ Ἰωάννου Φυλλοπούλου* (Athens 2000) 181–207, at 191–194.

¹⁰ Benzinger, *RE* 5 (1905) 2353–54.

¹¹ F. Papazoglou, *Les villes de Macédoine* (Paris 1988) 401–402; H. Koukouli-Chrisanthaki, *Tekmeria* 4 (1998/9) 55.

eastern Macedonia and western Anatolia (287–281), Agathocles was delegated to command the Asiatic part of the kingdom, until his disgrace and elimination in 282. If Bulgarian Agathopolis was his work, this would have to be earlier, in the 290's, when he is attested in Thrace,¹² amid his father's largely failing enterprises (Agathocles captured by Thracians and released: Diod. 21.11–12).

Again, it might be that the son, as Lysimachus' agent in Asia, was somehow involved in the foundation or refoundation of a city in Mysia. That in turn would suggest a chronological limit, that the foundation of Agathocleia occurred in the years, the 280's, when Agathocles was an adult invested with some real power in Anatolia.¹³ We should doubt, however, that he was officially the founder: Lysimachus, not Agathocles, was king. More important, we should doubt that a city Agathocleia was named for him at all. For there was a more compelling Agathocles for Lysimachus to commemorate: his father. For a king to name a city for his son, to the studied exclusion of his father, would imply a lack of *pietas* that cannot be credited. One thinks of Seleucus I in these years founding in the Orontes valley cities named for himself (Seleuceia), his father (Antioch), his mother (Laodiceia), and his wife (Apameia). The Agathocles whom Lysimachus commemorated by founding Agathocleia would surely be not his son but his father. If this is so, then no grounds remain for associating the younger Agathocles with Agathocleia.

This in turn frees us from the constraining years of the surrogate authority of Agathocles the son in Asia. A more probable date when Lysimachus might honor his father would be as early as possible – nearer in time to Lysimacheia, which was founded on the Thracian Chersonese in 309 (Diod. 20.29.1). No such foundation in Anatolia (whether specifically Miletoupolis or some neighbor) was possible for Lysimachus before 301 and the gaining of Antigonos' lands in Asia; but we now have no reason to date the foundation of Agathocleia so late as the 280's and young Agathocles' presence in Asia. The foundation of Nicaea (named for one wife) is dated soon after 300, Arsinoe-Ephesus (for another wife) ca. 294, Eurydiceia/Smyrna before 287(?).¹⁴ I would urge that Agathocleia be grouped at the head of these: it could well have been Lysimachus' first foundation in Asia, soon after the battle of Corupedium in 301. Such were the expectations of filial piety.

Who then is the male represented on the coins of Agathocleia?¹⁵ Lysimachus did not even put his own image on his coins, nor did his cities put it on theirs.¹⁶ That he or they would so honor his son is a puzzle. Perhaps the image on these coins is intended as his father Agathocles, young and idealized, and with a fillet that hints that he was the ancestor of kings.

¹² See H. S. Lund, *Lysimachus* (London 1992) 45–49.

¹³ On the obscure nature of his authority see H. Bengtson, *Die Strategie in der hellenistischen Zeit I* (Munich 1937) 227–229.

¹⁴ Cohen's *Hellenistic Settlements* makes documentation unnecessary. That the name of Smyrna/Eurydiceia derives from Lysimachus' daughter is a modern deduction (the date *ante quem* is derived from her disgrace in 287). It happens that the name of Lysimachus' mother is not recorded (cf. F. Landucci Gattinoni, *Lisimaco di Tracia* [Milan 1992] 78); it could be that she bore the good Macedonian name Eurydice, and that both the daughter and the city, whatever its date, were alike named for her.

¹⁵ Vaffeus (p. 66 n. 2) states that "Head agrees with the numismatists at the Museum in New York that the portrait on the coins of Agathopolis is not Agathocles, Lysimachus' son, as Borrell thought, but probably the face of the god worshipped, most likely Apollo", citing Head's *ἑλληρισμῶν* Greer (q. non vidi).

¹⁶ O. Mørkholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage* (Cambridge 1991) 81–82. R. R. R. Smith has doubted that Lysimachus is to be recognized on the one civic bronze coin of Lysimacheia that has been alleged or in sculpture: *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford 1988) 68. The females shown on coins of Ephesus/Arsinoe and Smyrna/Eurydiceia have been taken as portraits of the wife and the daughter (doubted by Lund, p. 194).

A final speculation. Robert was not wholly certain about assigning the Agathocleia coins to Miletoupolis.¹⁷ Lysimacheia at the northern extreme of the Chersonese, founded in 309, faces west, toward Samothrace and the Aegean; it would not be surprising if Lysimachus built up a second city on the Chersonese in order to watch east over the Dardanelles. What led Robert to Miletoupolis in Mysia was the unusual image of a double-bodied owl. The only city on the Chersonese whose coins show an owl (but single-bodied, not double) is Elaious,¹⁸ the farthest city to the south, guarding the entrance to the Dardanelles. It may be that Borrell's intuition in placing Agathocleia on the Chersonese was right. If this was Elaious, rather than a city in Asia, that would allow for a foundation date even earlier than Lysimachus' acquisition of western Anatolia in 301, and we could see this foundation as coordinated with his development of Lysimacheia to the north. But no evidence of such an intervention at Elaious is in hand. So the geographical question rests where it ever has, awaiting an excavated specimen of these coins.

2. Doulopolis

Late in the second century B.C. the city of Colophon honored two citizens, Polemaeus and Menippus, for their public services in the difficult times during and after the war of Aristonicus. One of the accomplishments of Polemaeus has prompted special interest and disagreement. In his missions to Rome he was favorably received by the Senate, and, "as plundering and incursions with arms and attacks were happening on the territory we have at Slave City" (γινομένης ἀρπαγῆς καὶ ἐφόδου μεθ' ὄπλων καὶ ἀδικημάτων ἐπὶ τῆς ὑπαρχούσης(ης) ἡμεῖν χώρας ἐπὶ Δούλων πόλεως), by a senatorial decree he prevented these plunderings and damage to the crops from continuing (διατάγματι διεκώλυσε τὰς ἀρπαγὰς τῶν σπερμάτων καὶ τὰς βλαβὰς γίνεσθαι), the Senate giving an order (ἐπίταγμα) to those committing these things that no wrong (ἀδίκημα) was to be done to the Colophonians and that the *stratego*i who henceforth cross over to the province were to see to this and enforce it.¹⁹

The Roberts deduced that, in the context of Aristonicus' call for social revolution, run-away slaves had seized a fortified place in the territory of Colophon. The puzzle is that the Roman Senate has the authority to stop these depredations suffered by Colophon. Hence the Roberts reckoned that not only the brigands of Doulopolis but also Roman troops were committing these wrongs. J.-L. Ferrary suggested further possibilities: attacks by some city of the province, which the Roman governor failed to stop, hence Colophon's appeal to the Senate; or attacks by the agents of publicans.²⁰ C. Mileta urged that Aristonicus actually founded Doulopolis.²¹ Recently, however, K. Buraselis rejected this picture entirely, arguing that the phrase is temporal, "in the time of Doulopolis", a contemptuous reference to Aristonicus' Heliopolis: hence there was no Doulopolis by Colophon, and all the depredations were committed by Romans.²²

¹⁷ A travers l'Asie Mineure 89 n. 572: Miletoupolis "probably at one time an Antioch and perhaps previously an Agathocleia"; more certainty in the postumous Claros I (Paris 1989) 79 n. 115.

¹⁸ An illustrated example is McClean Coll. no. 4157.

¹⁹ L. and J. Robert, Claros I (1989) p. 13, no. 1 col. II.32–51 [SEG XXXIX 1243].

²⁰ J.-L. Ferrary, CRAI 1991, 557–577, at 558 n. 3.

²¹ C. Mileta, Klio 80 (1998) 47–65, at 55–56; his conclusion, however, that Aristonicus founded the new city (p. 61) is not necessary.

²² Buraselis 184–190.

Such a phrase however seems gratuitous here, and the parallels offered for a temporal reading (Buraselis pp. 188–190) are uncogent. To indicate attacks on their territory, the Colophonians might have said precisely that, ἐπὶ τῆς χώρας (ἡμῶν). Instead they specify “the land that we have at Doulopolis”. The participle is insistent, implying the territory that the Colophonians still possessed, as distinct from what they had lost to Slave City.²³ Buraselis (p. 187), arguing that the phrase refers to the whole territory, cited *OGIS* 228 (Rigsby, *Asyria* 7) as an instance of “existing land” used absolutely, without a comparandum. But there it is in fact the opposite: the king guarantees Smyrna “the land that it has” as distinct from their “ancestral territory”, which he now restores in addition. Ferrary observed (p. 559) that the text does not actually say that the attacks originated from Doulopolis. Yet this location evidently was relevant, in the Colophonians’ view. We should conclude that Doulopolis was, as the Roberts thought, a break-away group in Colophon’s territory; and that it was the source of the attacks.

In treating “Slave City” as a date and equivalent to Aristonicus’ Heliopolis, Buraselis held that the attacks on the territory happened before the defeat of Aristonicus in 129; Ferrary thought that they might continue later.²⁴ That successive governors were to see to it that the Senate’s decree was obeyed implies that the danger to Colophon’s land endured for some years into the established province, and was not confined to the time of Aristonicus down to 129. This speaks against a temporal reading of ἐπὶ Δούλων πόλεως.

But Buraselis’ objection about such a dissident community is compelling:²⁵ for how can the Senate have passed a decree that commands non-Romans? The notion that Roman troops might be involved in addition to others does not save the phenomena.

The repeated seizure of crops might rather be expected of a neighbor than of a Roman army – and for how long were Roman troops ever stationed near Colophon? The Colophonians may well be giving their view of what was in reality a border dispute: the secessionists of Doulopolis, in the inevitable absence of established and agreed-upon boundaries, may have been exploiting land that they felt they had won by the spear.

More important, violent and unjust exploitation of Colophon by Roman troops would be protested by an embassy to the commander in the field, not to Rome and the Senate.²⁶ The Senate dealt with Roman allies; the discipline of Roman soldiers was the responsibility of the general in the field. The decree for Polemaeus uses strong language, and not the formal terminology that we expect of a complaint about requisitions or billeting by Roman troops.²⁷ On the face of it, the depredations are true attacks on Colophonian territory by the people of Slave City. The problem then is that Doulopolis is treated as a friend of Rome and subject to the Senate’s strictures. How can Rome be a friend of a community that originated in the rebellion of Aristonicus?

²³ Cf. the Roberts, *Claros* I p. 37, “c’est bien une partie de notre territoire”.

²⁴ Buraselis p. 186 n. 13; Ferrary pp. 558–559, similarly *Mileta* p. 61.

²⁵ Buraselis pp. 184–185, “The problems Colophon had to cope with resulted from the activity of Roman/pro-Roman troops on its territory. Otherwise the successful intervention of the senate would have been incomprehensible.”

²⁶ Otherwise, Buraselis pp. 199–200.

²⁷ A contemporary example is the Carian decree published by P. Briant, P. Brun, and E. Varinlioğlu, in *Les cités d’Asie Mineure occidentale au II^e siècle* (Bordeaux 2001) 241–259 [SEG LI 1495]: the embassy to the governor was polite (the strongest words are θλίβομαι and ταραχή), and studious in blaming no one.

A famous inscription from Spain suggests an explanation. In 189 B.C. the commander L. Aemilius Paullus, under arms in the lower reaches of the Baetis River, issued an edict (*ILLRP*² 514):

*L. Aemilius L. f. imperator decrevit
utei quei Hastensium servei
in turri Lascutana habitarent
leiberei essent; agrum oppidumqu(e)
quod ea tempestate posedisent,
item possidere habereque
iousit, dum populus senatusque
Romanus vellet. Act(um) in castris
a. d. xii k. Febr.*

L. Aemilius L. f. *imperator* ordered that those slaves of the Hastenses who were occupying the Lascutana fortress are to be free men; the land and city which they had at that time he ordered that they have and hold, so long as the Roman people and senate wish. Issued in camp, 20 January.

The situation is clear:²⁸ Slaves of the city of Hasta have fled their masters and seized some fortified position in the city's territory. Aemilius, intent on conquering the area, has exploited this discord by offering Roman recognition not only of their freedom but of their possession of the place – Rome will recognize them as a city. The price, surely, was their aid to the Roman army in reducing Hasta. That city was finally taken by the praetor C. Atinius after more than a year (Liv. 39.21). Aemilius twenty years later would be the victor at Pydna; his astuteness was legendary (Diod. 30.20).

This episode suggests for us a model, even a Roman precedent, for interpreting the situation at Colophon. We know that Colophon resisted Aristonicus and he had to take it by force (Florus 1.35 [p. 47 Halm], *resistentes ... vi recepit*). Dissidents in Colophon have seized some defensible place in the countryside. Many, perhaps all, were slaves who went over to Aristonicus, attracted by his promises of social change, while the Colophonians resisted him. Aristonicus' forces prevailed, presumably with the aid of Doulopolis. Evidently, however, he did not force the reunification of the two polities; doubtless he had more important concerns, and little time, and perhaps had offered Doulopolis guarantees to the contrary. The Romans, for their part, knew how to divide and conquer – and at Colophon, this convenient division already existed. The Roman general won over the secessionists by promising them continued autonomy, and a treaty with Rome followed, recognizing them as a city and an ally of Rome. Colophon proper came to be reduced – doubtless with the help or at least the pressure of the secessionist group. In this region, the dissidents (however they called their new city) were the Romans' first friends and allies, while Colophon was won over later and perhaps on less favorable terms.

Thus Doulopolis entered Roman rule as an ally. Colophon, in the two decrees published by the Roberts, is a free city, and yet has had to labor to ward off challenges to its territory and to its legal autonomy; its rights, as Ferrary has stressed, were not yet obvious and settled at the beginning of provincial rule. Naturally, these two communities remained enemies. As Buraselis has well documented, the Colophonians' word for them, "City of Slaves", expressed hatred.²⁹

Accordingly, the Colophonians had to use diplomacy and caution in asking the Romans to rein in the aggression of the separatist city. They could not appeal to the provincial governor:

²⁸ See e.g. R. Knapp, *Aspects of the Roman Experience in Iberia* (Valladolid 1977) 108 n. 11; J. S. Richardson, *Hispaniae, Spain and the Development of Roman Imperialism* (Cambridge 1986) 118.

²⁹ Mileta p. 56; more fully, Buraselis pp. 190–194.

this new city had a Roman guarantee of autonomy, and a treaty ratified by the Senate. Hence Polemaeus' mission to Rome rather than to the governor. The senators responded in the way that we see so often in the late Republic: they warned an ally not to cause trouble.

What eventually became of Doulopolis? We do not hear of it again; it must soon have been reduced and reannexed by Colophon. But if the reconstruction offered here is correct, that annexation could not have happened to a Roman friend without the consent of the Senate. So we must postulate another, subsequent diplomatic success for the Colophonians: Rome allowed them to retake the place. It is not difficult to imagine the discomfort of the senators with having as allies former slaves and partisans of Aristonicus. And what did Slave City have to offer Rome beyond short-term military assistance in the pacification of the province? The established cities of the East knew how to win friends in Rome, and they had time to work.

No such renewed control had yet happened at the date of the decree for Polemaeus, or else that success too would have been trumpeted. But it is clear that the territory of Colophon was insecure and the object of diplomacy in these early years of the province. For the decree honoring Menippus cites just such successes: Menippus, on one of his missions to Rome, secured for Colophon some coastal land and the city's ancestral boundaries at the Defiles and Prepelaion.³⁰ Possibly the end of Doulopolis lies concealed in these phrases.

Athens

Kent J. Rigsby

³⁰ Claros I p. 63, no. 2 col. I.34–37, τῆς μὲν παραλίου χώρας τὴν πανκτησίαν βεβαιότεραν πεποίηκε τῷ δήμῳ, τῆς δὲ κατὰ τὰ Στενὰ καὶ τὸ Πρεπέλαιον τοὺς πατρίους ὄρους τετήρηκεν, with the Roberts' commentary on the topography, pp. 71–85.