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## The Antigonids and the Illyrians in the Late Third Century\*

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**ABSTRACT** During the 220s and the early 210s, the Antigonid and the Illyrians cooperated politically and militarily more than once: they fought together against Kleomenes of Sparta during the reign of Antigonos Doson and against the Aitolians during the reign of Philip V. The Illyrians proved to be valuable allies for the latter Antigonid because they provided not only well-trained infantry but also offered naval support to the Macedonian campaigns. However, by 211, Philip V had conquered the lands that had belonged to the Ardiaei dynasty of Illyria and controlled the Balkan peninsula from east to west. The only cities that were not under his rule were the Greek cities of the coast: Orikos, Apollonia, and Epidamnos. The Illyrian tribes under the defeated king Skerdilaidas were confined in the north. This study investigates the circumstances that led the Antigonids to go from friends to enemies of the Illyrians. It shows that Philip's relationship with the Illyrians was initially prompted by his *philos*, Taurion, who fostered cooperation between Macedonia and the forces of the Ardiaei. However, Demetrios of Pharos' arrival at the Antigonid court changed the political scene completely. By analyzing Polybius and Justin's account, the paper highlights the role Demetrios of Pharos played in Illyrian foreign relations with Macedonia and the dramatic impact of his relationship with Philip V on Hellenistic events. Demetrios' advice to the king on rethinking his military tactics and objectives was conducive to the Macedonian successes in the Social War. However, the real agenda of Demetrios became clear with time: Demetrios hoped to restore his leadership position in the Illyrian *basileia* as a local ally of Macedonia at the expense of his rival Skerdilaidas, a friend of the Romans. Although Demetrios' death compromised the project, it brought unwanted Roman attention to Macedonia.

**KEYWORDS** Antigonid Macedonia, Kingship, Hellenistic Time, Warfare.

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In 211 Philip V conquered the lands that had belonged to the Ardiaei dynasty of Illyria: the Antigonid king occupied the Skodra basin, core of Illyria, and controlled the Balkan peninsula from east to west. Therefore, he gained access to the Adriatic, the Ionian, and the Aegean seas. The only cities that were not under his rule were the Greek cities of the coast: Orikos, Apollonia, and Epidamnos. The Illyrian tribes under the defeated king Skerdilaidas were confined in the north, whereas the Aitolian power, much reduced in size and influence, was surrounded by the Antigonid hegemony. This led the Aitolians and the Illyrians to militarily involve Rome in the southern Balkans.

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This study investigates the circumstances that led the Antigonids to become the enemy of the Illyrians. In 1966, already Hammond<sup>1</sup>, explored the strategic relevance and the economic vitality of the western Balkans in the Hellenistic period. Accordingly, the same scholar, in his 1988 work, *A History of Macedonia*, volume III, innovated the approach to the Macedonian events by devoting attention to the role of the Illyrians in the third-century events<sup>2</sup>. The Illyrians were re-evaluated as more than some disorganized and “barbaric” pirates, thirsty for booty and blood. They had become political players on the competitive Balkan chessboard.

In the past thirty years, the information on the Illyrian tribes has grown immensely thanks to archeological, numismatic, and epigraphic research. In particular, the works of John Wilkes, Marjeta Šašel Kos, Hasan Ceka, and Neritan Ceka have contributed to studying these people and their political and economic structures<sup>3</sup>. Valuable books finally shed light on the history of the Illyrians, such as that of Pierre Cabanes or the recent one by Danijel Dzino<sup>4</sup>. Amid this new wave of studies, Alessandra Coppola singled out, for the first time, the contribution of the Demetrios of Pharos to the Mediterranean events of 220s and 210s as Illyrian leader, as a Roman enemy and as a Macedonian advisor<sup>5</sup>. Building on the findings on the Illyrian kingdom, the present study addresses the events leading up to the Antigonid conquest of Illyria. It explores the role Demetrios of Pharos played in Illyrian foreign relations with Macedonia and the dramatic impact of his relationship with Philip V on Hellenistic events<sup>6</sup>.

## 1. DEMETRIOS OF PHAROS BEFORE PHILIP V

Demetrios of Pharos (modern Hvar in Croatia) was originally an ally of Teuta, the queen of the Illyrians, as a (half-)Greek *philos* of the Illyrian *basileia*<sup>7</sup>. Illyrians had been subjected to the Epeirote kings, but when in the 230s, Pyrrhos' kingdom collapsed and the dynasty, and partially the lands, were absorbed by Macedonia<sup>8</sup>, the Illyrians found new strength under Agron king of the Ardiaeans. He seized southern Illyria from Epeiros and extended his rule over Korcyra, Epidamnos, and Pharos<sup>9</sup>. At his death, his wife Teuta embraced a more aggressive military naval policy with the help of her husband's *philoï*, who included Agron's relative, Skerdilaidas<sup>10</sup>. In particular, the Illyrian ruler successfully expanded her kingdom at the expense of the Epeirote League: raiding south, her forces conquered the region of the Atintanes which included the *koinon* of the people of Amantia, Antigoneia, and Byllis. She conquered Dassaretia and northern Epeiros up to Phoinike. This was a city of the Chaones where was the center of the federal government of the Epeirote League: the city was also a trading outpost of

<sup>1</sup> HAMMOND 1966, 239-253.

<sup>2</sup> Above all WALBANK 1940.

<sup>3</sup> Among many contributions, see CEKA 1972; WILKES 1995; ŠAŠEL KOS 2005; CEKA 2013.

<sup>4</sup> CABANES 1988; DZINO 2010.

<sup>5</sup> COPPOLA 1993.

<sup>6</sup> We are informed by Polibius on the life and deeds of the dynast, as well as Appian's *Illyrian Wars* and some Livian passages. Moreover, many details on the bond between Philip V and the Illyrian dynast Demetrios come from the *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus*, by Justin. See also ZANINOVIĆ 1998, 89-96.

<sup>7</sup> Plb. 2.10.8-11. 16; App. *Illyr.* 7; Dio F 49. As noted by COPPOLA 1993, 41, Demetrios was not included by the sources in the number of the Illyrian leaders (cf. WALBANK 1957-1967, I, 161). On Demetrios, see also ŠASEL KOS 2002, 137-155; on Teuta, ŠASEL KOS 2012.

<sup>8</sup> See GREENWALT 2010, 279-305.

<sup>9</sup> ŠASEL KOS 2013, 169-200.

<sup>10</sup> SCHERBERICH 2009, 50-55; BERNARD 2010, 41-53.

the Italic merchants<sup>11</sup>. The queen threatened northern Aitolian interests as well as the eastern outposts of Macedonia, both directly, with her presence in Dassaretia, and indirectly, by forcing the Dardanians to move towards the Macedonian cities<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, Illyrian naval growth under Agron and then Teuta was a threat (military and commercial) for the Italic businessmen (Ἰταλικοί ἔμποροι in Plb. 2.8.2-3) in the Adriatic Sea since the state-organized Illyrian piracy, or rather privateering, undermined Roman economic interests<sup>13</sup>.

In the war against Rome, Demetrios was Teuta's commander of the Illyrian garrison in Korkyra. However, he ventured to acquire more power and betrayed Teuta in 229<sup>14</sup>. He offered to Rome the control of Korkyra and then surrendered the garrison to them<sup>15</sup>. Following Demetrios' lead, the Romans exploited Korkyra to gaining control of Apollonia, Epidamnus, and Issa. As mentioned by Polybius (2.11.17-12.8) and Appian (*Illyr.* 8), in 228 the Senate rewarded Demetrios for his help with the confirmation of his rule over Pharos and some of those strongholds taken from Teuta, while the Ardiaei were ordered not to sail south of Lissos carrying weapons or with more than two *lemboi*, i.e. galleys<sup>16</sup>.

After Teuta abdicated<sup>17</sup>, Demetrios assumed the *epitropeia* of Pinne, son of Agron, and in 228 married Agron's second wife, Tritautea, becoming the leader of the Illyrians<sup>18</sup>. He thus had most of Illyria under his authority<sup>19</sup> and became an ally of the Macedonians, when he answered Antigonos III Doson's request of support against the Aitolians. Demetrios battled at Sellasia in Lakonia in 222 against Kleomenes, offering an Illyrian contingent of 1.600 men fighting with Boeotians, Epeirotes, and Akarnanians as *symmachoi* of the Hellenic League, under Macedonian command. Their contribution was decisive for the victory of the league, says Polybius (2.65.2-5)<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Plb. 2.4.7-6.11. The political importance, richness, and liveliness of these people is poorly attested in the Greek literary sources, yet well demonstrated by the documentary ones: see the several interesting and useful works by CEKA 2009, 5-23; 2013; CEKA-MUČAJ 2012, 3-14; GILKES 2013, 130-134.

<sup>12</sup> See HAMMOND 1967, 572-600; SAKELLARIOU 1997, 80-110. HANSEN-NIELSEN 2004, 348; CEKA 2013, 175-190. On the relations between Illyrians and Macedonians in the fifth and fourth centuries, see LANDUCCI-GATTINONI 2004, 23-52 and GREENWALT 2010, 279-305.

<sup>13</sup> Illyrian affairs are introduced in the *Histories* in relation to Rome's earliest military involvement in Eastern Europe in 229. According to Plb. 2.2.2-3: "this is a matter not to be lightly passed over, but deserving the serious attention of those who wish to gain a true view of the purpose of this work and of the formation and growth of the Roman dominion". On the Roman involvement in the Adriatic trades and routes and in Illyria, see MARASCO 1986, 35-112 and, recently, BANDELLI 2001, 17-41; 2004, 95-139; ŠASEL KOS 2004, 141-166; 2005, 252-262; BERTRAND-BOTTE 2015, 177-185; VITELLI CASELLA 2021, 73-80. Already, however, BANDELLI 2001, 17-41 stressed the necessity of a new survey of the Roman impact on the third-century Adriatic trades. On the circumstances of the First Illyrian War, among the many valuable studies, see also MUSTI 1978, 100-103; HARRIS 1979, 197; COPPOLA 1993, 29-41; WILKES 1995, 157-159; SAKELLARIOU 1997, 102-110; DE SOUZA 2000, 76-80; CEKA 2004, 69-74; DAVIES 2004, 119-28; SCHERBERICH 2009, 132-134; DZINO 2010, 47-60; WORTHINGTON 2023, 44-46. On the early phases of the Roman expansionism see HARRIS 1979, 9-130; ECKSTEIN 2008, 29-41. On Teuta see LINDERSKI 1984, 133-164 (in part. 141) and EHRHARDT 2002, 239-252.

<sup>14</sup> Plb. 2.11.3-4; App. *Il.* 7. Zon. 8.19.5-6 confirms the account but adds that the contact with the Romans happened when Issa called them for help, and Teuta sent Demetrios to reach an agreement. On the possible reasons for the betrayal, see COPPOLA 1993, 42-43; DAVIES 2004, 119-128.

<sup>15</sup> Plb. 2.11.4-6.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Zon. 8.19.7; Dio F 49: as a commentary on these events COPPOLA 1993, 41-51; BANDELLI 2004, 95-139.

<sup>17</sup> Dio F 49.

<sup>18</sup> Dio F 53. Similar to what had been done by Doson with Philip V, see D'AGOSTINI 2019, 13-22.

<sup>19</sup> Plb. 2.11.17.

<sup>20</sup> On the matter of whether Demetrios was or was not a member of the Hellenic Symmarchy see LE BOHEC 1987, 203-208; COPPOLA 1993, 53-62; SCHERBERICH 2009, 211-216. SCHOLTEN 2000, 147-149

In 220, a former *philos* of the late of Doson, Taurion, was a member of the royal Council and Philip V's commander in Peloponnese. Building on the previous partnership between Demetrios and Doson against Kleomenes in the 220s, Taurion sought a new alliance with Demetrios: he involved the Illyrians in the Aitolian war on the Macedonian side and obtained fifty *lemboi* as naval support. Specifically, Taurion asked the Illyrians to hit the Aitolians during their retreat from their incursions in the Peloponnese<sup>21</sup>. At the time, Demetrios was returning from an Aegean raid against the Kyklades, pursued by the Rhodian naval patrol. Taurion offered him safe passage through Korinthos and dragged his galleys across the Isthmus. In exchange, Demetrios was supposed to attack the Aitolians, but he missed their crossing, and only stormed some places on the coast of Aitolia<sup>22</sup>.

Philip V welcomed Taurion's naval initiative and, in winter 220/219, also reached out for the prince of the Ardiaei's, Skerdilaidas, help. According to Polybius (4.29.1-7), Philip V promised the Illyrian to help him secure his rule of Illyria and to bring retribution against the Aitolians, who had previously wronged the prince. Skerdilaidas provided the Macedonian king with thirty of his galleys to carry on the war against the Aitolians in exchange for an annual sum of twenty talents. The *lemboi* could transport c. fifty soldiers. In the absence of an Achaian or Macedonian fleet, they could provide the king with a relevant strategic and logistic advantage<sup>23</sup>.

The involvement of Demetrios and Skerdilaidas in the early stages of the war was minimal due to the outbreak of the Second Illyrian War with Rome<sup>24</sup>. Lucius Aemilius Paullus was sent to Illyria in 219 as an act of retribution against the Illyrians, and specifically against Demetrios, for the raids on the Greek coast he had carried on with Skerdilaidas, as well as those against the Kyklades, and the help given to the Histri in the northern Adriatic<sup>25</sup>. After the Roman conquest of Dimale and its pivotal fortress, close to Apollonia and Pharos<sup>26</sup>, Demetrios' troops dispersed over the island across the country. Still, the dynast had some boats ready at anchor at a solitary point on the coast, in case emergency escape was needed. He retreated there, embarked, and sailed away at nightfall. He then managed to cross the sea and arrived at the court of king Philip with only one ship, says Polybius<sup>27</sup>. It is unknown if he knew in advance that the

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and SCHERBERICH 2009, 49-57 mention the existence in the early 220s (230-228?) of an alliance of Illyrians, Akarnanians and Epeirotes against the Aitolians.

<sup>21</sup> Plb. 4.6.4. Taurion was in charge of the garrisons but also of royal affairs in Peloponnese. He was a liaison officer with the Achaian League. He represented the king in the Greek *synedrion*. On Taurion, see D'AGOSTINI 2019, 32-41 and 63-64. He was assigned to Peloponnese by Doson's testament: Plb. 4.87.7-8.

<sup>22</sup> Plb. 4.19.7-9. Cf. 4.16.6-11.

<sup>23</sup> SCHERBERICH 2009, 132-134; KLEU 2015, 24-5. On Skerdilaidas, see ŠAŠEL KOS 2002, 137-155; ANTONETTI-MATIJAŠIĆ 2012.

<sup>24</sup> An Illyrian contingent of 400 men participated in the Macedonian expedition to Crete in 220. They were, however, led by Platores and were likely mercenaries: Plb. 4.55.2.

<sup>25</sup> On the Illyrian raids: COPPOLA 1993, 70-84; BANDELLI 2001, 17-41; CEKA 2004, 69-74; DAVIES 2004, 119-128; WORTHINGTON 2023, 45-46: Plb. 3.16.2-11; 4.16.6-11; 4.19.8; App. *Illyr.* 8; Livy, *Per.* 20; 21.16.4; D.S. 25.14.1; Zon. 8.20.10; Oros. 4.13.16. On the Histri: VITELLI CASELLA 2021, 81-84. For the causes of the second Illyrian war, among many others: MUSTI 1978, 100-103; ŠAŠEL KOS 2005, 267-271; ECKSTEIN 2008, 60-76. See also Plb. 4.25.4; 4.37.4; 9.38.8.

<sup>26</sup> Plb. 3.18.1-12. 19.1-7; Dio F 5.; App. *Illyr.* 8; Zon. 8.20. Pharos ratified a new agreement as friend and ally of Rome and re-established its Greek identity and connections. Similarly, some Illyrian people also decided to establish treaties with Rome, Plb. 3.18.5-6. On the dividing up of the area after the Illyrian defeat and on the decree of Pharos, ROBERT 1935, 489-507; 1960, 505-41; *IG XII Suppl.* 200 (1940). On the bond between Rome and these people and cities, either foreign *clientelae* or under an informal sphere of influence, see COPPOLA 1993, 92-129; BANDELLI 2004, 95-139 and ECKSTEIN 2008, 43-58.

<sup>27</sup> Plb. 3.19.8-10.

Antigonid would have granted him refuge, or if Demetrius sought help in Macedonia because of his previous collaboration with Taurion. However, we know that Philip V did not make distance between himself and Demetrius; on the contrary, he thought, maybe upon Taurion's suggestion, that Demetrius could be of use and welcomed him in his court.

In 219, Demetrius could contribute to Philip's enterprises in only two ways, as far as I can see. He could offer a first-hand account of the Roman military skills and their interest in the coast of Illyria and he could advise the Macedonian on the planning and conduct of war at sea<sup>28</sup>. It might be anachronistic to argue in favour of the former as the primary reason for Philip to accept Demetrius at his court. However, the previous contact between Taurion, Demetrius, and Skerdilaidas had shown Philip V's impossibility of engaging directly by sea and his desire to acquire naval support to counteract the Aitolians. Therefore, I am more inclined to see in Demetrius' naval mastery and knowledge of the Ionian and Adriatic seas the main value of the Illyrian dynast for the Antigonid. Demetrius' enrolment among the king's advisors was likely due to the contribution he could offer to the military operation, advising on the naval front and, perhaps, bringing some forces with him.

## 2. DEMETRIOS AND PHILIP V'S NAVAL INITIATIVE

In 219, Philip was in his second year of his reign and in the early phase of the Social War against the Aitolians<sup>29</sup>. Philip bade Demetrius sail to Korinthos<sup>30</sup>, where the Macedonian garrison managed by Taurion assured the control of the maritime and terrestrial area. From there, Demetrius was supposed to go through Thessaly to Macedonia, where he would meet with the king. Philip, in the meantime, was crossing into Epeiros and advancing towards Pella to deal with the Dardanians<sup>31</sup>. Polybius emphasized the arrival of Demetrius as a game changer: the historian describes him as bold and brave, and with a great influence on Philip. However, he also stated his contempt for him who was lacking in judgement and prudence<sup>32</sup>.

Demetrius was officially introduced to the king's court in winter 219/8 at Larisa, where the Macedonians had established their headquarters in order to reorganize Thessaly. Demetrius was likely at the king's side in the following spring's blitzkrieg in Arcadia and Elis, which won for the king the control of Central Peloponnese, a large amount of plunder, and, most notably, the Triphylian coast<sup>33</sup>. However, the Illyrian-Macedonian agreement, although still in place, did not provide any concrete support for Philip's campaign of 219 and 218. Maybe Skerdilaidas<sup>34</sup> was reluctant to involve himself in the Ionian Sea after the outcome of the Second Illyrian War since, as has been suggested by Coppola, he might have chosen to be friends with Rome<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> According to WORTHINGTON 2023, 47, Philip V valued Demetrius' connections in Illyria.

<sup>29</sup> See KLEU 2015, 29 n. 92.

<sup>30</sup> Plb. 4.66.4-5.

<sup>31</sup> Plb. 4.66.4-5.

<sup>32</sup> Plb. 3.19.9.

<sup>33</sup> D'AGOSTINI 2019, 46-57.

<sup>34</sup> After the Second Illyrian War, Pinnes was again proclaimed king as a friend of Rome, says Appian (*Ilyr.* 2.7). On Pinnes and Rome see also Livy, 22.33.5. He was likely ruling under Skerdilaidas' watch. Still, the dynast eventually took over his protégée and became king. We do not hear of Pinnes anymore from the sources but of Skerdilaidas' descendants. HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 391-394; CABANES 1988, 289-295; ŠAŠEL KOS 2002, 137-155.

<sup>35</sup> COPPOLA 1993, 128-129.

It must have been during these months that Philip began to question his need for Illyrian commanders for naval operations and developed the idea of a new naval strategy. In winter 218, following a financial agreement with the Achaian League<sup>36</sup>, Philip broke free from Illyrian naval dependence and inaugurated a new war strategy in order to open a maritime warfront. According to Polybius (5.2.1-3), the reason lay in Philip's need to carry on a war on three fronts (Elis, Lakonia, and Aitolia). These regions were not connected by land, but they were all reachable by sea. The Macedonian fleet was thus not meant to engage in a naval conflict, but rather to allow Philip to transport his troops swiftly from one coastal area to the other for forays into the enemy territories. The goal was to damage the Aitolian land outposts and to disrupt the communication and partnership between Aitolia, Elis, and Sparta, dividing the enemy.

This military tactic imitated the Illyrian "piracy" to weaken the enemy outposts and undermine the adversaries' cooperation<sup>37</sup>, by employing a few galleys, moving quickly in and out from the coast, and carrying soldiers for the raids. To realize this plan, the king collected his warships in Lechaion in the Korinthian Gulf, joined by some Achaian ships. He remained in Korinthos and trained his Macedonian phalangites and mercenaries to become the crew and govern the warships.

Polybius (5.2.4-9) was rather impressed by the loyalty and obedience of the Macedonians to their king: the soldiers are described as having answered Philip's instructions with ready enthusiasm. However, reportedly, Philip V had some troubles with supplies and was forced to pawn his silverware to obtain the needed funds. He eventually put his fleet to sea and arrived at Patrai with six thousand Macedonians and twelve hundred mercenaries.

On this episode, Polybius remarks that not all of Philip's friends were happy about the idea of investing resources in a maritime enterprise, despite the naval strategy being conceived by Philip's *synedrion*<sup>38</sup>. Specifically, Apelles, Philip's former guardian and main *philos*, did not support the initiative and allegedly attempted to undermine it. Polybius accuses Apelles, and two other friends, Leontios and Megaleas, to have compromised Philip's supplies in order to hinder the king's naval project<sup>39</sup>. Admittedly, Polybius is critical of Apelles due to the rivalry between him and the Achaian leader Aratos<sup>40</sup>. Nevertheless, although the historian's accusations against the Macedonian *philos* need to be read with caution, Apelles, Leontios, or Megaleas were unlikely to be

<sup>36</sup> According to Polybius (5.1.6-12), in 218 Philip V obtained the financial support for his military expeditions in the Peloponnese from the Achaian League. The League provided the king with funding for the past and coming operations in the Peloponnese: fifty talents as a refund for the last campaign, 10,000 *medimni* of grain, and three months of salary for the army; the Macedonian army would then receive 17 talents for every month of war spent campaigning in the Peloponnese. See D'AGOSTINI 2019, 73-74.

<sup>37</sup> See CEKA 2004, 69-74 on piracy as strategic military force; DAVIES 2004, 119-128 on piracy as economic system and strategy in the Greek Mediterranean; MEDAS 2004, 129-138 on the military usefulness of *lemboi*.

<sup>38</sup> Plb. 5.2.1: τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ βουλευομένῳ μετὰ τῶν φίλων, ἐπειδὴ συνήλθον αἱ δυνάμεις ἐκ τῆς παραχειμασίας, ἔδοξε χρῆσθαι κατὰ θάλατταν τῷ πολέμῳ.

<sup>39</sup> On the diversity of opinion on the navy in Philip's council, see D'AGOSTINI 2019, 75-80 and WORTHINGTON 2023, 55.

<sup>40</sup> D'AGOSTINI 2019, 46-57, 95-115; NICHOLSON 2023, 60 and n. 6. On the so-called conspiracy of Apelles, see WALBANK 1940, 44-61; ERRINGTON 1967, 19-36; HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 381-383; WORTHINGTON 2023, 59-64. Contemporary scholarship is dubious about the existence of a conspiracy involving Apelles and certain Macedonians against Philip V and Aratos. It is possible that this is a later construction by Polybius.

among the designers of the naval initiative. Conversely, Taurion was probably involved, given his previous political engagement.

The change of strategy coincided with Demetrios of Pharos' arrival at Philip's side. Notably, when Demetrios requested to join Philip's court, he was first sent to Taurion. In 220, the two had worked together to coordinate a naval attack against the Illyrians: this had not accomplished the hoped-for result but had shown the potential of a maritime offensive. Building on their previous cooperation, Demetrios and Taurion might have promoted the naval initiative together to the king, and also supported Philip in carrying it out. On the one hand, Korinthos, Taurion's headquarters, was crucial to the development of the maritime war; on the other hand, the plan envisioned by Philip V was built on a naval strategy inspired by the Illyrian one, likely based on Demetrios' expertise<sup>41</sup>.

Justin's *Epitome* of Pompeius Trogus could confirm this<sup>42</sup>. Justin, or rather Trogus, says that Demetrios, once introduced to Philip's court, claimed that the Romans were dangerously attacking neighboring rulers and that Philip should prepare for a conflict in the west. By presenting this event as a pivotal moment in Hellenistic history, Trogus-Justin's account identifies Demetrios' presence among the Macedonian *philoï* as the leading determining cause of the opening of a new Macedonian interest in the western Balkans and in the Ionian and Adriatic seas.

Demetrios had been the ruler of a town always oriented towards the Adriatic and Ionian seas and, in the 220s, had ventured to establish a thalassocracy. His experience with Illyrian piracy offered a convenient solution to overcome the predicament of the Aitolian-controlled lands and to secure a Macedonian rule in the western Balkans. These areas were naturally challenging to conquer by a field army but easy to hit by raids and forays, especially with naval support. Demetrios' expertise made him the most valuable architect for the Macedonian maritime plan<sup>43</sup>.

### 3. THE ILLIRIAN CONTINGENTS AND PHILIP V'S ARMY IN THE SOCIAL WAR

The first Macedonian naval enterprise occurred in 218 when Philip V took the conflict closer to the Aitolian homeland. The Macedonian army planned to attack swiftly and raid the cities controlled by the enemy, eventually withdrawing to prepare for the next incursion.

Philip left a contingent of Achaian and mercenary forces in Dyme and gathered his naval forces at Kephallenia (Kephalonia). The king intended to wait there for his allies and at the same time to take Pale, one of the main towns of the island: he would thereby deprive the Aitolians of their most vital support—for they used the Kephallenian ships to cross to the Peloponnese and plunder the coasts of Epeiros and Akarnania; in addition, he intended to acquire a convenient base of operations against the enemy's territory, says Polybius<sup>44</sup>. Therefore, his goal in controlling the island of Kephallenia

<sup>41</sup> KLEU 2015, 31-42.

<sup>42</sup> Just. 29.1.1-6. This is the first episode concerning Philip's reign yielded by this source and is delivered through Demetrios' speech. I shall mention that Justin's passage summarizes two different events: the first part is the speech of Demetrios on the Roman expansion, which must follow the 219 Roman Adriatic expedition. The second part of the episode tells of Philip's decision to open the peace negotiations because of Hannibal's defeat; thus it must be connected to the events of 217. D'AGOSTINI 2015, 121-144.

<sup>43</sup> On Demetrios' responsibility for the new strategy, see WALBANK 1940, 51; COPPOLA 1993, 132-136. KLEU 2015, 30-31, 33 agrees with ERRINGTON 1967, 19-36 on the shared responsibility of the strategy among the king's councillors and the Illyrian dynast.

<sup>44</sup> Plb. 5.3.7-10.

was not only to obstruct the connection between Elis and Aitolia but also to secure Epeiros and Akarnania from the Aitolian sea incursions. Nevertheless, this first enterprise was not successful. Philip's siege of Pale was aborted after the Macedonian breach of the city wall because of the excessive loss experienced by the light infantry, the peltasts, used as breaching force.

The 218 expedition involved, for the first time, the fleet under the Macedonian command. This was assembled Epeirote and Akarnanian ships, the Messenian navy, and fifteen Illyrian *lemboi* sent by Skerdilaidas<sup>45</sup>. According to Polybius (5.4.3), the Illyrians were supposed to send thirty ships, but Skerdilaidas could only provide fifteen because of some unrest among the Illyrian leaders. These Illyrian contingents were conducive to the victories in the following Aitolian campaign.

In the early campaigns, the king had sought an alternative to the open battle whose success relied on the mighty, but rigid Macedonian phalanx scheme, ill-suited to campaign in Aitolia<sup>46</sup>. The alternative was based on Aitolian and Illyrian warfare, on incursions, but it took time to perfect and adapt to the Macedonian army, and in turn to adapt the Macedonian soldiers to it. Philip V had increasingly relied on the light infantry, the peltasts, as missile troops to confront the enemy. They were more flexible, thus better suited than the hoplites for the current war based on forays<sup>47</sup>. However, when deployed alone as breaching force in Pale, they had suffered unsustainable losses. To avoid replicating Pale, starting from the attack on the Aitolian headquarter and sanctuary, Thermos, the corps of peltasts were successfully paired with the Illyrian contingents to overcome the enemy<sup>48</sup>. The Aitolian army under Alexander of Trichonion arrived after the Macedonian king had sacked the Aitolian shrine. Being too late to defend the sanctuary from the looting, the Aitolians waited for Philip to abandon the heights of Thermos. As soon as the Macedonians moved out of the city, the Aitolians entered it and attacked the last departing ranks. While Philip's rear-guard was thrown into some confusion, the Illyrians and a handpicked force of peltasts, concealed under a hill on the descent, ambushed and charged the Aitolian forces which had advanced farthest. The whole enemy army fled, leaving behind many dead and prisoners.

Given that their ruler could not lead his men, Coppola argues that Demetrios of Pharos, who appears among the closest *philoï* of Philip V, might have commanded these contingents in 218<sup>49</sup>. Polybius's remarks on Thermos' attack might support this thesis. He deplores Philip V's behaviour because he allowed his army to sack the sanctuary and the temples. Polybius attributes the responsibility for Thermos not solely to the king's youth but to his advisors' bad advice<sup>50</sup>. Although the historian admits his ignorance on the circumstances of the events, he suggests that it was likely Demetrios of Pharos as the one responsible for the operations in Thermos. By ascribing responsibility for the events at Thermos to Demetrios, Polybius exonerates Aratos, the leader of the Achaean League and Philip V's close advisor, from any accountability. The two advisors present opposing perspectives. As Nicholson has observed, "Demetrius represents the collective characteristics of the Illyrians, whom Polybius

<sup>45</sup> KLEU 2015, 33-36.

<sup>46</sup> SEKUNDA 2010, 446-471.

<sup>47</sup> D'AGOSTINI 2019, 80-84.

<sup>48</sup> Plb. 5.13.1-3.

<sup>49</sup> See COPPOLA 1993, 140-141, 143. Cf. WALBANK 1957-1967, I, 510 who thinks the Illyrians were mercenaries.

<sup>50</sup> ECKSTEIN 1995, 145.



considered to be a non-Greek/barbarian people, and Aratus represented the exemplary Hellenic Achaeans”<sup>51</sup>.

Given the success of the Aitolian campaign, the combination of peltasts and Illyrians became the shock forces most appreciated by the king<sup>52</sup>. In the subsequent expedition against Sparta, Philip V again employed a tactic similar to the one he had used in Aitolia: at first, he sent forward the light-armed mercenaries as the breaching force instead of the peltasts. The peltasts were later employed in conjunction with the Illyrians for the heavy attack following the breach. This was an improvement of the tactic he employed in Pale, where he instead deployed the peltasts from the beginning as the breaching force, exposing them to severe losses.

The king planned the scheme with his friends, and he himself led the peltasts into battle. Philip’s direct command of the unit, like Alexander III with the hypaspists, further enhanced the delicate and pivotal role of these contingents of the army, who were crucial in all the king’s military successes of 218. Coppola convincingly argued that among the friends of the king, the main contributor to the tactic used against Sparta was Demetrios of Pharos<sup>53</sup>. She finds confirmation of it in Philip’s visit to Sellasia right after the battle. Here, the king sacrificed on the hills and celebrated the memory of the victory of Doson and the symmarchy together with Demetrios’ Illyrians against Kleomenes. The tribute was meant to promote the image of the symmarchy fighting successfully together and defeating the common enemy. The celebrations paired the two Macedonian kings as the bringers of peace in the Peloponnese. But there was also a substantial similarity between the two battles since, under both circumstances, the Illyrians had played a similar role by encircling the enemy from above. Demetrios was thus arguably behind both victories.

The role of the Illyrian contingents in the 218 victories matches the growth of Demetrios’ position at court, especially after the death of Philip’s Macedonian mentor and advisor, Apelles. When Philip decided to spend the winter securing the defence of Macedonia and Thessaly, he took Demetrios with him. Still, he left most of his other closest friends in the south: Aratus and Taurion in the Peloponnese and Alexander, the Captain of the Bodyguard, in Phocis. Demetrios stayed at Philip’s side during the successful campaign in Achaia Phthiotis that led Philip to secure Macedonia and Thessaly from the Aitolian raids, the last and decisive campaign of the Social War<sup>54</sup>. The Illyrian contingents are not mentioned in these campaigns; they were likely discharged in the winter months, as Philip had done with most of his army except the peltasts, the *agema* and the hypaspists. The campaign in Achaia Phthiotis apparently involved only the Macedonian army, recalled into service after the winter<sup>55</sup>. However, Demetrios’ prestige was not affected by the absence of the Illyrian corps. When the

<sup>51</sup> Plb. 5.12.7-8. NICHOLSON 2023, 188-190; see also 2018, 434-453. Polybius holds Demetrios responsible for the behavioural change of the king, his *metabolē*, from a good to an evil ruler and traces back his behavioural transformation to Thermos. See HATZOPOULOS 2014, 99-120. The *metabolē* will be complete in 215 during the *stasis* of Messene when Philip preferred Demetrios’ advice to Aratos’. Holding Philip responsible for the following death of Aratos, Polybius considers the king a tyrant from that episode onwards. Plb. 7.11.8-11; 8.8.1-12.1; Plu. *Arat.* 49-52; Paus. 4.29.1-5; 32.2. See also GOLAN 1995, 31.

<sup>52</sup> During the Aitolian campaign he resorts to them also in Stratos: Plb. 5.14.1-7.

<sup>53</sup> COPPOLA 1993, 144-146.

<sup>54</sup> On these events, HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 384-387; D’AGOSTINI 2019, 118-126; WORTHINGTON 2023, 65-67.

<sup>55</sup> Plb. 5.29.5; 5.97.4.

Achaian leader Aratos met the king in Argos in 217 after the winter campaign<sup>56</sup>, Demetrios had replaced Apelles as the king's right hand.

#### 4. DEMETRIOS, PHILIP AND THE ILLYRIAN WAR

In 217 Philip's relationship with the Illyrian king Skerdilaidas dramatically deteriorated. The incident leading to the rupture between Philip V and the Illyrians developed as follows, according to Polybius<sup>57</sup>. In spring and summer Taurion had dispatched part of the land forces from Korinthos to support the Messenians in protecting the Peloponnese, while his fleet was anchored at Leucas with no military coverage. Skerdilaidas, claiming not to have been fully paid for his contribution to the victories of the previous year<sup>58</sup>, sent fifteen *lemboi* to attack Taurion's ships with the plan of treacherously obtaining payment. These galleys sailed to Leucas, where they were received as friends, thanks to their alliance in the war. Yet they then attacked the four Macedonian vessels anchored close by. The anchored vessels were under the command of the Korinthians Agathinos and Cassander, who were left in charge of Taurion's squadron. The Illyrians sent Skerdilaidas the two captured commanders, along with their ships. Thereafter, they sailed towards Malea and plundered and raided the area.

During the winter, Philip, emboldened by his 218 sea expeditions, employed Macedonian timber to build war machines and warships. We know Philip had twelve decked ships, eight open vessels, and thirty *hemioliai*<sup>59</sup>. These last were ships with a bank and a half of oars and they were fast and light, thus appropriate for piracy, while the other ships were meant to transport troops. As noted by Kleu, Polybius does not, however, specify whether these ships were the entire Macedonian fleet or only the part the king thought necessary to bring south at the time. Although the fleet which Philip sailed to the Peloponnese was not as large as the Ptolemaic, Roman, or Seleucid fleets, it was large enough to make the Macedonians the foremost sea power of the Greek mainland and Balkan northwest, and a concrete threat to the Illyrian sea power<sup>60</sup>.

Skerdilaidas' attack against Taurion's fleet in Leucas was only the first symptom of the mutation of the Illyrian-Macedonian political relationship.

After agreeing to a new truce with the Aitolians, requested by the envoys from Rhodes, Chios, Byzantion, and Ptolemy IV, Philip V moved quickly against his former partner. The king sailed his army south but arrived too late to capture the Illyrian galleys. Anchoring off Kenchreai, Philip V sent away his decked ships with orders to sail around Cape Malea toward Aigio and Patrai. Nevertheless, instead of pursuing the Illyrians immediately, he dragged the rest of his vessels across the Isthmus and landed at Lechaion. These events clearly mark not only the first hostilities between Macedonian and Illyrian kingdoms in the emerging conflict, but also the unconditional estrangement between the Illyrian forces under Skerdilaidas, now dangerous enemies of Macedonia, and the former Illyrian dynast Demetrios who remained at Philip's side.

<sup>56</sup> Plb. 5.101.5.

<sup>57</sup> Plb. 5.95.1-4.

<sup>58</sup> According to Plb. 4.29.9, Skerdilaidas was to receive a yearly subsidy of twenty talents to provide thirty galleys. However, since in Kephallenia he only sent fifteen because he was facing turmoil among his lords, probably he was paid less than twenty talents by Philip, despite the fortunate campaign and the Illyrian engagement in battle.

<sup>59</sup> Plb. 5.101.1-4.

<sup>60</sup> KLEU 2015, 38-41; Cf. WORTHINGTON 2023, 67-68.

Based on our sources, the Macedonian plan to expand against Illyria was born at the subsequent Nemean Games. During the gymnastic contest, a courier arrived from Macedonia bringing the news that Hannibal had defeated the Romans in a great battle. Polybius says that the only person Philip made aware of the letter was Demetrios of Pharos, whose relationship with the king had thus become rather exclusive. Demetrios seized the opportunity to advise Philip to take advantage of the disaster of the Roman army and end the war against the Aitolians. He persuaded the king towards the war in Illyria and from there cross over to campaign in Italy<sup>61</sup>. The Polybian speech thematically overlaps Trogus-Justin's first conversation between Demetrios and Philip we have mentioned before. The passage summarizes two events: when Demetrios arrived in 219, escaping the Romans, and when in 217, he persuaded Philip to make peace with the Aitolians and prepare for a possible fight with Rome. Specifically, Demetrios remarks on Philip's future conquest of Illyria: he conceded to Philip the claim to his *basileia*, because he said he would find it more agreeable seeing an ally rather than the Romans, his enemies, in possession of his realm<sup>62</sup>.

Although it is beyond the scope of the present study to engage with Philip V's aspiration to a universal dominion, or to Italy<sup>63</sup>, these two passages are valuable to assess the correlation between the Macedonian interest in Illyria and the relationship of the king and Demetrios. Although presenting the episode differently, both sources agree that Demetrios of Pharos inspired the Macedonian offensive against Illyria. He is thus identified as the one responsible for Philip V's turn toward the Balkan west in 217<sup>64</sup>.

The Illyrian kingdom was close to the Macedonian heartland, but the Balkan west was politically variable and patchy. Behind the Greek coastal cities of Apollonia and Oricum were the *koina* of the Chaones, with their rich city of Phoinike, and that of the Atintanes, which controlled the fertile plain of northern Epeiros. A little north of Apollonia there was the *koinon* of the Parthini. As shown by Ceka's work, during Teuta's, Demetrios of Pharos' and Pinnes' rules, the Atintanes people had been formally under their authority. Yet these *koina* were administratively independent trade partners of Roman and Italic businessmen and economically under the influence of the League of Epeiros, even after the end of the Molossian kingship<sup>65</sup>.

In particular, the Atintanes had three main powerful cities: Antigoneia<sup>66</sup>, Byllis, and Amantia<sup>67</sup>. Notably, Byllis during the last years of the third century, flourished, as the archaeological and numismatic evidence shows, and the Byllinian *koinon* gained

<sup>61</sup> Plb. 5.101.6-102.1. HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 387-388 considers Demetrios' speech to be false, believing the role of the *philos* is overly stressed by Polybius, who enriches the account with the narrative *topos* of the evil advisor.

<sup>62</sup> Just. 29.2.1-6.

<sup>63</sup> See, among many others, WALBANK 2002, 127-136; ECKSTEIN 2008; WORTHINGTON 2023, 69-71, and below n. 78.

<sup>64</sup> Notably, Plb. 5.105.1-2 identified the Illyrian dynast as the inspirer of the subsequent agreement of Naupaktos in Aitolia and as the leading promoter of peace. Agelaos of Naupaktos' famous speech (Plb. 5.104.1-11) overlaps with Demetrios' previous statement. It could have been delivered in response to Demetrios' speech or to Philip's speech. According to Trogus-Justin (29.2.1-6), Philip had also spoken similar words during the negotiations: D'AGOSTINI 2019, 126-132. The truthfulness of the speech has been a matter of academic debate for almost sixty years: see among others WALBANK 1940, 66-67; 1965, 7-18; 1972, 69; PÉDECH 1964, 264; MØRKHOLM 1967, 240-253; 1974, 127-132; MUSTI 1978, 16-18; GRUEN 1984, 324; CHAMPION 1997, 111-128; ECKSTEIN 2006, 78-117; 2008, 79-80; 217-220, 372-381; 2013, 131-143. See recently NICHOLSON 2023, 105-107 and WORTHINGTON 2023, 69-79.

<sup>65</sup> CEKA 1972, 119-181.

<sup>66</sup> Antigoneia, founded by the Macedonian dynasty, could have been either member of the *koina* of the Chaones or of the Atintanes.

<sup>67</sup> See the recent contribution CEKA 2009, 5-23.

autonomy and influence among the people of the Atintanes' region, which also included the *koinon* of the Amantes and that of the Antigoneians<sup>68</sup>. West of the Atintanes and Parthini, there was Dassaretia, an inland area with influential cities such as Antipatreia<sup>69</sup>, a Macedonian foundation that fell under Illyrian authority. Moreover, after the Macedonian conquest of Byzalora and Paionia from the Dardanians, the areas under Skerdilaidas lay between the western Macedonian region and the Antigoneid allies, *i.e.* the Epeirote *koinon* and the Akarnanian *koinon*. In a recent publication, Worthington states that "The key to understanding Philip at this time revolves not around any grand design to invade Italy, but around Illyria and, like his predecessors, protecting his realm"<sup>70</sup>.

As mentioned, the Macedonian relationship with the Illyrian leader Skerdilaidas deteriorated in 217 with the Illyrian attack on Cape Malea. Nevertheless, the actual beginning of the Illyrian-Macedonian conflict was Skerdilaidas' attack on Pissaeum, in the western Macedonian region of Pelagonia, and on the Macedonian cities bordering Dassaretia and the lake region of Lychnidos<sup>71</sup>. As noted by Walbank, few details of this campaign survived due to the fragmentary state of Polybius, but also to the limited interest of historians regarding the northern Balkans<sup>72</sup>. According to Polybius, Philip successfully secured the Macedonian border; he acquired the control and loyalty of Dassaretia and won the valleys of the rivers Apsus and Genusus<sup>73</sup>. By challenging Skerdilaidas' authority, Philip eventually managed to safeguard his *basileia* from the Illyrian raids. Moreover, he connected western Macedonia to his Epeirote territories: the Antigoneid gained direct routes and outlets on the Adriatic, Ionian, and Aegean seas. To consolidate his achievements and his Balkan *basileia*, the king spent the winter 217/6 outfitting his navy with Illyrian *lemboi* to transport missile troops for blitz attacks on land. Polybius (5.109.1-3) clearly says that Philip V thought that the Illyrian ships were the best suited for his plan and had a hundred galleys built. He aimed to complete the acquisition of Illyria, expanding the Macedonian hegemony over those territories between Dassaretia and Epeiros still under Illyrian rule.

In 216 the king sailed from Demetrias towards the Illyrian coast, in a first attempt to win the valley of the Aous River. However, he renounced his claim over those territories when he heard the news of Roman support coming for Skerdilaidas. The Roman support was actually only ten ships under the command of Marcus Valerius Laevinus, that had sailed from Lilybaion to defend the Illyrian coast because Skerdilaidas had implored help<sup>74</sup>. The king could have defeated them according to Polybius himself (although the historian might have underestimated the number of Roman troops involved)<sup>75</sup>. However, simply the name of Rome was enough to persuade

<sup>68</sup> The archaeological evidence from Byllis, the southern Illyrian capital of the Byllinian *koinon*, shows that in the third century the city was monumentalized with walls, theatre, and agora. See HAMMOND 1966, 239-253; CEKA 2009, 5-23; CEKA-MUČAJ 2012, 3-14; GILKES 2013, 130-134 (which considers the walls to be fourth-century).

<sup>69</sup> Plb. 5.108.2 also names the Dassaretian cities of Gertos and Chrysondyon, which are, however, more difficult to locate: WALBANK 1957-1967, I, 632.

<sup>70</sup> WORTHINGTON 2023, 71

<sup>71</sup> Plb. 5.108.1-3. On the area see HAMMOND 1966, 239-253: "This vital area was of the first importance to any ambitious power in the vicinity" (here: 249).

<sup>72</sup> WALBANK 1940, 68-69; HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 391-393.

<sup>73</sup> Plb. 5.108.8. Specifically, according to Polibius, he won the cities of Antipatreia, Gertos, Chrysondyon and Kreonion in Dassaretia, Bantia in the *koinon* of the Kaloeikines, Orgissos in the *koinon* of the Pisantines, and Enchelanoi, Kerax, Sation, and Boei near the lake Lychnidos.

<sup>74</sup> Plb. 5.110.8.

<sup>75</sup> WORTHINGTON 2023, 72.

the Macedonian king to abandon his plan<sup>76</sup>. Compelled to fall back to Kephallenia, the king waited for the outcome of the coeval battle of Cannae and then sought an alliance with the more attractive Mediterranean partner, i.e., Carthage<sup>77</sup>.

Philip's Balkan interests are at the core of the 215 Macedonian agreement with Hannibal, as transmitted by Polybius<sup>78</sup>. Although the treaty is also preserved by other sources, Polybius' version is usually considered the closest to the document since the historian likely saw it<sup>79</sup>. He might have found it in the Roman archives, since the Romans had captured the Macedonian ambassador Xenophanes on his way back to Philip from Carthage<sup>80</sup>. The document, after introducing the involved parties and identifying Hannibal and Philip as the two promoters, stated the mutual friendship between Macedonia and Carthage (7.9.2-9) and required Macedonia to support Carthage in the current war with Rome (7.9.10). In exchange Carthage, in the case of victory over Rome (which after Cannae seemed likely), committed to include Macedonia and Illyria in the peace agreement. The terms were the following (7.9.11-15)<sup>81</sup>:

1. The Romans were not allowed to make war upon Philip (ἐφ' ᾧ τε μὴ ἐξεῖναι αὐτοῖς ἄρασθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς μηδέποτε πόλεμον).
2. The Romans were not to have power over Korkyra, Apollonia, Epidamnos, Pharos, Dimale, the Parthini, nor the Atintanes, i.e. the *koina* of northern Epeiros and the Greek cities on the coast. Some of them were under Illyrian rule, but the

<sup>76</sup> See also BANDELLI 2001, 17-41.

<sup>77</sup> Plb. 5.109.1-5.110.11. The episode was exploited by the later Roman propaganda as evidence of Philip's interest in Italy. On this episode, see COPPOLA 1993, 164-168; KLEU 2015, 47-48; WORTHINGTON 2023, 71-73.

<sup>78</sup> On the treaty, see also CASSOLA 1962, 65; WALBANK 1957-1967, II, 42; WILL 1979-1982, II, 83-84; BARRÉ 1983; LONGARETTI 1989, 183-192; GOLAN 1995, 45; THORNTON 2002, 441-443; ECKSTEIN 2008, 83-85; INTRIERI 2011, 53-82. Hammond (HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 393-397) was sceptical about Philip's interest in Italy and Rome: he argues the 217-215 decisions were determined primarily by the "internal situation in Greece". Building on Hammond's scepticism, SEIBERT 1993, 165-166 rejects the existence of a Macedonian project in Italy in 217 or 215, as do BOFFO 1998, 81-106 and GIOVANNINI 1998, 745-772. Both scholars argue that Philip's agency was consistent with his lineage since he attempted to preserve the *basileia* he had inherited from his predecessors against the constant Hellenistic warfare and to secure access to his territory. Most recently, BRIZZI 2003, 63-78, although relying on Polybius' version of the treaty, accepts Justin's reference (29.4.1) to a Macedonian project of crossing to Italy: Philip V considered his forces superior to the Roman and Carthaginian, but after Cannae, he would have changed his mind and sought Hannibal's alliance. SCHERBERICH 2009, 153-154 does not reject the possibility of Philip's aspirations about Italy. However, he also highlights that Philip's actions in Illyria during the following years can be interpreted without such an assumption, and the treaty of Philip with Hannibal in the year 215 did not betray any ambition of the king in Italy. HATZOPOULOS 2014, 99-120 also stresses that there is no trace of Philip's Italian project or initiative in the treaty. Most importantly, on Philip and Italy cf. also WALBANK 1940, 65; 1965, 7-18; 1972, 69; 1984, 481; 2002, 127-136; GRUEN 1984, 324; 1998, 773-802; BRIZZI 2003, 63-78; ZECCHINI 2003a, 91-98; ECKSTEIN 2013, 131-143; WORTHINGTON 2023, 69-76.

<sup>79</sup> Plb. 7.9.1-17. Similarly, the author delivers the text of the embassy of Philip's son Demetrios likely preserved in the Roman or Macedonian archives. PÉDECH 1964, 382-383 considers it likely that Polybius consulted these documents in Rome, while ZECCHINI 2003b, 123-141 suggests that the historian might have seen the texts during his travels. Cf. WALBANK 1957-1967, II, 32. The treaty has been preserved by other sources including Livy, 23.33.8-12; Plu. *Arat.* 51.2; Dio 15.4.2 (Zon. 9.4); App. *Mak.* 1.2; Just. 29.4; Eutr. 3.12.2.

<sup>80</sup> Livy, 23.38.4; 23.39.4. On Livy's account and the acquisition of the treaty, see COPPOLA 1993, 176-195; BRIZZI 2003, 63-78.

<sup>81</sup> WALBANK 1957-1967, II, 46-56.

treaty stressed in negative terms the influence Rome had acquired there (μηδ' εἶναι Ῥωμαίους κυρίους Κερκυραίων μηδ' Ἀπολλωνιατῶν καὶ Ἐπιδαμνίων μηδὲ Φάρου μηδὲ Διμάλης καὶ Παρθίνων μηδ' Ἀτιντανίας).

3. The Romans were to return to Demetrios of Pharos either the friends of Demetrios detained in Rome, or all those areas formerly his but currently in the dominions of Rome (ἀποδώσουσι δὲ καὶ Δημητρίῳ τῷ Φαρίῳ τοὺς οἰκείους πάντα, οἳ εἰσιν ἐν τῷ κοινῷ τῶν Ῥωμαίων)<sup>82</sup>.

The treaty then concluded that Carthage would help Philip in case of war with Rome (7.9.16-17). The agreement in form and substance was unbalanced in favour of Hannibal since he was the author of Rome's defeat: the Carthaginian commander was in the prominent position and, as such, allowed the Antigonid king to control the east Balkans. The core of the agreement for the Macedonian party concerned specifically those areas between Dassaretia and Epeiros, identified as northern Epeiros, that had escaped the Macedonian hegemony. These were the wealthy cities of the Atintanes, the Parthini, and their fortress, Dimale, and the coastal Greek cities that controlled the trade routes from Macedonia to Akarnania and Epeiros, as well as the lucrative Adriatic and Ionian maritime trade. The king had been well-informed of the value of those lands by one of his councillors, Demetrios of Pharos, and perhaps he intended to entrust the latter with Illyria, as he did with Olympichos with Karia<sup>83</sup>. The last term of the agreement clearly stressed Demetrios' involvement in the making of the agreement and in the upcoming management of the Adriatic and Ionian: both interpretations of paragraph 7.9.15 point to a re-establishment and reinforcement of the authority of Demetrios, either through the restitution of his lands, or maybe the return of his courtiers. Yet, the latter rendition of τοὺς οἰκείους πάντα, οἳ εἰσιν ἐν τῷ κοινῷ τῶν Ῥωμαίων appears more likely because the imposition of Demetrios in Illyria as a local dynast under the Antigonids, in the place of Skerdilaidas friend of Rome, required support among the Illyrians, likely Demetrios' friends and allies, which had been abandoned to Rome by Skerdilaidas. The southern Adriatic and Ionian seas and northern Epeiros had been under Demetrios' rule for almost ten years until, in 219, the Romans had driven him out. Four years later, the dynast had arguably seen the chance to recover his authority and rule as a friend of Macedonia<sup>84</sup>.

Counting on his new agreement, in the summer 215 Philip seized Korkyra. Appian (*Mak.* 1.2) claims the reason of the attack to be the king's desire to avenge the previous capture of his ambassador by the Romans. However, the port was the ideal outpost from which to carry out an offensive in Illyria. In summer 214 Philip used it as a base to move against Apollonia and Oricum<sup>85</sup>, following the same strategy used by the Romans in their expedition against Teuta. The plan had been suggested to the Romans by Demetrios of Pharos, and likely also to Philip V<sup>86</sup>. Rather than an impulsive action, the

<sup>82</sup> The clause has been interpreted either way. According to WALBANK 1957-1967, II, 56; HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 394 and COPPOLA 1993, 176, these could be the friends or the allies of Demetrios captured during the siege of Pharos in 219.

<sup>83</sup> On Olympichos, CRAMPA 1969, 28-41, 47-52. See also D'AGOSTINI 2019, 22-29.

<sup>84</sup> Notably the Romans had already requested that Demetrios be sent to them in 217: Livy, 22.33.3. On Demetrios' support in the area see ECKSTEIN 2008, 58-73.

<sup>85</sup> Dio 15.4.2 through Zon. 9.4. Cf. Livy, 23.39.4. See COPPOLA 1993, 188-189; WORTHINGTON 2023, 74.

<sup>86</sup> Plb. 2.11.6. On the expedition, see Livy, 24.40.1-17, based on an annalist source: HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 395-396; ECKSTEIN 2008, 85-86.

capture of Korkyra seems to be a planned strategic action. Using the port, in 214, the king transported his army on 120 *lemboi* from Macedonia into Epeiros and attacked Apollonia<sup>87</sup>. Since the undertaking against the city proved slower than anticipated, Philip moved his army to Oricum by night and conquered the city. There he left a garrison and returned to the siege of Apollonia employing the same strategy he had used to conquer Phthiotic Thebes, which was afterwards renamed Philippopolis, from the Aitolians: he brought catapults and ballistae<sup>88</sup>. He likely received logistic support from Dassaretia and Epeiros.

The king was finally one step from completing his enterprise. Apollonia was going to fall, opening the Adriatic Sea to Macedonia, and Demetrios was behind this plan based on Illyrian-style warfare and strategy. Demetrios perhaps hoped to receive assistance from some forces inside the city still loyal to him. However, no citizen group surrendered the town. Instead, Apollonia's fierce resistance was a "game changer" since it tested the Antigonid offensive and left Philip's stretched between two cities and exposed.

Apollonia's opposition opened the chance for Roman intervention. Oricum secretly sent ambassadors to M. Valerius Laevinus and requested the intervention of Rome. The praetor, who oversaw the Roman fleet at Brundisium, guarding the neighbouring coast of Calabria, decided to land troops on Illyrian soil and move against Macedonia. The main reason might have been to protect its trade business and to prevent being caught between two fronts by Hannibal at Tarentum and Philip at Apollonia<sup>89</sup>. The Roman commander M. Valerius Laevinus marched against Oricum and quickly conquered it by surprise since the king had left only a small garrison there. Apollonia, while still opposing the Macedonian forces, requested Roman help. Laevinus dispatched part of his troops to enter Apollonia secretly and, by joining the local forces, attack the Macedonian camp. Additionally, Laevinus blocked the mouth of the river Aoos with his Roman warships and trapped the Macedonian fleet of light *lemboi*. The Macedonian king retreated to the ships but avoided direct maritime confrontation with Rome, as he had done in 216: Philip folded back and burnt his boats rather than take them against the Roman navy<sup>90</sup> and left Oricum, Apollonia and the Illyrian coast to the western forces<sup>91</sup>.

The king's diplomacy and actions between 217 and 215 suggest that Philip V was not inclined to confront the Roman power alone. Nevertheless, the king was interested in the Balkans, which had become the focus of his military efforts against Skerdilaidas in the past two years. Unable to expand in Illyria without causing a Roman intervention, Philip decided to abandon the naval enterprise and renounce the coast and the island. However, he did not renounce the Balkans. Two years later, Philip headed towards the central Illyrian strongholds, Lissos and Skodra, without Demetrios, who was already deceased at the time. The strategy was radically changed. Instead of relying on forays and blitz attacks from the sea, the Antigonid invaded the enemy's territory with a land army.

As shown by the numismatic evidence, differently from the cities of northern Epeiros, the Illyrian cities of Skodra and Lissos (the valley of the river Drin) had been

<sup>87</sup> Plu. *Arat.* 51.1.

<sup>88</sup> Livy, 24.40.15. On the strategy used to conquer Philippopolis: Plb. 5.99.7-10.

<sup>89</sup> See above n. 7.

<sup>90</sup> It should be attributed to this naval battle App. *Mak.* F 9: see D'AGOSTINI 2011, 99-121; 2015, 121-44.

<sup>91</sup> KLEU 2015, 48-50, 195-201. COPPOLA 1993, 187-193 argues that the reason for the retreat was the internal tension in Messene. See also WORTHINGTON 2023, 74-75.

more directly affected by the growth of the dynasty of the Ardiaei. They had broken free from the influence of the Greek cities of Dyrrachion and Apollonia. Lissos might have profited from the pivotal role played by the peace agreement between Rome and Teuta, likely acquiring a certain political autonomy, and consequently might have issued its own coins for the first time<sup>92</sup>. Moreover, by conquering the Ardiaei's heartland, the Skodra basin, Philip V could also take control of the local copper mines<sup>93</sup>. Philip moved against Lissos and its fortress Akrolissos, took the fort with a stratagem, and Lissos surrendered. Philip V achieved the submission of all the districts around since, after the fall of Lissos, the Illyrians of the heartland voluntarily surrendered their cities to his protection. The Macedonian king had finally defeated Skerdilaidas' forces. The significant part of what once had been the territory of the Ardiaei was now Antigonid since he had conquered the greater part of Illyria up to the Skodra basin or the Ostrog pass. He consequently reorganized the area, started building a new fleet, and had the city issue coins with Macedonian symbols, such as the goat and the thunderbolt<sup>94</sup>.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Philip's relationship with the Illyrians was initially prompted by his *philos*, Taurion, who fostered cooperation between Macedonia and the forces of the Ardiaei. In so doing, he also promoted his prestige in Philip's entourage since he controlled the vital port of Korinthos. However, Demetrios of Pharos' arrival at the Antigonid court completely changed the political scene. The former Illyrian dynast promoted a change of strategy and the creation of a Macedonian fleet. Initially, Skerdilaidas' forces collaborated with Demetrios and Philip V to develop a successful strategy against the Aitolians. Building on Illyrian warfare, Illyrian corps and Macedonian elite corps were successfully employed together as shock forces in Aitolia and the Peloponnese. However, the Macedonian fleet soon became a dangerous competitor for the Illyrian one in the Ionian and Adriatic seas. The creation of an Antigonid naval force turned the partnership into rivalry: after 217, the Illyrians withdrew their support from Philip V and began to operate to weaken his fleet and outposts. At the peace negotiations of Naupaktos, Demetrios' real intention became clear: rather than cooperating with Skerdilaidas, he planned on replacing him by relying on Philip's help.

Demetrios did not live long enough to see the conquest of the Ardiaei's heartland and himself restored to his lands, to realize that project he had worked so hard to plan, because he died during a military operation in the Peloponnese against Messene around 214/3<sup>95</sup>. Nevertheless, Philip kept the project alive. Starting from 219, the king had built his Balkan enterprise under the input and advice of Demetrios. His enterprise had been a 360° effort. Logistically, Philip had reorganized his army and engaged in a naval project to match the challenge of the Illyrian territory. Diplomatically, he sought a partner to support this project and found it in Carthage. Militarily, he repeatedly

<sup>92</sup> CEKA 1972, 119-181.

<sup>93</sup> Pib. 8.13.1-14. 11; HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 398-399.

<sup>94</sup> CEKA 1972, 119-181; HAMMOND-WALBANK 1988, 399; ECKSTEIN 2008, 87: "The evidence from a coin hoard found at modern Scele, 30 miles northeast of Lissos, shows that the entire Scodra region –not just Lissos itself– came under Macedonian control; many polities were now striking coinage with Macedonian royal emblems". See also KLEU 2017, 112-119.

<sup>95</sup> See recently D'AGOSTINI 2021, 59-74 and NICHOLSON 2023, 81-93.



campaigned in Illyria between 217 and 211 until he brought the Balkan west under Antigonid power.

According to the Carthaginian treaty, this extensive and daring plan was meant to make Demetrios the ruler of Illyria under the Antigonid, to re-establish him to his leadership position in the Illyrian *basileia* at the expense of his rival Skerdilaidas. Unfortunately for Philip V, Demetrios' death compromised the whole project because the king lacked a manager and leader of the area. Philip could not exploit the victory, which, instead, brought unwanted Roman attention to Macedonia.

Demetrios was the author of Philip's Illyrian policy, making the dynast, on the one hand, if we listen to Polybius, the worst of the advisors, but, on the other hand, the architect of the Macedonian Balkan conquest.

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