

DEINOKRATES: A DISAPPOINTED GREEK CLIENT

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In 184 B.C. Deinokrates of Messene came to Rome to enlist the support of T. Quinctius Flaminius in his attempts to break Messene away from the Achaean League.¹ According to Polybios, Deinokrates had high hopes for accomplishing what he wanted for two reasons: the friendship that existed between him and Flaminius, and the difference of opinion between Flaminius and Philopoemen, the Achaean *strategos* (23.5).² Deinokrates trusted the strength of this friendship to such an extent, we are told, that he did not seek help from anybody else in Rome. His Roman friend Flaminius, on the other hand, was more cautious, and made only vague promises to "do what he could," even going so far as to admonish Deinokrates for his rather wild life style during his stay in Rome (23.5.10-12).³

At this time the Romans were concerned both with affairs in mainland Greece and with the war between Prusias of Bithynia and Eumenes of Pergamon. Consequently, Q. Marcius Philippus was appointed ambassador to Greece for 183 B.C. (23.4.16),⁴ and Flaminius was sent to Bithynia to settle matters with Prusias (23.5.1).⁵ En route to Bithynia Flaminius stopped in Greece, accompanied by Deinokrates. They disembarked at Naupaktos, and Flaminius asked for a meeting of the Achaean League (23.5.13-16). Philopoemen and the officials of the League, the *damiourgoi*, answered coldly that no meeting could be held unless the Achaeans

¹ For Deinokrates, see *RE* 4 (1901) 2392 (W. Judeich).—In transliterating Greek names I have attempted to use a spelling that is as close to the original as possible and still within the practices of English.

² References to Polybios follow the Teubner edition by Th. Büttner-Wobst, 1-5, 2 ed. (Stuttgart 1962-1963).

³ Cf. Plutarch, *Titus Flaminius*, 17.3.

⁴ References are to Polybios, unless indicated otherwise. See also Livy 39.48.5-6 and T. R. S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* 1 (Cleveland, Ohio 1968) 379-380.

⁵ Cf. Livy 39.51.1.

were informed in advance of the matter to be discussed.⁶ Polybios goes on to say that Flaminius "did not dare to reply to this," and so nothing was accomplished concerning Messene (23.5.17-18). Flaminius continued to Bithynia, and Deinokrates was left to handle the situation on his own. This, in short, is Polybios' version of the events in 184/183 B.C. The interest in the story does not lie so much in the shady character of Deinokrates, whom Polybios portrays as most reckless and irresponsible (23.5.4-8), as in the light it sheds on Flaminius and his relations with the Greeks.

Ever since the "liberation" of Greece in 196 B.C. Flaminius had been hailed as the benefactor and protector of the Greeks. The literary sources, mainly Polybios, Livy, and Plutarch, tell us that he was constantly called upon to settle disputes or to render help in general to Greek cities or individuals.⁷ In gratitude for these good deeds, the Greeks honored Flaminius in different ways, in particular by referring to him as their savior, σωτήρ, in dedicatory inscriptions, and by portraying him on coins which bear the legend T. Quincti.⁸

In view of Flaminius' reputation in Greece it is easy to see why Deinokrates turned to him for help and support. However, his hopes were shattered once and for all when his Roman friend failed in his attempt to contact the Achaean League. It has been pointed out by Errington and others that Flaminius had no right to intervene in Greek affairs at this time, since Philippos was the officially appointed ambassador.⁹ Consequently, the Achaeans could afford to ignore his request, especially since they must have realized what Flaminius, with Deinokrates in tow, wanted to bring up at the meeting.

⁶ R. M. Errington, *Philopoemen* (Oxford 1969) 184.

⁷ For an account of Flaminius' activity in Greece, see *RE* 24¹ (1963) 1062-1084 (H. Gundel).

⁸ The different ways in which Flaminius was honored are listed and discussed by Gundel (*supra* n. 7) 1075-1076, F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybios* 2 (Oxford 1967) 613-614, and Robert Werner, "Imperialismus und römische Ostpolitik im 2. Jh. v. Chr.," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 1¹ (Berlin-New York 1972) 554 n. 175.

⁹ *Loc. cit.* (*supra* n. 6). See also G. Colin, *Rome et la Grèce de 200 à 146 av. J.-C.* (Paris 1905) 228; A. Aymard, *Les assemblées de la confédération achaienne* (Bordeaux 1938) 348-349, and J. A. O. Larsen, *Greek Federal States* (Oxford 1968) 454.

In spite of Flamininus' lack of official authority in Greece, there was another factor which would have justified his interference in the affairs between Messene and the Achaean League. This was his friendship with Deinokrates, in which Flamininus saw himself as the Roman protector or *patronus* whose duty it was to help out a friend or *cliens* at all times.¹⁰ The friendship between Deinokrates and Flamininus had been initiated during the war with Nabis in 195 B.C., according to Polybios (23.5.2). It is not clear what Deinokrates' status then was, but one would assume that he had a position of some power, if he in fact became a friend of Flamininus. A few years later, in 191 B.C., Messene was besieged by the Achaean League for its refusal to join. The Messenians sent ambassadors to Flamininus saying that they were ready to surrender their city to the Romans but not to the Achaeans (Livy 36.31.5). Flamininus settled the situation by urging the Achaeans to raise the siege, and he instructed the Messenians to restore their exiles and to join the Achaean League. In order to explain this response Errington suggests that Deinokrates had shifted in position during this time, between 195 and 191 B.C., and that he was one of the exiles to be restored in 191 B.C.¹¹ Presumably he had been exiled for his pro-Roman attitudes in 192 B.C. when Messene sided with Antiochos against Rome.

Regardless of Deinokrates' status in 191 B.C. it seems that Flamininus' attitude towards Messene and the Achaeans was rather inconsistent since in 183 B.C. he was willing to undo the bonds which he had earlier helped to initiate. Even if his strained relations with Philopoemen might have had some impact, the question of his sincerity in promising help to Deinokrates still comes up. True, he agreed to stop in Greece on his way to Bithynia, and he approached the Achaean League on behalf of his Greek friend without the backing or sanction of the Roman senate. Polybios records a similar instance in which Flamininus was unsuccessful in his attempts to help another Greek friend. This time it was a Boeotian, Zeuxippos, who had been of great service to Flamininus during the wars with Antiochos and Philip (22.4.4). He had been

¹⁰ For the concept of *clientela*, see E. Badian, *Foreign Clientelae* (Oxford 1958) esp. ch. 7 "The Noble and his Foreign Clients."

¹¹ *Op. cit.* (supra n. 6) 124-127.

exiled from Boeotia for various internal political reasons, and Flamininus intervened on his behalf in 189/188 B.C. Specifically, he persuaded the senate to write a letter to the Boeotians with a request to recall Zeuxippos and other exiles.¹² The Boeotians in power were reluctant, and after arranging it so that Zeuxippos was accused of several crimes they felt entitled to ignore the senate's request. The Romans then urged the Aetolians and the Achaeans to intervene, but to no avail (22.4.6-17). Polybios says nothing about Zeuxippos' reactions to the fruitless efforts of his Roman friend, but it should be safe to assume that the notion of disappointment was there.

A generous interpretation of both these events leads to the conclusion that Flamininus was genuinely concerned with fulfilling his obligations of friendship, but that he was hampered by unfortunate circumstances. However, I would suggest that Flamininus' actions were rather those of a pragmatic or cynical man, intent primarily on his own interests.¹³ Since the request of a friend could not be turned down, especially not by the man who was the hero among the Greeks, Flamininus accommodated his friends, but only to the extent that it suited his own plans. He made one attempt to help them out, but he was not willing to go any further and risk his own career. Perhaps this attitude is what Polybios had in mind when he refers to Flamininus as ἀρχίβουρος, best translated as "shrewd" or "clever" (18.12.2-4).¹⁴ Plutarch is more direct in his description of how Flamininus was constantly seeking fame: "But since he was covetous of honor and fame, he desired that his noblest and greatest achievements should be the result of his own efforts, and he took more pleasure in those who wanted to receive kindness

¹² Cf. Livy 33.27.5-29.12. See also Errington (supra n. 6) 153-154 and Jürgen Deininger, *Der politische Widerstand gegen Rom in Griechenland* (Berlin-New York 1971) 131.

¹³ For an evaluation of Flamininus' character, see Gundel in *RE* (supra n. 7) 1094-1100 and E. Badian, "Titus Quinctius Flamininus, Philhellenism and Realpolitik," *Lectures in memory of Louise Taft Semple*, 2d ser., 1968-1970 (University of Oklahoma Press 1973). I see the incident with Deinokrates as one more factor that supports Badian's rather negative view of Flamininus.

¹⁴ For Polybios' use of this word, see A. Mauersberger, *Polybios-Lexikon* 1¹ (Berlin 1956) 8. Its application to Flamininus is analyzed by Badian (supra n. 13) 292, 317-318.

than in those who were able to bestow it, considering that the former were his rivals, so to speak, in the struggle for fame."¹⁵

On the whole, Flaminius seems to have been successful in maintaining his image among the Greeks as their savior and protector and at the same time satisfying his desire for personal glory. However, in the few cases where he suffered any kind of setback there is a great deal of difference in the way in which he and his Greek friends reacted. We have already seen how Deinokrates, and probably also Zeuxippos, showed disappointment when Flaminius did not succeed in helping them. On the other hand, when the Greeks for one reason or another did not act as Flaminius had expected, he was not merely disappointed, but burst out in rage, accusing them of treachery and lack of gratitude toward him and toward Romans in general. This happened when the city of Demetrias seemed to lean towards Antiochos in 192 B.C. and Flaminius asked the gods to witness the ungrateful and treacherous spirit of the city council, in Livy's words: "*Quinctius quidem adeo exarsit ira, ut manus ad caelum tendens deos testes ingrati ac perfidi animi Magnetum invocaret.*"¹⁶ On another occasion, the Boeotians pleaded with Flaminius to help them restore some of their countrymen from Philip of Macedonia (18.43.1-4).¹⁷ Their request was granted, but Flaminius did not receive the gratitude he had expected, since the Boeotians chose to thank Philip instead for having released their men. This time Flaminius kept his temper, but he also chose to look the other way when the pro-Roman party (including Zeuxippos) decided to get rid of the pro-Macedonian spokesman in Boeotia, Brachylles.

In dealing with the Greeks Flaminius acted as the liberator and protector, or as *patronus* in Roman terms, but he also represented the Romans as a whole. Except for the constant disputes between the Aetolians and Rome, it seems that the Romans were successful in dealing with the Greeks. For the most part, their relations consisted of an exchange of Roman favors, matched by Greek loyalty and gratitude. However, the nuances of this kind of friendship became evident if the balance in the exchange was

¹⁵ *Titus Flaminius* 1.2, transl. B. Perrin (Loeb Classical Library 10).

¹⁶ 35.31.13. See also Badian (supra n. 10) 78-79.

¹⁷ 23.5.18. Cf. 21.1.2-4 (Spartan embassy in Rome).

disturbed in any way. When Roman favors (*beneficia*) failed for one reason or another, the Greeks, including Deinokrates, showed disappointment only.¹⁸ On the other hand, the Romans were quick to accuse the Greeks of disloyalty or lack of gratitude if they did not act completely according to Roman expectations. Thus the difference in reactions—Greek “disappointment” as opposed to Roman accusations of “lack of gratitude”—adds to the picture of the implied conditions of friendship between the Romans and the Greeks. The Romans regarded themselves as patrons, and had as such rights and expectations which the Greek friends and clients did not always recognize. Thus, in the case of Deinokrates and Zeuxippos, Flamininus intervened to the extent that he saw fit, but once the obligation of doing a favor had been fulfilled, he thought little of abandoning his friends. With these instances in mind, we can see how the picture of Flamininus as the altruistic philhellene should be modified to contain also the element of selfish concern with his own prestige as politician and *patronus*.¹⁹

¹⁸ Expressed by Polybios by terms such as ἀχαριστία (Mauersberger [supra n. 14] 307-308). I discussed the Roman concept of “lack of gratitude” in patron-client relationships in a paper delivered at the Seventy-First Meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South in Cleveland, Ohio, April 1975.

¹⁹ I wish to thank Professor David L. Thompson (University of Georgia) for reading the manuscript and for offering many helpful suggestions. The late Professor Krister Hanell (University of Lund, Sweden) first introduced me to the study of Polybios and the problem of *clientela*.