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DID PTOLEMY I GET HIS SURNAME FROM THE RHODIANS IN 304?

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## DID PTOLEMY I GET HIS SURNAME FROM THE RHODIANS IN 304?

According to Pausanias, the Athenians had statues of the Ptolemaic kings before the entrance to the Odeum. "They are all called Ptolemy," he wrote, "but each has his own epithet, for they call one Philometor and another Philadelphos, while the son of Lagos is called Soter, a name given to him by the Rhodians."<sup>1</sup> Professor Christian Habicht and other scholars have presumed from this statement that Ptolemy Soter got his surname from the Rhodians in 304,<sup>2</sup> since that was the year they declared him a god and granted him a sacred precinct.<sup>3</sup> This article will submit that the presumption of modern scholars is unwarranted.

### Pausanias as an Authority on Ptolemaic Matters

Let us first examine the authority of Pausanias because modern historians have accepted him at his word.<sup>4</sup> Pausanias wrote his comment some four hundred years after the death of Ptolemy I. Although Pausanias did not fabricate the claim, he was only as accurate as his source or sources of material, and, as we shall presently learn, Pausanias could sometimes give false information about events before his own lifetime.<sup>5</sup> To test his accuracy in such matters, we shall now examine six statements made by Pausanias about the Ptolemies.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Paus. I.8.6: ὀνόματα μὲν δὴ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ Πτολεμαῖοι εἴσιν, ἄλλη δὲ ἐπίκλησις ἄλλη. καὶ γὰρ Φιλομήτορα καλοῦσι καὶ Φιλάδελφον ἕτερον, τὸν δὲ τοῦ Λάγου Σωτῆρα παραδόντων Ῥοδίων τὸ ὄνομα. We do not know when these statues were raised. In Ptolemaic Egypt, the locution Ptolemaios Soter was only introduced about the middle of Ptolemy II's tenure (infra n.35) whereas the epiklesis Philadelphos was attached to Ptolemy II's name between 170 and 165, so that we need not presume that each statue was raised during the lifetime of a particular monarch.

<sup>2</sup> C.Habicht, *Gottmenschen und griechische Städte*, Munich 1956, <sup>2</sup>1970,109. The presumption was already current by the eighteenth century: J.F.Vaillant, *Historia Ptolemaeorum Aegypti Regum*, Amsterdam 1701, 1 & 17, and J.Lemprière, *Bibliotheca Classica*, London 1788, s.v. Ptolemaeus 1st. Classicists of the twentieth century, who also make the presumption but cite Habicht as their secondary source, include H.Hauben, 'Rhodes, Alexander and the Diodochi from 333/332 to 304 B.C.' *Historia* 26,1977,339, E.Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique I<sup>2</sup>*, Nancy 1979,201, R.M.Berthold, 'Rhodes in the Hellenistic Age', *Ithaca* 1984,78, and F.W.Walbank, 'Monarchies and Monarchic Ideas' *CAH VII.1<sup>2</sup>*,1984,92.

<sup>3</sup> Diod.Sic. XX.100.3 & 4.

<sup>4</sup> supra n.2.

<sup>5</sup> Habicht gives an assessment of Pausanias as a historian in *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece*, Berkeley 1985,95-116. Habicht submits (*ibidem*) that Pausanias "contains a good deal of solid historical information ..., but whereas Pausanias's descriptions have been proven time and again to be accurate and trustworthy, there are quite a number of errors and other shortcomings in his historical narrative." Habicht adds (*ibidem* 98) that he has the impression that, except for some long and elaborate digressions, "Pausanias does not copy any historian's work, but usually writes history from memory." Professor Christian Habicht never explains why he believes Paus. I.8.6 for a surname at Rhodes when he has such a low opinion of Pausanias for historical narrative.

<sup>6</sup> That the examples are taken from Book I does not imply that Pausanias was more accurate historically in subsequent books.

Pausanias included the tale which ranked Ptolemy I foremost amongst those who had saved Alexander from the Oxydrakai,<sup>7</sup> but Ptolemy declared in his own narrative that he was absent from the rescue, wrote Arrian, adding that it actually took place at the city of the Mallai.<sup>8</sup> Quintus Curtius, who also saw Ptolemy's text, likewise declared that Ptolemy placed himself elsewhere during the famous rescue,<sup>9</sup> so that we can have little doubt about the inaccuracy of the source used by Pausanias, especially if we consider that Ptolemy had no motive to denigrate his own achievements. Next, Pausanias implied that only one winter passed between the battle of Gaza in 312 and the battle of Salamis in 306,<sup>10</sup> but we learn from a better and earlier source, the Marmor Parium, that six winters passed between the conflicts pitting Ptolemy I against Demetrios Poliorketes.<sup>11</sup> Pausanias also remarked that before Ptolemy I died, he relinquished the throne of Egypt to Ptolemy II, the issue of Berenike and the old king,<sup>12</sup> but as we have already seen from an earlier study,<sup>13</sup> the documents from the reigns of Ptolemies I and II refute this version of the facts. The scribes kept dating with the name and years of Ptolemy I until the old king's death in 282 when Ptolemy II entered into his first regnal year and moved against his enemies at court: Argaios, Demetrios of Phaleron and other partisans of the eldest son. Only during the course of this first regnal year did Ptolemy II equate it to his fourth year and propagate the myth of his father's abdication. In the following passage, Pausanias wrote that Ptolemy II Philadelphos brought down the corpse of Alexander from Memphis,<sup>14</sup> but Diodoros, Strabo and Quintus Curtius left a more credible version, stating that the cadaver was moved by Ptolemy I who paid it every honour at his new capital of Alexandria.<sup>15</sup> Since P.Eleph. 2 and P.Hib. I.84A have long suggested the functioning of the cult of Alexander at the capital in Ptolemy I's reign,<sup>16</sup> and since Ptolemy I had possession of Alexander's corpse, presumably the centre of the cult, we can surely conclude that he shipped the body to Alexandria before his death in 282. Pausanias said too that Ptolemy II Philadelphos was one of the eponymoi of Athens,<sup>17</sup> but the earliest mention of the tribe Ptolemas occurred about 224 when Eurykleides and

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<sup>7</sup> Paus. I.6.2. Possibly neither Pausanias nor his readers took the claim very seriously since he ascribed it to tradition (λέγουσιν). Pausanias was much less circumspect when he reported other details of Ptolemaic history.

<sup>8</sup> Arr.Anab. VI.11.3.

<sup>9</sup> Q.Curt. IX.5.21.

<sup>10</sup> Paus. I.6.6.

<sup>11</sup> Marmor Parium, FGrHist IIB, 239B.16 & 21; see also Diod.Sic. XIX.82.1-84.8 & XIX.47.1-3. R.M.Errington compares the chronology of the Parian with that of Diodoros in 'Diodoros Siculus and the Chronology of the Early Diadochi, 320-311 B.C.', *Hermes* 105,1977,478-504.

<sup>12</sup> Paus. I.6.8. The tradition originated at the Ptolemaic court in 282 (infra n.13).

<sup>13</sup> R.A.Hazard, 'The Regnal Years of Ptolemy II Philadelphos' *Phoenix* 41,1987,150 & 151.

<sup>14</sup> Paus. I.7.1.

<sup>15</sup> Diod.Sic. XVIII.28.3 & 4; Strab. XVII.1.8; Q.Curt. X.10.20.

<sup>16</sup> The papyri, which name Menelaus, Ptolemy I's brother, as the priest of Alexander, were written about 283; P.Hib. I.84A indicates that Menelaus was in his fifth year of office.

<sup>17</sup> Paus. I.5.5, 6.8 & especially 8.6.

Mikion directed the affairs of the city.<sup>18</sup> The Athenians then named their tribe after Ptolemy III Euergetes I (246-222 B.C.), styled a deme after his cousin and wife, Berenike II, and established the Ptolemaieia at the city.<sup>19</sup> Finally, Pausanias remarked that Ptolemy IX Soter II (116-80 B.C.) got his surname Philometor "in sarcastic mockery, for we know of none of the kings who was so hated by his mother,"<sup>20</sup> but Ptolemy IX assumed the surname Philometor in 116 in order to present an image of dynastic solidarity to the people.<sup>21</sup> His marriage to Selene - his mother's choice - and the royal tour to Elephantine in 115 were aspects of the same policy. Only after the feud between mother and son became public about 108 could the Alexandrians use the surname Philometor in a sarcastic sense, so that the comment in Pausanias does not accurately depict the origin of the epithet for Ptolemy IX.

These six errors in Book I do not inspire one's confidence in Pausanias as an authority on Ptolemaic matters. If Pausanias could report the abdication of Ptolemy I and his rescue of Alexander (non-historical events), compress the period between the battles of Gaza and Salamis, post-date the shipping of Alexander's body to the capital, ante-date the establishment of the tribe Ptolemais at Athens, and misrepresent the origin of Ptolemy IX's cognomen, why should we accept Pausanias' word about the introduction of the surname Soter? Indeed, we have only looked at six errors from Pausanias - Habicht has even found more -<sup>22</sup> but these errors are enough to suggest that we should not accept Pausanias as an infallible source on Ptolemaic history.

#### The Silence of Diodoros

Diodoros did not mention the surname amongst Rhodian honours to Ptolemy I in the detailed narrative for 305/4;<sup>23</sup> Diodoros took an interest in public honours and described Alexander's tributes to Hephastion, Ptolemy's tributes to Alexander and Athens' tributes to Antigonos and Demetrios.<sup>24</sup> Ptolemy's surname would have interested Diodoros, just as it interested his contemporary, Timagenes of Alexandria, and other authors over the next six centuries: Josephos, Arrian, Pausanias and Stephanos of Byzantion.<sup>25</sup> Since Diodoros

<sup>18</sup> For the date of the tribe, the reader can see W.K.Pritchett, *The Five Attic Tribes after Kleisthenes*, Baltimore 1943, 13-23, B.D.Meritt, 'Philinos and Menekrates', *Hesperia* 38, 1969, 441 and C.Habicht (infra n.19) 107-112. The chronology of Athens is secure for the period beginning in 229/8 suggests M.J.Osborne, 'The Chronology of Athens in the Mid-Third Century,' *ZPE* 78, 1989, 209. Call.Ep. XII referred to a certain Timarchos of the Ptolemais tribe, but the reference is almost certainly to the Ptolemais tribe of Alexandria where Kallimachos worked.

<sup>19</sup> C.Habicht, *Studien zur Geschichte Athens in hellenistischer Zeit*, Göttingen 1982, 105-112.

<sup>20</sup> Paus. I.9.1: τὴν δὲ ἐπὶ κλητὴν ἔσχεν ἐπὶ χλευασμῶ. οὐ γὰρ τινα τῶν βασιλέων μισηθέντα ἴμεν ἐκ τοσόνδε ὑπὸ μητρόσ ....

<sup>21</sup> P.dem.Adler 3 and P.dem.Cair. 30602 (116/5 B.C.).

<sup>22</sup> C.Habicht (supra n.5) 98-101. His examples are mostly non-Ptolemaic, although he does include the period between the battles of Gaza and Salamis.

<sup>23</sup> Diod.Sic. XX.100.3 & 4.

<sup>24</sup> Diod.Sic. XVII.114.1-115.6; XVIII.28.3 & 4; XX.46.1-3.

<sup>25</sup> Supra n.1.; Joseph. AJ XII.1, Stephanos s.v. Ὀξυδράκατ.

depicted the king in flattering terms and mentioned his other glories,<sup>26</sup> we have no reason to believe that Diodoros maliciously omitted the surname if it had been in those histories read by him, so that his silence likely reflects the silence of the sources. Possibly one of those sources was Zeno of Rhodes, a local historian of the late third century B.C., whom Diodoros cited earlier in his fifth book for the mythical history of Rhodes. The employment of a Rhodian account of the siege would explain his sympathetic treatment of the city - Demetrios is clearly the aggressor - and his use of Rhodian words and phrases.<sup>27</sup> Zeno, if drawing upon local records, had no cause to suppress an honour freely granted by his own countrymen and presumably still observed by them at his time of composition. Possibly another source was Hieronymos of Kardia, author, diplomat and associate of the Antigonids. Hieronymos was a fair and sober historian of the late fourth century, concludes Jane Hornblower in her lengthy study of the subject.<sup>28</sup> Hieronymos would have recorded a surname if Ptolemy had got one from the Rhodians, because surnames were rare in the late fourth century and were matters of contemporary interest.<sup>29</sup> From the silence of Diodoros, therefore, we may infer that neither he nor his sources associated the surname with the Rhodian honours of 304.

#### The Silence of Rhodian Documents

Priestly inscriptions from the island of Rhodes did not employ the epiklesis, if they referred to Ptolemy I during his own lifetime and after his death into the first century B.C. After the siege of Rhodes in 305/4, Ptolemy exported twenty prometopidia to the temple of Athena Lindia, and the priests acknowledged his gift in the temple records. "King Ptolemy sacrificed to Athena Lindia while Athanagoras was priest of Athena."<sup>30</sup> If Ptolemy had got his surname from the Rhodians, as Pausanias declared, one would expect them to recognize the surname in a priestly text, but the Rhodians did not do so in this inscription, just as they omitted the surname in another stele raised in the late third century B.C. This latter inscription, a column of priests and priestly offices, mentioned one Aineisagoras, son of Hagepolis, as <the priest> of Ptolemy on lines 15 and 16.<sup>31</sup> The word Πτολεμαίου

<sup>26</sup> Diod.Sic. XVIII.14.1, 28.5 & 6; 33.3. J.Hornblower, Hieronymus of Cardia, Oxford 1981,184, n.12, suggests that Diodoros may have used Kleitarchos or some other source highly partial to Ptolemy I.

<sup>27</sup> J.Hornblower (supra n.26) 56-59. She also thought that Zeno might have read the account by Hieronymos (p.59).

<sup>28</sup> J.Hornblower (supra n.26) passim. She dwells on Diodoros' debt to Hieronymos between pp.18-75.

<sup>29</sup> According to Diod.Sic. XX.46.2 and Plut.Dem. X.3, the Athenians recognized Demetrios and Antigonos as the Theoi Soteres after the liberation of the city in 307. Both authors possibly took their material from Hieronymos of Kardia, a contemporary of the event (supra n.28). Thus, the silence of Diodoros about a Rhodian surname in 304 is significant.

<sup>30</sup> I.Lindos 2 = FGrHist IIIB, 532C, lines 111-113: βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος ἔθυσε Ἀθά[ν]αι Λινδίαι ἐπ' ἱερέως Ἀθ[α]νᾶ τοῦ Ἀθαναγόρα, κ.τ.λ. See A.Chaniotis, *Historie und Historiker in den griechischen Inschriften*, Wiesbaden 1988,52-57.

<sup>31</sup> M.Segré, 'Il culto rodio di Alessandro e dei Tolomei' BSRAA 34,1941,29 & 30.

occupied a single line with space on either side, so that we can be sure that *Κωτήρος* was never part of the text, even though it referred to the priesthood of Ptolemy I.<sup>32</sup> Nor did Timachidas, son of Hagesitimos, include the epiklesis in the Temple Chronicle at Lindos (99 B.C.),<sup>33</sup> although he had probably heard of the surname since he himself wrote literary commentaries, including a book on rare words.<sup>34</sup> He referred to Ptolemy I some four times, twice as King Ptolemy and twice as Ptolemy. Because Timachidas used surnames elsewhere in his chronicle - he spoke of Athena Lindia and Ptolemy Philadelphos - his avoidance of a surname for Ptolemy I likely reflects Rhodian usage in the early first century B.C. The Rhodians, one now suspects, had never recognized a surname in 304 and had never adopted one over the next two hundred years.

If the Rhodian references to Ptolemy I had come from the works of poets, historians or philosophers, the form of the reference - Ptolemy or King Ptolemy - might not have any bearing on whether the monarch received his surname in 304, because these writers might have dropped a cognomen in the interests of brevity, metre or style. But all our references come from priestly inscriptions, the sorts of documents most likely to include an epiklesis if the Rhodians had used one after the siege, especially since one of the documents referred to the priest of Ptolemy I. We have thus examined the most germane class of evidence.

This epigraphical evidence, along with the silence of Diodoros, allows us to question the comment in Pausanias. But Pausanias, as we have already seen, is a dubious source on Ptolemaic matters, so that we have good grounds to conclude that Ptolemy I may not have got an epiklesis attached to his name in 304. The presumption that he did so is unwarranted.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> M.Segré (supra n.31) 35 & 36 and P.M.Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria II*, Oxford 1972, 279, n.240. No scholar has ever objected to their identification of the priesthood with that of Ptolemy I.

<sup>33</sup> Timachidas, *FGrHist III B.532* = *I.Lindos 2* = *SIG II.725*.

<sup>34</sup> *Ath. passim*.

<sup>35</sup> Except for Paus. I.8.6, we have no evidence that the locution *Ptolemaios Soter* was introduced during the lifetime of Ptolemy I. Professor Christian Habicht (supra n.2) 114 & 115 speculates that the Milesians recognized Ptolemy I as *τὸν θεὸν καὶ κωτήρα Πτολεμαῖον* as early as 314/3 or 294-288, but R.S.Bagnall, *Administration of the Ptolemaic Possessions outside Egypt*, Leyden, 1976, 173, n.46, dismissed the speculation as totally unwarranted. Habicht's speculation that the Islanders recognized Ptolemy I as *ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ κωτήρ Πτολεμαῖος* from 287/6 is equally dubious. Both speculations depend on texts written under Ptolemy II - *I.Milet I.3,139* (circa 262) and *SIG I.390* (date uncertain) respectively - and these inscriptions only tell us how Ptolemy I was described during his son's reign. The earliest dated document with the locution is *Svoronos 821*, a silver tetradrachm bearing the obverse portrait of Ptolemy I, the reverse legend *ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ*, and the 23rd regnal year of Ptolemy II or 263/2. The next dated documents are also silver tetradrachms struck to commemorate Ptolemy Soter. Issued from the cities of Tyre, Sidon, Ptolemais and Joppa, these commemorative coins bear the locution in and after the 25th regnal year or 261/0 (*Svor.* 650, 722-725, 765 & 795 respectively). The locution first appears in the papyri just after the revolt of Ptolemy the son in 259 when Ptolemy II started describing himself as the son of Ptolemy Soter (*τοῦ Πτολεμαίου Κωτήρος*) in the protocol of legal documents (*P.Rev. col.I, line 1*).