THE POLICY OF AUGUSTUS IN GREECE

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The purpose of this little article is not to solve the old riddles of the personality and policy of Augustus. It is merely to assemble and call attention to some evidence that is easily overlooked. What is presented consists of odds and ends of information, some of it rather obscure, concerning Greece and Macedonia under Augustus. This is important for the general policy of provincial government, which, after all, is the most important problem connected with the reign of Augustus; for, whatever was his program, or whatever view of himself and his work he wished to present to the Roman public, his real mission was to give the provinces better government. The story of Greece at the time is largely the story of how the new arrangements were made attractive and acceptable to the Greeks.

The evidence to be presented has come to my attention at various times, and most of it has been mentioned in earlier studies, but it has seemed desirable to assemble it and discuss it somewhat more fully. When evaluating the evidence, it is well to remember that, in the Roman policy in the provinces, two all-pervading but conflicting tendencies can be observed. On the one hand, there was the tendency to make everything conform to Roman ideas and practices; on the other hand, the tendency to preserve as much of the old as possible. This applies both to Roman ordinances and to the institutions of states annexed or subjugated. Some of the survivals from earlier times are rather startling. An example is the use of foreign judges. The practice of inviting outsiders to come in and act as judges in local lawsuits had been common among the cities and federal states of Greece and Asia Minor. It was continued to some extent under Roman rule. Thus, Cicero, in a letter written while he was governor of Cilicia, in a sentence seldom understood, indicates that foreign judges were used in his province, and there is other evidence too of the survival of the institution. Another example is that of the four federal republics organized in Macedonia in 167 B.C. It used to be taken for granted that they were dissolved after the Fourth Macedonian War, but evidence has turned up indicating that they were still in existence under the Flavian emperors. Since the republics had been founded under Roman supervision, their retention exemplify at the same time the habit of preserving Greek institutions and the tendency, when possible, to retain earlier arrangements made by the Roman state. Better known is the fact that the Greek cities of the eastern provinces outwardly retained the Greek form of city-state government and that even a number of federal states were retained as instruments of local government. Though this gives the impression that the original institutions were retained unchanged, it is possible that they actually were considerably modified. When a decree was passed by the boule and demos...
of a city, it is perfectly possible that the ratification by the *demos* was purely formal and that the *boule* was the controlling organ of government. Moreover, it is possible that the members of the *boule* were no longer selected for a short term, as was common in Greece, but were appointed for life by officials corresponding to the Roman censors, and that the city was ruled by a hereditary aristocracy much like the *curiales* of the western municipalities. Hence, when Roman authorities did obeisance to Greek institutions, it need not mean that they in any way weakened Roman control.

Greece was more likely than any other country absorbed by the Roman Empire to be allowed to retain its former institutions. It was acquired early and, even though there may have been contempt for Greeklings, there was always respect for the better things in Greece. The four Macedonian republics already mentioned illustrate how an old status could be maintained and yet the controls tightened. Though Macedonia was given a governor in 148, the republics remained and the freedom which had been decreed by the senate was not cancelled. It is reasonably certain even that at least one of the republics continued to coin tetradrachms after 148. The sending of a governor did not mean change in status but merely that the relations with Rome formerly handled through ambassadors and written communications were now in large part handled by a representative of Rome and his staff permanently on the ground. From the point of view of the theoretical status of the province, the magistrates and promagistrates sent to Macedonia would almost more correctly be called ambassadors than governors. However, from the point of view of actual conditions and the practical limits to the freedom of the republics, governor remains the appropriate title. In Greece, freedom was granted by the proclamation of 196 B.C. and the other arrangements made at the time. This, apparently, was the closest approach to a *lex provinciae* for Greece that was ever issued. This fundamental arrangement was never abrogated as a whole, though various offending states were punished from time to time and lost some of their privileges. This happened to Aetolia in 189, and various states were disciplined after the Third Macedonian War, after the Achaean War of 146, and after the intervention of Sulla in Greece, but it is a mistake to think of any of these events as marking a complete revolution in status. Not even for Augustus is there evidence for the revocation of the old freedom of the Greeks. On the other hand, it is clear that through the gradual process of limiting the rights of individual states and through the long-continued practice of giving directions to the free friends and allies, the latter became actual subjects until only cities with special grants were regarded as free cities. Something of the kind happened also in Macedonia, where ultimately one of the four republics became known as Free Macedonia. It was somewhat the same with taxes. In this connection it may be recalled that the four republics, in spite of their freedom, paid taxes from the first. In Greece, some of the states which, from the Roman point of view, misbehaved may have had taxes imposed upon them. For the

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5 The great change is commonly placed after the destruction of Corinth in 146 B.C., but see *Econ. Surv.*, IV, 306—11; S. Accame, *Il Dominio Romano in Grecia dalla Guerra Acaica ad Augusto* (1946) especially chap. ii.

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rest it seems that the frequent collection of 'contributions' resulted in a regular system of taxation.

The arrangements of Augustus for Greece followed the old pattern but with a close personal tie between himself and the country added as something new. Augustus obviously did not cancel the old grant of freedom, he placed great emphasis on the Amphictionic League, and he represented himself as under the special protection of Apollo, but he also regularized the provincial organization. When he permitted himself to be listed as the chief magistrate of the Thessalian Confederacy, this will recall the practice of western municipalities of electing an emperor or a member of his household as sole duumvir, but it also had a Hellenistic background, and service specifically in a federal state would naturally be Hellenistic. In the case of Augustus and Thessaly the service apparently had a very special significance.

Thessaly had played a relatively important role in the civil wars from 48 to 31 B.C., not so much on account of any act of will of its own, but because it proved a convenient theatre of warfare and above all because it was a district with abundant food supplies. Troops too, naturally, were drawn from the region, and the government would have to co-operate with the Roman party in control locally. From the point of view of Augustus, this had often been the wrong party. In the Pharsalus campaign, to be sure, there was nothing to bring blame on Thessaly as a whole. At the outset the Confederacy seemed rather on the side of Caesar, but there were two factions and, when the news of the battle of Dyrrhachium reached Thessaly, the Pompeian faction prevailed, and the general of the Confederacy, Androsthenes, tried to hold up Caesar at Gomphi until Pompey or one of his generals could bring up troops. As a result the city was captured and sacked. Caesar himself has preserved the names of the leaders of both factions and of the general, and the mention of the sack of Gomphi in later accounts shows that it had left an impression. If the purpose of this act was to intimidate the rest of Thessaly, it had the desired effect, and soon all Thessaly, except Larisa, which was held by the Pompeians, came over to Caesar. After Pharsalus, before his hurried departure in pursuit of Pompey, Caesar set free Thessaly.

See the treatment of these problems in Econ. Surv., IV: indications of early limitations on freedom, pp. 286—90 ('Roman Supervision of Greece between Wars'); Free Macedonia, 443 f.; exactions of contributions, 422—35 passim ('The Effects of Wars between 146 and 30 B.C.'); transformation of contributions into taxes, 440 f.; taxation under the Principate, 453—60. For the early limitation of freedom see also A. Aymard, Les Premiers rapports de Rome et de la Confédération achéenne (1938). In his article, 'Roman Revenues from Greece after 146 B.C.', CP, XLI (1946), 33—42, H. Hill argues for even less taxes than indicated for that period in Econ. Surv., IV. E. Badian in his important book, Foreign Clientelae (1958), traces the extension of the practices of patrons towards clients from purely private affairs to public affairs and foreign relations. In connection with the settlement after Pydna he remarks, 'Henceforth there was no question of Greek 'freedom' —' after 146 B.C.

7 L. Robert, Études épigraphiques et philologiques (1938) 143—47.
8 Caesar BC iii. 34—45. 80—81. The following accounts add little: Appian BC ii. 64; Dio Cassius xli. 51. 4; Florus ii. 13. 41; Plut. Caesar 41.
9 Plut. Caesar 48; Appian BC ii. 88.
states, represented this act as a memorial to his victory. For practical purposes it cannot have meant anything except that the government of the Confederacy was allowed to resume functioning in a normal manner.

Less is told about the role of the Thessalians in the war of Octavian and Mark Antony against Brutus and Cassius, but their contribution to the array of the tyrannicides must have been considerable even if not always voluntary, and the country certainly was drawn upon also for money and supplies. If it is true that, aside from other troops, 2,000 Thessalian cavalrymen served in the army of Brutus and Cassius, their contribution to the armed forces was particularly important. This contingent, in fact, so far as we can trust our statistics, was larger than the famous contingent of Thessalian cavalry which served with Alexander the Great \(^{10}\). For the years that precede the battle of Actium we have less information about Thessaly, but can assume that it too was called upon at least for supplies. The situation may have been complicated by the service as general of the Confederacy in 30/29 B.C. of Themistogenes son of Androsthenes, apparently the Androsthenes who opposed Caesar at Gomphi \(^{11}\). If so, Augustus cannot have failed to be aware of it.

The situation Augustus faced was then as follows: The civil wars had been fought largely in the east. The rival forces had drawn upon the resources of the country and, as was natural in such wars, had not always been too nice in the methods by which they raised money and supplies. As a result Greece and other provinces were probably more thoroughly exhausted than by any other wars of antiquity. The country obviously needed relief and not oppression. The situation, however, was complicated by the fact that Greeks had taken part in the wars, and that some states did not have too pure a record. On the other hand, their delinquencies were due more to force of circumstances than to hostility to the new regime. One of the states that were in a dubious position was Thessaly. In her favor, however, was the Roman habit of preserving older arrangements made by the Roman state, and the federal government of Thessaly to Augustus must have seemed a creation of Roman statesmanship and specifically of Titus Quinctius Flamininus \(^{12}\). Fortunately the information concerning Thessaly derived from coins, inscriptions, and literary sources is relatively full.

This information shows that the Thessalian Confederacy continued to be a going concern under the Principate. A large number of its generals, or heads of state, are known, and some of these can be dated accurately. In many cases they are known from manumission records, which are dated by the name of the general of the year. From these rather numerous documents we learn that the Thessalian Confederacy continued as a state with its own eponymous magistrate. Of these relatively few were Roman citizens. The Confederacy was definitely Greek. We also learn that slaves were manumitted locally in the various cities but under federal law, the new freedmen paying a fixed fee to the city. Another indication of the activity of the Confederacy is that, for a rather important point of law, jurists quoted a rescript of Hadrian or Antoninus Pius to the

\(^{10}\) Appian BC iv. 88 and for Alexander's Thessalian cavalry (1,800) Diod. xvii. 17. 4.  
\(^{11}\) IG, IX, 2, 415; the date is that of Arbanitopulos as cited in n. 13.  
\(^{12}\) While the ten commissioners sent out to co-operate with Flamininus divided some of the tasks between each other, Flamininus himself, according to Livy xxxiv. 51. 4—6, undertook the reorganization of Thessaly.

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Thessalians. Still another is the relatively copious issues of bronze coins. Moreover, in so far as the careers of local magnates can be reconstructed, they suggest that, when Thessalians held office outside Thessaly, the positions held tended to be of Panhellenic importance, for instance, in the Amphictionic League and later in Hadrian's Panhellenion. Clearly Augustus must have permitted the Thessalian Confederacy to recover or retain its 'freedom'. That this was conscious policy is shown by the fact that he allowed himself to be listed as a general of the Confederacy, while this organization indicated its gratitude by using the legend 

\[\text{ΘEΣΣΑΛΙΩΝ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗΩΝ}\]

on some of its coins. When it is further noted that Augustus served as general in 27/6 B.C., at the very time of the reorganization of the provinces, it becomes clear that his generalship must have served as a symbol of his recognition of the Confederacy and reconciliation with it, if a reconciliation was necessary. Undoubtedly, after the chequered period of the civil wars, some sort of settlement was necessary, and one more favorable to Thessaly can hardly be imagined. Additional indications of the favor of Augustus were the increase of the territory of the Confederacy and the six votes assigned Thessaly in the Amphictionic League. These points will be taken up below.

But first a few words concerning the Thessalian coinage. The local Greek coinages in Roman times appear to be a field which offers much interesting information but which never has been thoroughly investigated. The manumission records already mentioned indicate that under the Principate denarii were usually substituted for staters in listing the fee paid in connection with manumissions. For some time the fee had been 15 staters. Just before the generalship of Augustus, apparently under his immediate predecessor, it was decided that for the payment of this fee, 22½ denarii were to count as 15 staters. Thereafter the fee was normally listed by denarii, though sometimes, after the 22 denarii, 4 obols are listed instead of ½ denarius. Yet the fee probably legally continued to be 15 staters. It is actually listed thus in a document from A.D. 131/2, though the individual payments are listed by denarii. These documents, by the way, throw light on the respective roles of the imperial

13 A list of Thessalian generals is given in IG, IX, 2. This should be supplemented by the list of A. S. Arbanitopoulos in Arch. eph., 1917, pp. 146-50; cf. also 'A Thessalian Family under the Principate', CP, XLVIII (1953), 86-93. Imperial rescript: Dig. v. 1. 37, xlviii. 6. 5. 1; cf. Rep. Ger., 147. Coinage: BMC Thessaly, 6-9. Demonstration that Thessaly was 'free': Econ. Surv., IV, 447 ff.; this freedom, of course, should be equated with that of civitates liberae. The statement of Mommsen (Provinces, I, 298) that the freedom and autonomy of the Thessalians seem to have been withdrawn by Augustus, no longer deserves attention except as an example of how a theory that once was plausible can be completely overthrown by the discovery of additional evidence.

14 This point is made by A. R. Bellinger, 'Greek Mints under the Roman Empire', Essays in Roman Coinage Presented to Harold Mattingly (1956), 137-48, an article full of ideas and suggestions.

15 IG, IX, 2, 415 preserves records of manumissions at Pherae under several generals, of whom the last is Augustus. Under the earlier generals the fee is given as 15 staters. Then, in the entry immediately preceding that for the first half year of the generalship of Augustus, it is indicated that by correction or adjustment (dioerthoma) 22½ denarii are to count as 15 staters. There can be little doubt but that this means that an official ruling on the point had been made and that this ratio was to be official for the future.

16 IG, IX, 2, 546. On the Thessalian manumissions see also Econ. Surv., IV, 456 n. 21.
and local authorities and, in Thessaly, on those of the federal and city governments. In the first place, it is clear that the manumission of slaves was handled in Thessaly according to Thessalian law and was in no sense the concern of the Roman authorities. This is not surprising. Apparently in the provinces the "vicesima liberatis" was collected only when Roman citizens manumitted slaves, who thus acquired a claim to Roman citizenship. When others manumitted, this was done according to local law, as in Thessaly. The records show further that manumission was regulated by federal law and that the manumission fee, paid by the new freedmen, was uniform throughout the Confederacy. This fee, however, was collected by the city governments and not the federal government.

Concerning the money in circulation, the same records show that the Thessalian silver coins used locally had been coined according to a light standard, so that a drachma, instead of being worth one denarius, was worth only \( \frac{3}{4} \) and a stater \( 1\frac{1}{2} \) instead of 2 denarii 17. This, of course, meant that a denarius was figured as the equivalent of eight, not six, obols. It is usually recognized that the Thessalian Confederacy coined silver from its formation in 194 to 146 B.C. There is, however, no reason to think that the minting stopped in 146 except the old conviction that all signs of freedom in Greece were cut short in 146. Now, when it is known that this was not the case, it seems likely that various states continued to mint silver after that date 18. Some of this silver may well have continued in circulation at least during the early Principate, though probably most of the silver in use was Roman 19, but the mention of obols in some of the documents suggests that the bronze in circulation was local. In fact, the evidence of coins found indicates that Roman bronzes scarcely were used at all in Thessaly 20. Since it appears that 'the face value of the [bronze] coins was greater than their bullion value' 21, it appears that permission to issue bronze coins was a concession of financial value to the Confederacy. That may be the reason for the fact that in this period, contrary to earlier practices, the federal government seems to have minted whatever money was coined in Thessaly. Thus the manumission records suggest a division of profits. The manumission fees went to the city governments, but any profit that accrued from issuing the bronze coins in daily use belonged to the federal government.

The arrangements for Thessaly belong to the general settlement that followed Actium. A detail of this settlement which is better known is the founding of Nicopolis. It would seem that the city which was to commemorate the victory by which the chief rivals of Augustus were eliminated must have been as highly privileged as any city could be. Hence, if one approaches the question with a

17 Econ. Surv., IV, 329 f.
18 Ibid., 330, 334; on Macedonia cf. Edson cited in n. 4.
19 Econ. Surv., IV, 489.
20 Bellinger, p. 147.
21 Bellinger, p. 148. According to his hypothesis the emperor took all the profit from imperial coins; the cities, from civic coins; while, 'in the case of combined imperial and civic types' (the type minted in Thessaly under Augustus), the profits were divided. This is a hypothesis of a kind that cannot be proved or disproved but seems too mechanical. There may have been times when cities and koina, if permitted to mint, were required to place the emperor's image on the coins, but there may well also have been times when they themselves wished to use it. Thessaly, with the exchange of courtesies between the Confederacy and Augustus, may well be a case in point.
western point of view and thinks of Augustus as the defender of western traditions against the east, it is natural to look for a Roman colony. But Nicopolis was not a Roman colony. As the name and coins show, it was a Greek city, and there is reason to believe that it ranked as a civitas foederata. At the moment, in Greece at least, it was a greater honor to be an allied city than a Roman colony. The few such colonies known to us had special reasons for their status. For Corinth the reason was that the colony had been planned by Caesar; for Dyme, that settlers had been planted there by Pompey; for Patrae, that veterans had been settled there after Actium. As cities, Corinth and Patrae may have outstripped Nicopolis, but the pre-eminence of Nicopolis is indicated by the six votes assigned the city by Augustus in the Amphictionic League, a representation such as was granted to no other city and which was equalled only by those of the Thessalian Confederacy and Macedonia.

By this reorganization of the Amphictionic League the total number of votes in the council was increased from 24 to 30. Of these, as already implied, Nicopolis, Thessaly, and Macedonia each received 6, while the remaining 12 were distributed much as they formerly had been. The votes assigned to Thessaly and Nicopolis were those that formerly had belonged to various tribes of northern Greece, while the additional seats added to the earlier 24 were created for the benefit of Macedonia. It was apparently in connection with the reorganization of the Amphictionic League that the territory of the Thessalian Confederacy was enlarged and some of the neighboring tribes merged with it. This connection between the reorganization of the League and the increase in territory of the Confederacy indicates that the two belong together, and that both were linked with the provincial reorganization of 27 B.C. The election of representatives may not have posed any problem for Nicopolis and Thessaly; in the one case they could be elected by the city; in the other, by the Confederacy. It was different in Macedonia, where, as already noted, the four republics of 167 B.C. remained alive. How could six representatives be divided among four states? It will not do to suggest that two went to the Illyrian states organized the same year, for they numbered three, and thus there would be a total of seven. Moreover, it is almost unthinkable that Illyrians should be represented in the Amphictionic League. It is more likely that the six representatives were elected by the Macedonian League, which probably was a union of the four republics. There seems to be no proof for the existence of this organization before the reign of Claudius, but it may well have originated earlier.

The Thessalian Confederacy and the Amphictionic League were old institutions which Augustus preserved but modified to some extent. There was also a newer organization, the Panachaean League, which he apparently allowed to live on, though there seems to be no record of it from his own reign. This began as a

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22 The evidence is listed Econ. Surv., IV, 446; cf. Rep. Govt., 111 f.
23 This leaves only Buthrotum without an explanation. Here the reason may well be the importance of the city for communications. On colonies in Greece see Econ. Surv., IV, 446; for Pompey and Dyme add Strabo viii. 387 and Appian Mithr. 96.
24 Paus. x. 8. 3—5; cf. CP, XLVII (1932), 14 and 16 n. 42; Rep. Govt., 110 f.
25 G. Busolt, Griechische Staatkunde, 1494 and n. 3.
26 Livy xlv. 26. 15.
league of Greek federal states and is known only from a number of inscriptions. It apparently originated in the period of the civil wars — the earliest record is from about 34 B.C. — for convenient joint action in such matters as appeals to Rome and dealings with Roman officials. The membership of the Panachaean League varied from time to time and may never have embraced the entire province of Achaea. There is, for instance, no record that the Thessalian Confederacy ever was a member. This organization was the nearest approach to a 'provincial assembly' for Achaea, but as late as the reign of Gaius it appears to have been a purely secular and political organization. Only later did it establish an imperial cult and acquire a high priest.

To summarize, Augustus in Greece, as in the Empire as a whole, created something new largely by preserving and utilizing the old, and the prestige of what he preserved was derived both from Greece and from Rome. This is particularly clear in the case of the Thessalian Confederacy. This was a typical Hellenistic federal state, but it had been organized under Roman patronage as part of the program of freedom for Greece. The case of Nicopolis, on the other hand, meant the deliberate choice of a Greek over a Roman city organization, while the prominence given it in the Amphictionic League and the importance of that organization in the plans of Augustus indicate that he sought to exploit Greek religion and institutions. To the Greeks, he desired to appear, not as a foreign conqueror, but as a patron of things Greek and as a statesman under the special protection of Apollo. Thus his position in Greece was not to be that of a god but rather of a representative of the gods on earth. Hence it was only later that the Panachaean League established an imperial cult.

All of this, it may be said, was merely a matter of public relations, but so were many of the acts of Augustus in his dealings with the Roman people. The latter acts have been emphasized so much that Augustus tends to appear as a defender of Roman privileges and traditions against the east, and so he largely was. But this was hardly the best pose to assume in Greece, if he wished to win the approval and support of the people of the country. It was much better to appear to the Greeks as one of them supporting Greek traditions and institutions. This was not too difficult for the simple reason that the Roman organization of Greece from the outset had been based on similar principles. This need not make the control any less real. It was still possible to favor friends and oppose enemies and, in accordance with traditional Roman policy, to help keep the men of property in control in the various Greek communities. Yet there were enough concessions to the Greeks to make one wonder whether similar consideration may not have been given to local institutions also in other provinces.

28 Rep. Gort., 110 and 112 f. correcting on some points the fuller account of Econ. Surv., IV, 450—52.
Acta Classica is published annually by the Classical Association of South Africa. The journal has been in production since 1958. It is listed on both the ISI and the SAPSE list of approved publications.

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