



## Aristotle Returns to Athens in the Year 335 B.C.

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Volume 23, numéro 2, 1967

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1020112ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1020112ar>

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Éditeur(s)

Laval théologique et philosophique, Université Laval

ISSN

0023-9054 (imprimé)

1703-8804 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Chroust, A.-H. (1967). Aristotle Returns to Athens in the Year 335 B.C. *Laval théologique et philosophique*, 23(2), 244–254. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1020112ar>

## Aristotle Returns to Athens in the Year 335 B.C.

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According to tradition, Aristotle returned to Athens in 335/34 B.C.,<sup>1</sup> that is, during the archonship of Evaenetus (335/34 B.C.),<sup>2</sup> in the second year of the 111th Olympiad.<sup>3</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus claims that his return in some way was related to the sudden death of King Philip of Macedonia (in the summer of 336 B.C.).<sup>4</sup> Diogenes Laertius insinuates that the relations between Aristotle and Alexander had become somewhat strained during the preceding years. This biographer maintains that when Aristotle thought he had stayed long enough with Alexander, he simply departed for Athens.<sup>5</sup> Al-Mubashir<sup>6</sup> and Usaibia,<sup>7</sup> on the other hand, relate that Aristotle left Alexander when the latter invaded Persia (in 334 B.C.). With Alexander gone off to Asia, Aristotle felt relieved of all responsibilities: he simply disassociated himself from the affairs of the king and thus was able to return to Athens.<sup>8</sup> It appears, therefore, that the ancient biographers of Aristotle had relatively little to say about his return to Athens in the year 335 B.C., and about the reasons why he did so.

In order to understand better the particular circumstances surrounding Aristotle's return to Athens in the year 335 B.C., it might be helpful to review briefly Greek and Macedonian history between the years 336 and 335 B.C. Philip of Macedonia was assassinated in the summer of 336 B.C. He was succeeded, though not without some serious difficulties, by his son Alexander who, on his accession to the Macedonian throne found himself threatened by foes and rivals on all sides. In Macedonia, Attalus and his followers claimed the throne for the infant son of Cleopatra, the daughter of Attalus and the second wife of Philip; others supported the bid of Amyntas, the son of

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1. DIOGENES LAERTIUS V. 4-5 (hereinafter cited as DL V. 4-5); *Vita Aristotelis Marciana* 23 (hereinafter cited as VM 23); *Vita Aristotelis Vulgata* 21 (hereinafter cited as VV 21); *Vita Aristotelis Latina* 23 (hereinafter cited as VL 23).

2. DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS, *I Epistola ad Ammaeum* 5 (hereinafter cited as DH 5).

3. DL V. 10 (Apollodorus).

4. DH 5.

5. DL V. 4-5.

6. *Vita Aristotelis Arabica* 19 (hereinafter cited as II VA 19), and *ibid.*, 24.

7. *Vita Aristotelis Arabica* 6 (hereinafter cited as IV VA 6), and *ibid.*, 22.

8. AN-NADIM, *Vita Aristotelis Arabica* 10-11 (hereinafter cited as I VA 10-11). See also II VA 24-25; IV VA 22-23; VM 23; VV 21; VL 23.

Perdiccas. With a boldness and speed that bordered on madness, Alexander immediately brought Macedonia back into line. Attalus, Amyntas and later Cleopatra and her infant, as well as some of the conspirators, were simply removed from the scene through execution or outright murder.<sup>1</sup> Greece, which on the news of Philip's sudden death had revolted, was frightened into quick submission by a speedy show of force. Philip, the founder of the League of Corinth (of 338 B. C.), did not have sufficient time to consolidate this League, which had been forced upon the Greek states after the battle of Chaeronea. When the news of Philip's assassination reached the Greeks, they regarded all previous agreements and alliances as terminated. The vast majority of the Greek states rejoiced over the death of Philip, discounting completely the ability and willingness of Alexander to restore Macedonian domination over Greece. Demosthenes, who in matters concerning Macedonia more often than not allowed wishful thinking to control his judgment, actually reported to the popular assembly at Athens that the city had nothing to fear from so young and inexperienced a boy as Alexander.<sup>2</sup> Ambracia simply expelled the Macedonian garrison; Aetolia recalled the anti-Macedonian exiles; and there was great exultation both in Athens and Thebes over the murder of Philip. In Thessaly the anti-Macedonian party seized power; and in the east, north and west the Balkan peoples were rising in revolt. Alexander first descended upon Greece, putting down the Thessalian uprising by having himself declared the leader and commander of the Thessalian League. He then convoked the Amphic-tionic League and had himself elected its protector. Greece proper, including Athens and Thebes, at that moment was not prepared to offer Alexander any effective resistance and, hence, submitted rather meekly, Sparta excepted. In a gesture of generosity Alexander forgave Athens, Thebes and Ambracia for their display of hostility. Next he reestablished and convoked the League of Corinth and had himself elected its supreme commander.<sup>3</sup> Subsequently, in the spring of 335 B. C., he turned upon the Illyrians, Epirotes and Thracians, whom he subdued after some hard-fought campaigns.

While Alexander was fully preoccupied with these difficult and dangerous campaigns, the Greek cities and states continued agitating against him. Darius Codomannus, the King of Persia, intended to provoke a war between Macedonia and Greece and thus prevent, or at least postpone, Alexander's intended invasion of Asia. Hence, he

1. See DIODORUS SICULUS XVII. 2. 4 ff., and *ibid.*, XVII. 5. 1 ff.; CURTIUS RUFUS VI. 9. 17, and *ibid.*, VII. 1. 13; JUSTIN XI. 5. 1 ff., and *ibid.*, XI. 7. 12; XII. 6. 14; PLUTARCH, *Alexander* 10.

2. See AESCHINES, *Contra Ctesiphontem* 160; DIODORUS SICULUS XVII. 3; PLUTARCH, *Alexander* 22; PLUTARCH, *Phocion* 16.

3. See DIODORUS SICULUS XVII. 4; ARRIAN I. 1. 1-3; JUSTIN II. 3. 1-3.

sent money as well as agents for that purpose, which were gladly received by some Greek cities.<sup>1</sup> The threatened defection of Greece was both wide-spread and serious. Suddenly, the rumor was passed around that Alexander had been slain in battle in Illyria. Demosthenes, blinded by his furious hatred of Macedonia, actually produced a man who allegedly had witnessed the death of Alexander. Once more some Greek states raised the banner of revolt. At Thebes the anti-Macedonian democrats, exiled by Philip, immediately returned, seized power and resorted to open violence. They slew Timolaus and Anemoetas, two pro-Macedonian leaders, killed the captain of the Macedonian garrison, and laid siege to the Cadmea, which was held by Macedonian troupes. This signal action of Thebes was followed by other uprisings. Athens actually sent weapons and supplies to Thebes, and promised to follow up with a dispatch of soldiers. Aetolia and Elis promptly denounced their allegiance, and the Arcadians marched to the Isthmus of Corinth, ready to join any military action. The hopes of the patriots ran high to the point of recklessness.<sup>2</sup>

Apparently out of nowhere Alexander suddenly appeared and descended upon Greece with lightning-like speed.<sup>3</sup> Thebes, which in a spirit of desperate heroism hoped to defy the enraged king, was immediately put under siege. After a brief struggle the city was stormed and razed to the ground. The fate of Thebes dispelled among the Greeks all further thought of rebellion or resistance. The Arcadians, in a gesture of abject submission, condemned to death the men who had counselled them to come to the aid of Thebes; the people of Elis hastily called back the pro-Macedonian exiles; and the Aetolians rushed to assure Alexander of their undying devotion and loyalty. The news of the Theban disaster reached Athens during the celebration of the Eleusian festival. An emergency meeting was called at once, and on the initiative of Demades it was resolved by the very men who on the motion of Demosthenes only a few days before had wildly clamored for the annihilation of Macedonia, to send a congratulatory embassy to Alexander, praising his just punishment of treacherous Thebes.<sup>4</sup> Alexander knew only too well that the uprisings had actually

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1. ARRIAN II. 14. 6; PLUTARCH, *De Alexandri Fortuna et Virtute* (*Moralia* 327 C); PLUTARCH, *Demosthenes* 20; AESCHINES, *Contra Ctesiphontem* 106, and *ibid.*, 239 ff.; DINARCHUS, *Contra Demosthenem* 10, and *ibid.*, 18.

2. ARRIAN I. 7. 1-3; DIODORUS SICULUS XVII. 8; PLUTARCH, *Demosthenes* 23.

3. The Theban leaders first tried to reassure the alarmed people by claiming that since Alexander was dead it must be Antipater who was approaching the city. Later they announced that it was not Alexander of Macedonia but Alexander of Lyncestis. See ARRIAN I. 7. 4-11; DIODORUS SICULUS XVII. 9. 10; PLUTARCH, *Alexander* 11.

4. At the same time, the Athenians welcomed the few Theban refugees who had managed to escape the holocaust, ordered the rural population of Attica to seek shelter behind the walls of Athens, and put the whole city in a state of military preparedness. See ARRIAN I. 10. 1-4; PLUTARCH, *Alexander* 13.

been planned and supported by Athens and that the Athenians had actively aided and abetted Thebes. Nevertheless, he accepted the submission of the Athenians. He demanded, however, that the leading anti-Macedonian patriots, among them Demosthenes, Lycurgus, Hyperides, Charidamus and Chares,<sup>1</sup> be handed over to him for punishment, and that the Theban refugees, who had been welcomed in the city, be expelled. But for some reason Alexander suddenly relented — tradition has it that Phocion and Demades prevailed upon him — and he withdrew his demands. He insisted solely on the banishment of Charidemus, a Thracian mercenary captain and adventurer.<sup>2</sup>

The unusually generous treatment of Athens by Alexander is generally explained by calling attention, as was the case after the conclusion of the Peloponnesian War (in 404 B.C.) or after the battle of Chaeronea (in 338 B.C.), to Athens' ancient glory and deathless renown. It has been pointed out that Alexander, by displaying clemency, hoped to establish lasting friendly relations with the most important and the most famous city in the Hellenic world — and that he intended, by winning over the Athenians through a signal display of magnanimity, to secure the support of their powerful fleet in his Persian ventures.<sup>3</sup> All this might be true, but we are still puzzled by Alexander's unusually lenient treatment of Athens, undoubtedly the main instigator of the whole Greek revolt, as the king knew only too well. Moreover, aside from the fact that Alexander himself was not immune to impulsive outbursts of violence and vindictiveness, the Athenians had entered into treasonable negotiations with Persia, an unpardonable crime in the eyes of the man who was about to launch a panhellenic crusade against the Persian arch-foe. And finally, the destruction of Athens might well have served as an effective deterrent to the Greeks not to attempt any further uprisings while Alexander was preoccupied with the conquest of Asia.<sup>4</sup>

There might be, however, another and, perhaps, more satisfactory explanation for Alexander's generous treatment of the Athenians in

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1. The complete list is preserved in SUDA, *Antipater*. Suda also mentions Polyeuctas, Ephialtes, Diotimus, Patroclus (should read Moerocles) and Thrasybulus. See also ARRIAN I. 10. 4, who omits Thrasybulus; PLUTARCH, *Demosthenes* 20, who omits Hyperides, Chares, Diotimus and Thrasybulus, but adds Demon and Callisthenes.

2. Since Charidamus was not an Athenian, Alexander's demand for his banishment was readily accepted. Chares, on the other hand, left Athens voluntarily. See ARRIAN I. 10. 6; DIODORUS SICULUS XVII. 15; PLUTARCH, *Demosthenes* 23; PLUTARCH, *Phocion* 17. The Athenians refused, however, to deliver the Theban refugees to Alexander.

3. It has been claimed that soon after the destruction of Thebes Alexander had feelings of bitter remorse. A contemporary orator compared the destruction of Thebes with the tearing of the moon from the heavens. See HEGESIAS, frag. 2; DINARCHUS, *Contra Demosthenem* 24; ARRIAN I. 9. 1-10.

4. From his father, Philip, one of the shrewdest statesmen and politicians in antiquity, Alexander might have learned that according to the principles of *Realpolitik* such a wanton act might frighten the Greeks into total and lasting submission.

the fall of 335 B.C. It is commonly believed that Aristotle, himself a Macedonian, left Athens in the summer or early fall of 348 B.C. because of an outbreak of violent anti-Macedonian sentiment and agitation in the city. This agitation was provoked by Philip's capture and destruction of Olynthus, the ally of Athens.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, Aristotle went to Atarneus or Assos, probably after having spent the winter of 348/47 B.C. in Macedonia, keeping in close contact with Philip. In 343/42 B.C. he returned to Macedonia, where, according to the biographical tradition, he "tutored" Alexander.<sup>2</sup> What seems more likely, however, is that Aristotle took an active part in Macedonia's foreign policy and that he performed many valuable services for King Philip, a great admirer of his talents.<sup>3</sup> It also appears that some of the services he rendered Philip were of a diplomatic or political nature.<sup>4</sup> In any event, Diogenes Laertius relates that at the time of Speusippus' death (in 339 B.C.) Aristotle was on a diplomatic mission.<sup>5</sup> Other biographical sources maintain that Aristotle dealt often with foreign kings, potentates, governments and countries; and that because of his many acts of valuable assistance he was highly esteemed and greatly honored by them as well as by Philip.<sup>6</sup>

Now it is quite possible and, as a matter of fact, quite reasonable to assume that it was Aristotle who personally persuaded Alexander to deal mercifully and generously with the Athenians. We know that

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1. See Anonymous, *II Vita Aristotelis Syriaca* 3 (Codex Vat. Syriacus 158, hereinafter cited as II VS 3): "But frightened by the execution of Socrates, he [*scil.*, Aristotle] left Athens and stayed near the Hellespont." See also A. H. CHROUST, "Aristotle Leaves the Academy," *Greece and Rome*, vol. XIV, no. 1 (1967), pp. 39-43; A. H. CHROUST, "Aristotle and Athens: Some Comments on Aristotle's Sojourns in Athens," *Laval Théologique et Philosophique*, vol. XXII, (1966) no. 2, pp. 188-189.

2. There exists some doubt as to whether Aristotle was indeed the tutor, or the chief preceptor, of Alexander. See, for instance, A.-H. CHROUST, "Was Aristotle Actually the Preceptor of Alexander the Great?," *Classical Folia*, vol. 18, no. 1 (1964), pp. 26-33.

3. See, for instance, VM 15-16; VV 15-16; VL 15-16; I VA 8; II VA 28; IV VA 15; EUSEBIUS, *Praeparatio Evangelica* XV. 2. 6, and *ibid.*, XV. 2. 10; etc., etc.

4. See, for instance, VM 17; VV 17; VL 17; IV VA 16. It has been claimed that Aristotle's visit with Hermias of Atarneus (347-345 B.C.) had political overtones: Philip attempted, through the intermediary of Aristotle, to win over Hermias to his political designs, thus gaining on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont an effective bridgehead for his planned invasion of Persia as well as an important base for the encirclement of Thrace.

5. DL V. 2.

6. See, for instance, VM 15-16, and *ibid.*, 17-18; 20; 23; 46; 49; VV 15-16, and *ibid.*, 17; 21; VL 15-16, and *ibid.*, 17; 19-20; 49; Anonymous, *I Vita Aristotelis Syriaca* 10 (Codex Berol. Sachau 226, hereinafter cited as I VS 10); II VA 28, and *ibid.*, 29-30; *Vita Aristotelis Arabica* of Al-Quifti Gamaladdin (hereinafter cited as III VA); IV VA 13, and *ibid.*, 15-16; 17-18; 21. DL V. 26 lists letters of Aristotle to Philip, Alexander, Antipater (nine books), Mentor, Olympias, Hephaestion, and others. See also *Vita Aristotelis Hesychii* (*Vita Menagiana* or *Vita Menagii*) 10 (no. 137).



in the summer or fall of 335 B. C. Aristotle was still with the Macedonian king. Although during the past year the relations between these two men had somewhat deteriorated,<sup>1</sup> Aristotle still had a considerable influence over Alexander. At the same time Aristotle seems to have had a genuine liking for Athens,<sup>2</sup> where he had gone to school and where he had spent twenty apparently happy years (367/348 B. C.). The deep and lasting impression which Athens' intellectual culture must have made upon Aristotle during these twenty formative years, as well as his affection for this renowned city probably explains his attempt to intercede for her.

The likelihood that in the year 335 B. C. Aristotle personally — and successfully — interceded on behalf of Athens seems to be confirmed by the report of Usaibia: "On account of the many good deeds and services [Aristotle had rendered the city of Athens], the Athenians went so far as to call an assembly and vote an honorific inscription [dedicated to Aristotle]. They had this inscription engraved on a stone column which they erected on the highest citadel of their city called The Summit [*scil.*, the Acropolis]. In this inscription they recorded that Aristotle of Stagira, the son of Nicomachus, had served the city well by performing many beneficial deeds, by the great number of his acts of assistance and beneficence, and by all his services to the people of Athens, especially by his interventions with King Philip [and Alexander?] for the purpose of promoting their interests and welfare and for seeing to it that they were well treated — that the people of Athens therefore wanted it to be known that they appreciated, and were grateful for, the good that had come out of his actions — that they conferred distinction and praise upon him — and that they would keep him in faithful and honored memory. Those among the Athenians holding high public positions, who are of the opinion that he is unworthy of such an honor, may they themselves attempt after his death to accomplish what he succeeded in accomplish-

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1. See, for instance, DIO CHRYSOSTOM, *Oratio* LXIV. 20. This deterioration might have been caused by the fact that Aristotle apparently was very close to King Philip. Alexander and King Philip, on the other hand, were not on the best of terms, especially after the latter had put away his first wife, Olympias, the mother of Alexander, and had married Cleopatra, thus jeopardizing Alexander's succession to the throne of Macedonia.

2. Later, in the year 323 B. C., when the Athenians drove Aristotle out of the city for a second time, he seems to have lost some of his love for Athens. It was in 323 B. C. that he supposedly wrote to Antipater that the city of Athens was crowded with professional informers (sycophants), that it was dangerous for a Macedonian alien to live in Athens, and that in Athens things which were permitted to an Athenian were not permitted to a Macedonian alien. See VM 41-42; VV 19-20; VL 43-44; ELIAS (*olim* David), *Comment. in Porphyrii Isagogen et in Arist. Categorias*, in: *Comment. in Arist. Graec.*, vol. XVIII, part 1 (edit. A. Busse, Berlin, 1900), p. 123, lines 15 ff.; DL V. 9 (Favorinus); AELIAN, *Variae Historiae* III, 36; ORIGEN, *Contra Celsum* I. 380; EUSTATHIUS, *Comment. in Odys.* VII. 120-121.

ing, taking an active part in all those affairs of state in which they, in their own selfish interest, would like to intervene."<sup>1</sup>

The honorific decree or decree of *proxenia* recited by Usaibia in the main reproduces the traditional form and style of such decrees.<sup>2</sup> It is not impossible, however, that the inscription mentioned by Usaibia, which specifically refers to Aristotle's successful intercessions with King Philip, may be related to the events which transpired on the eve of the battle of Chaeronea (in 338 B.C.), when Athens negotiated with the Macedonian king. Aristotle who at that time was in Macedonia, might have taken an active part in these negotiations, representing Athenian interests.<sup>3</sup> Usaibia's account may also refer to the events after the battle of Chaeronea, when Athens was treated rather generously by Philip, possibly on the recommendation of Aristotle, who had much influence with Philip. This account may, as it is contended here, relate Aristotle's successful intercession with Alexander on behalf of the Athenians in the year 335 B.C. It may also refer to all three of these crucial occasions in which Aristotle apparently played so decisive a role. Hence, it is possible that for some unknown reason the name of Alexander may have been omitted in the version preserved by Usaibia. Thus, the decree may originally have referred to Aristotle's "many and successful interventions with King Philip and King Alexander for the purpose of promoting the interests and welfare of the Athenians and for seeing to it that they were well treated by King Philip and King Alexander."<sup>4</sup>

1. IV VA 17-18. This incident is briefly referred to also in VM 20 and VL 20. A remote echo of this story might be detected in DL V. 2. — Aristotle, it appears, was publicly honored at least three times: (1) by a statue erected in Stagira by King Philip (VM 15; VL 15, Pausanias VI. 4. 8); (2) by an honorific inscription at Delphi, dedicated by the Amphictionic League (W. DITTENBERGER, *Syll.* 3 275; AELIAN, *Variae Historiae* XIV. 1); and (3) by Athens (IV VA 17-19).

2. See E. DRERUP, "Ein Athenisches Proxeniendekret für Aristoteles," *Mittheilungen des Kaiserlichen Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts*, vol. 23 (Athens, 1898), pp.369-381. See also C. I. A. II. 68, and *ibid.*, II. 124; II. 161; II. 193; II. 194; II. 234; II. 249; II. 263; II. 264; II. 300; IV. 2. 107b; IV. 2. 264c; IV. 2. 264d — all cited in DRERUP, *op. cit.*, p.373; DL VII. 10-12, which reproduces the honorific inscription dedicated to Zeno the Stoic by the Athenians.

3. This might be gathered, for instance, from DL V. 2.

4. It might be in order to discuss here some of the technical questions raised by the report of Usaibia. The reference to, and enumeration of, Aristotle's services and benefices to the city of Athens is rather typical of the traditional Athenian decrees of *proxenia*. The remark that the Athenians are grateful for his many good deeds and that on account of these good deeds they would keep him in honored memory, however, is somewhat unusual. As a rule, such inscriptions or decrees also recorded that the grateful people of Athens bestowed upon their benefactor a golden wreath. This might possibly be the meaning of Usaibia's statement that the Athenians "conferred distinction and praise upon him." Moreover, the traditional honorific inscriptions or decrees also mentioned that the person so honored was made a *proxenos* and declared an *evergetes*, as well as an "honorary citizen" of Athens. It is possible, however, that the wording used by Usaibia (or by his source)



Barring the last sentence of Usaibia's account, and making some concessions to the understandable unfamiliarity of the Syriac or Arabic translator with the lego-technical language and phraseology of official Athenian documents, the report of Usaibia fairly accurately recasts the traditional wording of the typical Athenian decree of *proxenia* of the fourth century B.C. This fact is in itself highly significant. For it is more than unlikely that Usaibia (or his source) should have invented this whole story as well as this unique phraseology merely for encomiastic reasons. It must be conceded, however, that Usaibia (or his source) not only was unfamiliar with the bureaucratic language of Athenian officialdom, but also was baffled and, perhaps, repelled by its linguistic awkwardness. In any event, he never intended to reproduce *verbatim* the original decree. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the account of Usaibia unmistakably retains some of the standard or formulaic characteristics common to all Athenian decrees of *proxenia*. It is well-nigh unthinkable, therefore, that Usaibia (or his source) should outright have invented the story of Aristotle's being honored by the Athenians with a decree of *proxenia*, and even more incredible that Usaibia should have resorted to a fairly accurate stylistic imitation of its unusual wording. Since all decrees of *proxenia* always mentioned the name as well as the descent of this honor's recipient, the passage, "Aristotle of Stagira, the son of Nicomachus" — a passage faithfully reproduced by Usaibia — should make it absolutely clear that this award was conferred upon Aristotle some time after 335 B.C.

Should our interpretation of Usaibia's report prove to be the correct one, then Aristotle did, on the surrender of Athens in the fall of 335 B.C., directly and effectively intercede with Alexander on behalf of Athens. Thus he probably saved the city from utter destruction, and the Athenians had every reason to be eternally grateful to him.

It must also be borne in mind that in 335 B.C. Aristotle for a second time made the city of Athens his permanent abode. In the eyes of the majority of the Athenians, however, he returned, or was brought back, to Athens in the van of the conquering Macedonian phalanx. Hence, in the mind and memory of many people he re-entered the city not as a welcome guest or cherished friend, but rather as a conqueror and as the symbol of conquest. This impression, which obviously caused much annoyance and profound enmity in a city where fear, anger and frustration were rampant, could only generate a deeply rooted and widely spread resentment.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly, the

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intends to refer to the bestowal of the *proxenia* and *euergesia*, two technical terms which Usaibia (or his source), who was not familiar with Athenian legal phraseology, probably did not fully understand and, hence, translated inadequately.

1. Usaibia's account (IV VA 17-18) makes it quite obvious that the decree of *proxenia* conferred upon Aristotle was moved and carried by the pro-Macedonian faction in Athens, which after 335 B.C. had the upper hand in that city. This would also lend some support

eternally gossiping Athenians saw Aristotle as a dangerous agent of Macedonian domination in their very midst—a political informer or “spy,” who regularly reported their moves, moods and aspirations to Antipater<sup>1</sup>—an assumption which probably was not too far removed from the actual truth.<sup>2</sup>

Many Athenians, among them rabid patriots, genuinely hated Aristotle. The frequently unflattering and even slanderous remarks about Aristotle interspersed in ancient literature<sup>3</sup> in part may reflect this general unpopularity with his Athenian contemporaries, who saw in him a pernicious instrument of Macedonian tyranny. As is so often the case in such tense situations, the average Athenian vented his futile anger by inventing all sorts of nasty stories about Aristotle's personal vices and depravities. In view of the circumstances which in the year 348 B. C. compelled Aristotle rather hurriedly to withdraw from Athens it is likely that he might never have returned to that city but for her military surrender to Alexander and her subsequent occupation by his troops. Hence, it is not surprising that he should be distrusted and even disliked by the majority of the Athenians who only waited for an opportunity to rid themselves of this unwelcome intruder.<sup>4</sup> It might be maintained, therefore, that the years between 335 and 323 B. C. probably were not the most pleasant years in the life of Aristotle.<sup>5</sup>

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to our contention that this decree was bestowed upon Aristotle because in the year 335 B. C. he had interceded with Alexander on behalf of Athens. Conversely, the action of Himeræus (IV VA 20), the well-known anti-Macedonian partisan, probably took place in the summer of 323 B. C. The restoration of the *stèle* or honorific inscription removed by Himeræus probably was undertaken after the battle of Crannon (in 322 B. C.) and after the re-occupation of Athens by Antipater. See also note 3, *infra*, on p.253

1. See, for instance, EUSEBIUS, *Preparatio Evangelica* XV. 2. 6, where Demochares is quoted as having maintained (in 306 B. C.) that many of Aristotle's letters addressed to Antipater had been intercepted and that the contents of these letters (official reports?) were detrimental to the interests of Athens. DL V. 26 relates that Aristotle wrote “nine books to Antipater.” Since intellectually Aristotle and Antipater had absolutely nothing in common, one may wonder about the content of these many letters.

2. See A.-H. CHROUST, “Aristotle and Athens: Some Comments on Aristotle's Sojourns in Athens,” *Laval Théologique et Philosophique*, vol. XXII, 1966, no. 2, p. 193.

3. To mention only a few of these slanderers: Theopompus, Theocritus of Chios, Timæus, Alexinus, Eubulides, Lycon Pythagoreus, and others. Some of these slanderous stories are recorded by Diogenes Laertius and the *Vita Aristotelis Hesychii*.

4. The traditional accounts have it that the years between 335/34 and 323 B. C. were philosophically the most productive years in Aristotle's life. This view might have to be revised somewhat, as might the view that the whole of the extant *Corpus Aristotelicum* should without exception be credited to the Stagirite.

5. In his learned work, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition* (Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, vol. 63, no. 2, Göteborg, 1957), p. 460, I. Düring explains Aristotle's return to Athens in rather idyllic terms: “When in 334, after the destruction of Thebes, he [*scil.*, Aristotle] returned to Athens in order to stay there, he did not come as a celebrated philosopher known to everybody as Alexander's tutor . . . He was merely one of the old dons of the Academy who returned, a professor among many other foreign professors in Athens.”

Now we may also understand why in the year 323 B. C., when the news of Alexander's sudden death in Babylon reached Athens and when Antipater was unable to give Aristotle military protection, Aristotle once more had to flee from Athens under circumstances almost identical with those causing him to depart from the city in the summer of 348 B. C.<sup>1</sup> Tradition has it that in 323 B. C. Aristotle faced an official indictment for impiety and blasphemy.<sup>2</sup> Such an indictment, however might have been a mere pretext — a screen issue to dispose of a much disliked and, at the moment, utterly defenseless Macedonian alien. The real reason for the persecution of Aristotle and for his renewed flight were his close political contacts with Macedonia and especially with Antipater.<sup>3</sup> Seen in a larger context it would appear that much of Aristotle's life was, in some ways, inextricably intertwined with Macedonia's political and military fortunes. In 348 B. C. Aristotle, the Macedonian, departed from Athens because of Philip's capture and destruction of Olynthus;<sup>4</sup> in 335 B. C. he returned to Athens when

1. See A.-H. CHROUST, "Aristotle's Flight from Athens in the Year 323 B. C.," *Historia*, vol. XV, no. 2 (1966), pp. 185-192.

2. DL V. 5-6; ATHENAEUS, *Deipnosophistae* XV. 696 A ff.; *Vita Aristotelis Hesychii* 6; II VA 20-21; IV VA 7-10; 7-10; II VS 3. VM 41, VV 19 and VL 43 only relate that the Athenians "turned against Aristotle."

3. This seems also to be reflected in Usaibia (IV VA 20-21): "After the Athenians had decreed to erect this inscription [honoring Aristotle], the decision was opposed by an Athenian named Himeraeus. Concerning Aristotle, this man voiced an entirely different opinion. He pounced upon the *stèle* on which the Athenians had decreed to engrave the laudatory inscription and which they had erected in a place called The Summit of the city, and hurled it down." Usaibia's report apparently refers to the following incident: in 323 B. C. the anti-Macedonian faction in Athens, which most certainly hated Aristotle, for a short period of time assumed political control. Among these anti-Macedonian partisans were such men as Hyperides, Lycurgus, Demosthenes and Himeraeus. They probably vented their dislike for Macedonia and for Aristotle by removing the honorific *stèle* commemorating the many services Aristotle had rendered the city of Athens. This incident, therefore, might be historical (it would have taken place in the summer or early fall of 323 B. C.), and as such might lend support to the thesis that at some earlier time the Athenians actually had erected a *stèle* in honor of Aristotle. Historical is also the additional remark of Usaibia (IV VA 20), namely, that Himeraeus subsequently was executed by Antipater (though certainly not for the removal of the *stèle*) after the latter had defeated the Greek rebels in the battle of Crannon (in 322 B. C.) and re-occupied Athens. Usaibia (IV VA 21) also maintains that subsequently this *stèle*, which had been removed by Himeraeus, was restored by a man called Stephanus, who in this apparently acted with the approval of many Athenians: "On the [new *stèle*] they engraved such praise of Aristotle as had been inscribed on the original monument. Moreover, they explicitly mentioned Himeraeus as the man who had removed the original *stèle*, recorded what this Himeraeus had done, and recommended that he be exiled and the city purified." There is no way of verifying this latter account of Usaibia. We know, however, that in Athens damaged or willfully destroyed honorific inscriptions and monuments were subsequently restored by special decrees of the general assembly.

4. It may also be claimed that originally, in 367 B. C., Aristotle went to Athens for "political" reasons — in order to escape the murderous interdynastic struggles which convulsed Macedonia between 369 and 365 B. C. An echo of these events may still be detected in VM 3, VV 2, and IV VA 3.

Macedonia's military might once more made the city accessible to him; and in 323 B.C., when the death of Alexander seemed to spell the end of Macedonian military and political power, he had to leave the city for a second time, never to return.<sup>1</sup> Although by his personal efforts Aristotle probably had prevented the total destruction of Athens in 335 B.C., the Athenians, never loath to deal harshly and unjustly with their benefactors, repaid him with flagrant ingratitude. In this he, the Macedonian, shared the fate of many of the greatest men in Greek antiquity. Now we may also understand why in his last will and testament Aristotle does not once mention Athens.<sup>2</sup>

Anton-Hermann CHROUST.



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1. After the battle of Crannon (in 322 B.C.), Antipater once more restored Macedonian domination over Greece and Athens. By that time Aristotle was on his deathbed, however, if not already dead. Otherwise he might once more have returned to Athens.

2. See D1 V. 11-16. This testament, though in a slightly different version, can also be found in I VA and IV VA.