

Inscription from Caria Mentioning Antiochus III, Ptolemy V, and Philip V

[AXON 514]

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Abstract The ‘Three Kings’ Inscription bears the fragment of a Rhodian arbitration between Bargylia and another town in Caria. It is an important document, for it described major political events which affected western Caria on the eve of the Second Macedonian War (200-197 BC). Above all, it makes it evident that Rhodes eventually came to know about the same Syro-Macedonian connivance against Egypt and the child king Ptolemy V which Polybius (3.2.8; 15.20) later described in big words. After a detailed *status quaestionis*, the importance of comparing the Rhodian, Ptolemaic, and Polybian perspectives on Antiochus III and Philip V’s conduct is stressed here.

Keywords Syro-Macedonian pact. Ptolemy V. Antiochus III. Philip V. Bargylia. Caria. Asia Minor. Rhodes. Arbitration. Polybius.



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Object type Block; white marble; 65 × 25 × 29 cm. Fragmentary.

Chronology 188/187-181/180 a.C. [Wiemer 2001a, 9; or before the autumn of 201: Dreyer 2002, 125]

Type of inscription Decree.

Findspot and circumstances Turkey, Caria, Bargylia (Dörttepe Köyü), reportedly found in 1996 among some ruins near the village of Hasanbağ, northeast of the Bay of Bargylia (see Blümel 2000, 95).

Preservation place Turkey, Milas, Milas Museum, inv. no. 2521.

Script

- Structure: epigraphic prose.
- Execution technique: engraving.
- Letter size: ±1 cm.

Language Doric.

Lemma Blümel 2000; Wiemer 2001 a, 7 [SEG LI, 1496; Dreyer 2002, 122-3 (ll. 10-13); Dreyer 2008, 223-4 fn. 25 (ll. 10-12)]; Ma 2002, 380 [SEG LII, 1038; Boulay, Pont 2014, 49-51 (ll. 8-16)]; **LaBuff 2015, 122-9, fig. 2.5, 2.6.** Cf. Blümel 1998b, 391-2; BE 2001, 409; Wiemer 2001b, 83-5; BE 2002, 392; Walbank 2002, 251 fn. 6; Wiemer 2002, 42 fn. 14, 179 fn. 1, 180, 206 fn. 49, 207 fn. 11, 211 fn. 25, 212; BE 2003, 497; van Bremen 2003, 10; Ma 2003b, 43; Ma 2003a, 243 and fn. 3; Bresson 2003, 186; Hansen, Nielsen *Inventory* no. 887, 1116; Reger 2004, 146-8; Eckstein 2005, 233 fn. 24; Eckstein 2006, 106-7 fn. 96; Capdetrey 2007, 435, 464 no. 126; Meadows 2008, 119 fn. 18; Eckstein 2008, 155-6, 167, 177-9, 184-5, 189, 198 fn. 58, 200; Blümel 2011sa, no. 656, 125-6; Blümel 2011b, no. 656, 127; Behrwald, Brandt 2013, 207 fn. 15; Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, no. 46, 73-6; Thornton 2014, 60; Hatzopoulos 2014, 102; Marek 2016, 221; Chrubasik 2016, 68 fn. 7; Unwin 2017, 158 fn. 196; Boehm 2018, 10 fn. 28.

Text

[---]NTO[-]ΘEAYT[---]N δεξ [---]
 [---]ΣΤΑΤ[---]ΓΕ[-]ΜΩΝ [---]N κα[ι] T[---]
 [---]ΩΡΙΣ[---] ἀντικατέστα ΕΠΑ[---]ΗΤΑ[---]
 [---]ΗΜΑΙΟΣ εὔ ΒΕΒ[---]ΤΟ[---]
 [---]? Σ[-]Α[---]ΕΒΛΗ[Α][---] 5
 [---]ΘΙΗΣ[---]ΩΣ τῶν δικαίων Τ[---]ΡΤΟ[---]
 [---]ΟΙΣ ?[---]γίνεσθαι Ν[---]ΑΝΤ[---]
 [εὐχρ]ηστήκειν πολλὰκις αὐτοῖς καὶ εἰς [χρ]είας τὰς πολιτικ[ὰς αὐ]τῶν [ἄ-
 τοκα] δεδανείκειν καὶ τὰ γραφίσματα τὰ ὑπὲρ τοῦ[τ]ων παραν[εγν]ώσ-
 [θειν. σ]υστάντος δὲ πολέμου βασιλεῖ Ἀντιόχῳ ποτὶ βασιλῆ Π[το]λεμ[αῖ]-
 10 [ον τὸν] νῦν βασιλεύοντα, κυριεῦσαι τοὺς παρὰ βασιλέως Ἀντιόχ[ου]
 [---]ρων καὶ Θωδᾶσων πρὸ τοῦ παρὰ βασιλέως Φιλίππου παρα[σ.1-2]Ο[σ.2-3]
 [---]ΝΤΙ[.]Ω[.]Θεαγγέλα καὶ συμπολιτεύεσθαι Κιλλαρεῖς καὶ Θ[---]
 [---]ΙΕ[---]ΣΕΩΝΚΑ[---]ΣΑ[---]ΟΥΣ εἰς τὰν αὐτὰν [---]
 [---]Ν[βα]σιλε[---] παρανα[γ]ινώσκοντας ἐπιστο[λή]ν vel ἐπιστο[λ]ὰς 15
 [---]??[---]ΤΟ Κυλβισσεῦσι

Apparatus 1 ΘΕΑΥ[---]Ν[.] | ed. pr. |]ΝΤΩΝΘΕΑΘ[c.6-7] ΝΕΙΑ Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 2]ΓΓ[---]Ν[ed. pr. |]ΣΤΑΤΑΣ[c.4-57] ΓΓ[---]ΑΝΕΙ[c.6-7] Ο Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows | “perhaps a form of [δ]ανεί[ζω]” Ma || 3] ΑΤΕΣΤΑΕΠ[ed. pr. | άπο]κατέστα ΕΠ[Wiemer, negavit Ma |]ΩΡΙΣ[---]ΙΟ[---] ΚΑΤΕΣΤΑΕΠ[c.10-11] Ν[---]Σ Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows | [ά]φορισ[θη]? Ma |] ΗΤΑ[vel]ΝΤΑ[LaBuff || 4]ΟΣΕ[.]ΒΕΒ[---]ΤΟ[ed. pr. | c.10-11 χρ?]ηματος ΕΚΒΕΚΛ[c.8-9] ΝΤΑ Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 5]ΑΣΚΑ[.]Σ[---]ΕΚΒΕΒΛΗ[Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 6 βασιλέ]ως γ[υ]ναίκα Γ[.]ΝΤ[ed. pr. |]ΩΣ τῶν δικαίων Τ[Wiemer, ex Hallof | ποιη]σάμενοι [δ]π]ως τῶν δικαίων τ[c.6-7] ΡΤΟ Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 7]ΟΙΣΕ[.]Τ[c.10-11] Υ γίνεσθαι Τ[c.6-7] ΑΝΥΛ Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 8 καὶ ΕΙΣ[c.4] Ω[---] πο]λιτικῶ[.]ΤΩΝ Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows | πολιτικὰὶ πρόσδοι et πολιτικὰ σώματα recusando coniecit Wiemer || 8-9 εὐχρ]ηστήκειν πολλα[ά]κις αὐτοῖς καὶ εἰς χρεῖας τὰς πο]λιτικ[ά]ς αὐ]τῶν [ἄ]τοκα] δεδανείκειν Wiemer || 9 δεδανείκειν Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows | κατὰ ψαφίσματα ed. pr. || 9-10 παραν[---]ω[ed. pr. | παραν]εγν]ώ[σ]θη Wiemer, (recusando παραν[αγν]ω[σ]θέντα) coniciens || 9 παραν]εγν]ώ[σ]θη Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 10 Π[το]λεμ[αῖ]ον Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 10-11 Π[το]λεμ[αῖ]ον | Πτολεμαίου τὸν νῦν βασιλεύοντα recusando coniecit Wiemer | Π[το]λεμ[αῖ]ον τὸν νῦν βασιλεύοντα Wiemer || 11 νῦν Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 12]σων ed. pr. | Κιλλά]ρων καὶ Ma, Reger, ex Crowther/Meadows | Θωδασῶν ed. pr., Wiemer, Ma, Dreyer, Reger | Θωδασῶν Dreyer || 12-13 παρα[γ]εν]ο[μ]ένου? [---]ΝΤΙ[.]Ω[ed. pr., (erratum typographicum παρα[γ]εν]ο[μ]ένου); prae spatio negant Ma et LaBuff || 12 παρα[δ]εδ]ό[σ]θαι recusando coniecit Wiemer (ex Errington) || 12-13 παρα[δ]ο[θή]μειν Ἄντι[ό]χῳ Wiemer (non παρα[δ]ο[θή]μειν ut a LaBuff de eo relatum); negat Dreyer || 12 ΠΑΡΑ Ο[.] (sequuntur rotundae litterae reliqua) Dreyer || 12-13 παρα[δ]ο[θή]μειν Ἄντι[ό]χῳ Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 13 inter ΩΑ et ΩΙ haesitavit LaBuff | καὶ Θ[ε]αγγελεῖς] recusando coniecit Reger | καὶ Θ[ω]δασεῖς Reger, Boehm | καὶ Θ[LaBuff || 13-14 Θ[ε]αγγελεῖς? LaBuff || 14 [.]ΕΠ[---]ΑΣΕΩΝΚΑΓΓΛ[Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows || 15 [c.11]]βασιλ[Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows |]γινώσκοντας ἐπιστ[ed. pr. | παρανα]γινώσκοντας ἐπιστορ[λ]ην vel ἐπιστορ[λ]ὰς Wiemer || 16]ΤΟ Κυλβισσεῦ[σι ed. pr., Wiemer, LaBuff |] ΤΟ Κυλβισσεῦ[σι Ma, ex Crowther/Meadows.

Translation [...] of the just things [...] be(come) [...] have often been of service to them and for their civic needs have made loans without interest and the decrees made on behalf of these things were read publicly. At the time when war broke out from King Antiochus against King Ptolemy – the one now ruling –, and King Antiochus’ soldiers had occupied [...] and Thodasa before those sent by (?) King Philip [...] Theangela and the Killareans and Th[...] arranged a *sympoliteia* [...] into the same [...] king [...] reading publicly a letter/the letters [...] to the Kylbisseans [...]

Adapted from: LaBuff 2015, 125

Links

Attalus: http://www.attalus.org/docs/seg/s51_1496.html.

Commentary

“the most effective propaganda
is usually the truth”¹

1 Introduction

A handful of ‘big history’ events which ancient historians pondered from different angles are known to have found some epigraphic confirmation. Such confirmations tend to raise more questions than they answer. The Mesha Stele and the Lyon Tablet are just two splendid examples of this. As for historians, to focus on authorial points of view *per se* may or may not respond to the needs of an accurate reconstruction of facts. This is a trait common to engraved documents as well as to historical prose. Given that, the fragmentary state of sources is just a further interpretative issue, as is the case with the ‘marvellous’² Hellenistic inscription from Asia Minor examined here. The debate on the circumstances referred to by this Rhodian text has depended on the variables of authorial perspective – i.e. ‘big historiography’ such as that of Polybius, but also of Zeno and Antisthenes of Rhodes. As cogently observed by John Ma about Hellenistic kings (read: map colouring) always on the move across land and sea, the Rhodian arbitration examined here is also useful for concretely grasping the complexity of that ‘royal spacetime’. The latter, in fact, can be observed both on a local level and in a time when – starting from the mid-third century BC – such local phenomena began to affect the aforesaid ‘big history’ no less than they had always been affected by it.³

Therefore, this recently discovered text from Bargylia, on the Carian coast, has the advantage of taking part in the reconstruction of facts and in the understanding of the historical reframing of a crucial moment between the third and second century. Despite its disastrous state of preservation, it is an important monument with a name of its own. Eckstein, for instance, confidently referred to it over time as the “Bargylia Inscription”⁴ and even the “Three Kings’ Inscription”⁵ – hereafter TKI – with respect to Philip V of Macedon (221-179), Antiochus III of Syria (223-187), and Ptolemy V of Egypt

To my friend Giovanni: with his help, Antiochus and Philip’s plan would have succeeded.

¹ Eckstein 2008, 178.

² Ma 2003b, 43.

³ Ma 2003a, 243. See specifically Ma 2002, 381-2. All dates of ancient events are BC.

⁴ Eckstein 2008, 167, 177-8, 189.

⁵ Eckstein 2005, 233 fn. 24 and 2008, *Index*, s.v. “Bargylia Inscription”. See already Blümel 2000, 96 (“Es ist die Rede von drei Königen”); Ma 2003a, 243 fn. 3 (“le ‘décret des trois rois’”) and 2003b, 43.

(204-180). From a merely descriptive standpoint, this last labelling is really appropriate, for three kings and their tangled power relations⁶ are mentioned within three lines – which is quite remarkable.⁷

The study of the TKI is not without difficulties – not only due to the fragmentary condition of the stone and the text, but also because much has been written about its historical significance, in different commentaries and with subtle nuances, in the last two decades. Much of this new commentary consists of a detailed and necessary *status quaestionis* of the identification (§ 3.1), the date (§ 3.2), the text (§ 3.3), and the historical contextualisation (§ 3.4) of such a remarkable testimony. In the end, much attention is paid to some thematic nuclei enabling an original reflection (§ 4) on the importance of comparing the Rhodian, Ptolemaic, and Polybian perspectives on Antiochus III and Philip V's conduct on the eve of the Second Macedonian War.

2 Description

The stone bearing the TKI is a rectangular, white marble block of medium size (65 cm wide, 25 cm high, 29 cm deep), with anathyrosis on the top; the right side is flat, the left and bottom roughly hewn; the edges are noticeably damaged, while the right upper corner is broken off.⁸ Such a solid stone was probably part of a building. This indicates that perhaps it belonged to an epigraphic dossier.⁹ It was found and eventually removed by private individuals from a ruin site adjoining the village of Hasanbağlı, northeast of the Bay of Bargylia (Dörttepe Köyü), then moved to the Milas Museum for safekeeping¹⁰ (inv. no. 2521). Its eventual discoverer, Wilhelm Blümel (in 1996 “am Hof von Hasan Çolak, Dörttepe Köyü, Hasanbağlı Mah(allesi)”), is also the *editor princeps* (2000).¹¹

In anticipating the content of the stone, Blümel immediately noticed its importance for the history of the reigns of Antiochus III, Philip V, and Ptolemy.¹² Unfortunately, such a relevant text insists on a broken, badly weathered support and is therefore largely illegible. Only the central lines have been satisfactorily reconstructed. In

⁶ So Ma 2003a, 243.

⁷ See Dreyer 2002, 125 and Ma 2002, 379.

⁸ Description: Blümel 2000, 95; Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 73 no. 46 and LaBuff 2015, 124.

⁹ See Wiemer 2001a, 8; BE 2002, 392 and Reger 2004, 147.

¹⁰ Blümel 1998b, 391: “zur Aufbewahrung in das Museum von Milas gebracht”. See also Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 73-5 no. 46.

¹¹ Blümel 2000, 95.

¹² Blümel 1998b, 391-2.

general, where the surface of the stone is not lost, it is quite difficult “to distinguish incidental marks from the mason’s cuts”.¹³ Getting the big picture is not easy either, due to the fact that the letter spacing was probably unequal.¹⁴ Moreover, only rare syllables and complete intelligible words survive at the edges of the text.¹⁵

Considering two levels on which inscriptions draw our attention - i.e. the content of the text and the history of the monument itself -, this is a case in which the former element has nearly disappeared (see only ll. 8-10), while fragments of the internal narrative about events in the recent past¹⁶ can somehow be restored. Indeed, understanding the reasons behind this document depends almost entirely on reconstructing its internal narrative.

3 Interpretations

3.1 First Assessment

As mentioned, the discovery and the content of the stone were briefly anticipated in an account of the results of the 1996 excavation campaign in western Caria.¹⁷ In the couple of years between the discovery and the announcement, Blümel was able to understand much of the scanty content of the TKI, thus clarifying its dating and geographical context: “Es geht um Ereignisse der Jahre 204/203, in denen Antiochos in Karien Angriffe auf ptolemäisches Hoheitsgebiet unternahm”.¹⁸ The dating was further clarified later. The third king’s name was correctly interpreted as “Ptolemy” only thanks to the initial Π (with a preliminary hesitation between Ptolemy IV Philopator or his son Ptolemy V Epiphanes). The reading Π[το]λεμ[αῖ]ον¹⁹ and the final identification with Ptolemy V only came, respectively, in the 2000 *editio princeps* and with Wiemer’s historical contextualisation of the stone.²⁰

13 LaBuff 2015, 126.

14 Wiemer 2001a, 2 approximately determined the line length of the TKI conjecturing that three to four letters are missing at the beginning of l. 10 and four to five at the beginning of ll. 11-13. See also Ma 2002, 379-80 and LaBuff 2015, 123, 126.

15 According to Wiemer 2001a, 4, in l. 3 there would hardly be any alternatives to ἀποκατέστα.

16 See Dreyer 2002, 125.

17 Blümel 1998b, 387-95.

18 Blümel 1998b, 391-2. The same words in Blümel 2000, 96.

19 Here I follow LaBuff’s recent reading Π[το]λεμ[αῖ]ον. As noted by Wiemer 2001a, 2 fn. 4, there is no space at the beginning of l. 11 for the patronymic Πτολεμαίου.

20 Blümel 2000 and Wiemer 2001a.

Let us focus on Blümel's translation of ll. 11-12:

Die von König Antiochos geschickten Truppen haben die Orte [---]a und Thōdasa vor denen von seiten des Königs Philippos geschickten in Besitz genommen.

This translation depends on the reconstruction $\pi\rho\acute{o}\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma\ \Phi\iota\lambda\acute{\iota}\pi\pi\omicron\upsilon$ ²¹ $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha[\gamma\epsilon\nu]\omicron[\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\upsilon$ and sees Antiochus III's troops seizing Thodasa and another town, whose name is lost, before those sent by Philip V.²² Ma and Reger conjectured that the lost town was Kildara: $\text{Κιλλά}]\rho\omega\nu$.²³ LaBuff only confirmed that the first visible letter is *rho*.²⁴ For its part, Blümel's restoration was eventually rejected by Wiemer on the grounds that it would only have that meaning if a noun such as $\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon$ ('army') or $\sigma\tau\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\upsilon$ ('expedition, army') could be added to the participle $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha[\gamma\epsilon\nu]\omicron[\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\upsilon$ at the beginning of the following line – which is not the case.²⁵ Wiemer proposed $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha[\delta\acute{o}]\omicron[\theta\acute{\eta}]\mu\epsilon\iota\nu\ \Lambda']\nu\tau\iota[\acute{o}]\chi\omega\iota$ instead²⁶ – despite the lack of royal title in this case alone.²⁷ This last proposal would accord well with the nodal point of the monument's history, but LaBuff's observation that it is 'unnatural' for the preceding preposition *para* to indicate agency should be taken into account. Hence the necessarily suggestive and hypothetical translation "those sent by" is followed by a question mark; moreover, the word at the beginning of l. 13 could also be the name of a man previously introduced in the inscription with his patronymic and title.²⁸ In general, Dreyer has proven to be sceptical – on a palaeographical basis – about the reconstructions of ll. 10-13 which followed the *editio princeps*, but not about the interpre-

²¹ For Polybian parallels of this expression in a military sense, see Wiemer 2001a, 1 fn. 2.

²² The same as in Blümel 2000, 95-6. *Contra*, see Ma 2002, 380 and LaBuff 2015, 126 (Blümel's $[\gamma\epsilon\nu]$ is deemed as "untenable"). See Dreyer 2002, 123 fn. 21, 124 fn. 28 (according to him, $\pi\rho\acute{o}\ \tau\omicron\upsilon$ linguistically introduces the end of active warfare in the area of Bargylia); Ma's (2002, 380) translation: "before the man arriving from King Philip" and the one by LaBuff (2015, 125): "before the officer of King Philip".

²³ Ma 2002, 380 (see also 382) and Reger 2004, 147.

²⁴ LaBuff 2015, 123.

²⁵ Wiemer 2001a, 1.

²⁶ Wiemer 2001a, 2. Of course, *paradidōmi* is here in the sense of 'handing over' rather than 'betraying' (in a legal sense: see Ma 2002, 381).

²⁷ See *BE* 2002, 392: "omission [...] très surprenante".

²⁸ LaBuff 2015, 126 (see also his other arguments), 128 (perhaps a Rhodian general who had recovered/was recovering territory taken by Philip V?). But – LaBuff observed – it could also be the genitive of a Carian name ending with the clearly legible *omega*, on which $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ in l. 12 depended. See LaBuff's provisional translation for this hypothesis: "those (sent) from King Antiochos took control of the [community X] and the Thodaseans before [Y] (sent) from King Philip [verb] Theangela".

tation relating to the Syro-Macedonian pact.²⁹ Dreyer saw Blümel's edition as the most reliable.

In conclusion, Blümel noticed the novelty of the place-name Thodasa³⁰ (from the demonym Θωδάσων at l. 12).³¹ In addition, he also recognised the Doric dialect as the language of the TKI and the infinitives ending in -ειν (e.g. l. 9: δεδαυείκειν) as a Rhodian feature.³²

3.2 Date

A debate on the dating of the events mentioned in the new inscription preceded the *editio princeps* itself. As early as 2000, Wiemer took the view that the events narrated fit better into the year 197/196,³³ for which Livy attests the presence of Macedonian troops in Bargylia, a town separated from the sea by a rugged set of hills:³⁴ *Macedones [...] Bargylias petentes fugerunt; eodem et Dinocrates³⁵ perfugit.*³⁶ On the other hand, Blümel felt that this did not fit the fact that, according

²⁹ Dreyer 2002, 123-4 (also fn. 21 for the syntax). See also BE 2003, 497. On the other hand, LaBuff 2015, 126 found no satisfactory restoration for his reading παρα[1-2]Q[. Dreyer rejected the *delta* of Wiemer's παρα[δ]ο[θή]μειν alleging that that gap would have accommodated more than simply a *delta*. According to LaBuff, however, it is only a matter of irregular spacing. See also *infra*.

³⁰ See also BE 2001, 409 and Reger 2004, 147. Thodasa is absent from Hansen, Nielsen's *Inventory* (Caria: 1108-37).

³¹ Also Blümel 2000, 96.

³² Blümel 1998b, 392 and 2000, 95. See also Wiemer 2001a, 1, 8 ("Festzustehen scheint auch, daß es sich um einen von Rhodiern verfaßten Text handelt"); SEG LI, 1496; Dreyer 2002, 122, 126 and Eckstein 2008, 177. But see Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 75 no. 46: "due to the fragmentary nature of the text its connection with the island is not easy to understand". For a further example, see e.g. Pugliese Carratelli 1939-40, no. 18, l. 23. For the infinitive, see in general Buck 1928, 110, 112, 150, 157 and Thumb, Kieckers 1932, 192, 216, 278, 295. The perfect with present endings is attested in Magna Graecia, as well as in inscriptions from Akragas, Gela, Syracuse, and Entella (for which see Giangiulio 1982 and Garcia Teijeiro, Molinos Tejada 1988). See also Mimbrea 2012, 232 and, in general, Ahrens 1839-43, II: 328-31; Bechtel 1921-4, II: 646-7; Sicca 1924, 125-6 and Salvaneschi 1975, 89-91.

³³ Reported by Blümel 2000, 96. See also Ma 2002, 381: according to him, the Syrian seizure of the towns mentioned may have occurred as late as 197 BC.

³⁴ For Bargylia, see Strabo 14.2.20 (ἐν δὲ τῇ παραλίᾳ τῆς ἠπείρου κατὰ τὴν Μυνδιάν Ἀστυπάλαια ἔστιν ἄκρα καὶ Ζεφύριον: εἴτ' εὐθύς ἡ Μύνδος λιμένα ἔχουσα, καὶ μετὰ ταύτην Βαργύλια, καὶ αὐτὴ πόλις); Plin. *NH* 5.107; Pompon. 1.85 (Βάργυλος); Ptol. 5.2.9 (between "Iassus", i.e. Iasus, and Myndus) and Steph. Byz. s.v. Βαργύλια (οὐδετέρως, πόλις Καρίας, ἦν Ἀνδανον οἱ Καρὲς φασιν, Ἀχιλλέως κτίσιμα λέγοντες. ἔστι δὲ πλησίον Ἰάσου καὶ Μύνδου. ὠνομάσθη δὲ ἀπὸ Βαργύλου, ὃς πληγεὶς ὑπὸ Πηγάσου τελευτᾷ, Βελλεροφόντης δ' ἀνιαθεὶς ἐπὶ τῷ ἑταίρῳ πόλιν ἔκτισε Βαργύλια). See also Hansen, Nielsen, *Inventory*, 1113 no. 879 and Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 72-3.

³⁵ *Scil. the regius praefectus*: see Liv. 33.18.6.

³⁶ Liv. 33.18.18-19. See Blümel 2000, 96 and Wiemer 2001a, 3. For an assessment of the situation in Caria in the summer of 197 BC, see Errington 1986 (edition and his-

to Labuff's provisional translation of ll. 10-11, Antiochus III's troops took possession (κυριεῦσαι) of certain localities before those sent (?) by Philip V: πρὸ τοῦ παρὰ βασιλέως Φιλίππου παρα[. At that time, in fact, Philip's men had occupied Bargyilia for several years - at least since the winter of 201/200.³⁷

Late 201 is precisely when the military-historical events discussed here are most likely to have taken place.³⁸

At first glance, it seemed more plausible to Blümel to place the TKI in the events of 204/203,³⁹ when "unsicher war, welcher Ptolemaios regierte (der Thronwechsel war 204 proklamiert worden,⁴⁰ aber der junge Ptolemaios V. stand unter der Vormundschaft von Ministern)" and Antiochos III began a war against Ptolemy's foreign possessions⁴¹

torical commentary of a contemporary inscription from Euromos). See also Kleu 2015, 116-39 and 2016.

37 See *infra*, fn. 117.

38 See Eckstein 2008, 156, 177 (autumn).

39 But see now Blümel 2011, 125-6 no. 656 and Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 73 no. 46 and *infra*.

40 The dates of Ptolemy V's accession and of the Syro-Macedonian agreement depend on the *vexata quaestio* of Ptolemy IV's death, whose stumbling block is the concealment which we read about in Just. *Epit.* 30.2.6: according to him, Philopator's *mors* [...] *diu* (how long?) *occultata fuit*. In 1936, Walbank placed the death as between Aug. and Sept. 204 and the accession as during about the same months of 203. A concise status: Jouguet 1937, 195 fn. 1 (accession: Nov. 205); Bickerman 1940 (a.: 12 Mar./8 Sept. 204); Samuel 1962, 113 (death: 28 Nov. 205; a.: summer/8 Sept. 204); Holleaux, *Études* V, 332 and fn. 1 (a.: 28 Nov. 203); Pédech 1964, 146 (a.: 28 Nov. 203); Schmitt 1964, 189-92, 236 (d.: summer 204; a.: soon after); Walbank 1967-79, 435-7 (d.: summer 204; a.: soon after, or one year later); Seibert 1967, 40 (d.: summer 204); Pestman 1967, 40-2 (d.: 28 Nov. 205; a.: summer 204); Skeat 1969, 32 n. 8 (a.: 28 Nov. 205); Will 1982, 108-11 (d. and a.: summer 204); Abel 1983 (d.: about 26 Mar. 204; a.: the same days, *ex* Abel 1967, 72, where the death was on 28 Nov. 205); Hazzard 1995, 427 (a.: summer 204); Grimm 1997, 233 (d.: summer/early autumn 204); Hölbl 2001, 133, 149-50 fn. 38 (d.: spring/summer 204; a.: soon after); Huss 2001, 470 (d.: mid July/mid Aug. 204; followed by Mittag 2003, 168 fn. 37). The assumed 28 Nov. 205 is 17 Phaophi (l. 46) of Ptolemy V's regnal year 9 (l. 6), which the decree on the Rosetta Stone indicates as the day when he "took over his father's kingship" (l. 47). The assumed 26 Mar. 204 is the Macedonian 4 Xandikos, the Egyptian 18 Mecheir of Ptolemy V's year 9 - the date of the *psēphisma* itself of the Rosetta Stone (l. 6). It is a subtle point of anniversaries. 17 Phaophi of year 9 should correspond with Ptolemy V's coming of age and of the *Anaklētēria* related by Plb. 18.55.3-4 among the events of year 4 of the 145th Olympiad (197/196 BC). 18 Mecheir - Macedonian 4 Xandikos - of year 9 should correspond with the Memphite coronation of Ptolemy V as a pharaoh, and not, as in Bickerman 1940, 126-7, with the Alexandrian *anadeixis* determining in Plb. 15.25.3-6 the open admission (*anthomologēsis*) of Philopator's passing. In Claudius Ptolemy's *Royal Canon* (see Mommsen 1898, 447-53) his death occurs between Oct. 205 and Oct. 204. Some older scholars relied on it. It is interesting to note the existence of an Egyptian tradition attested in epichoric documents (see Walbank 1967, 435-7) placing the start of Ptolemy V's year 2 in Oct. 204, and of a Polybian one placing his proclamation in 203/202, after the summer of 203 (see Schmitt 1964, 193-4), as well as after the news of his father's death in the events of the previous Olympic year.

41 Blümel 2000, 96, with a special reference to Robert, *Amyzon* no. 10 (= McCabe, *Amyzon Inscriptions* no. 42; see also Ma 2002, 294-5) (ca. 203) and *I.Labraunda* II no. 46

or hegemonic system – ultimately, the Fifth Syrian War (202-195).⁴² Philopator probably died between spring and autumn of 204. According to Wiemer, however, nothing prevents the succession to Ptolemy IV from being mentioned in the large gap at the beginning of the TKI. Rather, the valuable chronological specification τὸν νῦν βασιλεύοντα only implies that Ptolemy V was still alive when the arbitration occurred.⁴³ We know that Epiphanes died in the autumn of 180.⁴⁴ This can be regarded as the most obvious *terminus ante quem* for dating the TKI. It follows that there was an interval of several years between the change of ruler in the Ptolemaic kingdom and the composition of the text.⁴⁵

Determining the *terminus post quem* depended on Wiemer's recognition of the TKI as the fragment of a Rhodian arbitration⁴⁶ between Bargylia and another unknown town in Caria (see *infra*). There was no lack of occasions for a Rhodian mediation between Carian *poleis* at the time of Antiochus III, Philip V, and Ptolemy V. Logically, the most likely occasion came after the end of Seleucid rule beyond the

(= McCabe, *Labraunda Inscriptions* no. 44) (ca. 203) – two letters from Antiochus III and Zeuxis to their soldiers – as evidence of the presence of Seleucid troops in the region. He also quoted *I.Iasos* no. 150 (= McCabe, *Iasos Inscriptions* no. 70) as evidence that, approximately ten or fifteen years earlier, Rhodes “bot als Seemacht den Küstenstädten in der Region Schutz”. In fact, that specific inscription concerns the defence of Iasos. For Egypt's foreign policy at the time of Ptolemy IV, see Huss 1976 (esp. 193-200 on Caria).

42 For the Fifth Syrian War in general, see Schmitt 1964, Index, s.v. “Antiochos III”. no. B 8; Gera 1987; 1998, 21-5; Hölbl 2001, 136-7; Huss 2001, 489-92; Bar-Kochva 2008, 146-57 (the battle of Panium); Dreyer 2008, 217-20; Grainger 2010, 245-71; Gerardin 2017, 84-95; Johstono 2018 (again on Panium); Chrubasik 2019; Lorber 2021 (prev. Holleaux, *Études* III, 317-35 for the chronology).

43 Wiemer 2001a, 3. But see Dreyer 2002, 125 and fnn. 30-1: rather, the specification should have distinguished Ptolemy V from his father, whose relatively long reign of eighteen years would have just ended. See also Ma 2002, 380-1 and Reger 2004, 147 fn. 7. See e.g. *IG XII.3* 464, ll. 3-4: ἔτι προτέροις βασιλεύσιν | [πατρι] τε] κ[αί] π[α]ππ[ω]ι καὶ νῦν[ν] βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίωι (see Hiller von Gaertringen 1899, 191; McInerney 2017, 139 and Licciardello 2022, no. 187).

44 Ptolemy V died between September and early October 180, not yet thirty years old. See Samuel 1962, 139 (but “before 20 May”, followed by Hölbl 2001, 142); Skeat 1969, 13 and Bielman Sánchez, Lenzo 2015, 153-4. According to a tradition, the king was poisoned by his own worried *philoï*. He had disclosed – perhaps with irony, since he had been asked how he intended to fund a new war for Coele-Syria – that he saw them themselves as his “walking treasures” (Diod. 29.29). Therefore, Epiphanes' death would be indirectly connected to the system of Seleucid attacks on the Egyptian hegemony which can be seen in the TKI.

45 See Wiemer 2001a, 3.

46 See BE 2002, 392: “il ne s'agirait point d'un décret, mais d'un arbitrage rhodien (d'où le rappel de certains épisodes de l'histoire politique ayant entraîné des changements dans la situation de telle ou telle communauté)”. For Hellenistic interstate arbitrations in general, see Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca*², 101-3; Magnetto, *Arbitrati*; Ager, *Arbitrations*, esp. 4-35; Magnetto 2016 and 2018.

Taurus,⁴⁷ i.e. after the Peace of Apamea (188),⁴⁸ when Rome began to appear as a “puissance orientale, sans posséder un territoire en Orient”.⁴⁹

The stone is therefore to be dated between 188 and 180 BC,⁵⁰ at a certain distance in time from the events narrated. The theme of memory will be discussed at the conclusion of this commentary.

On the contrary, Dreyer expressed some doubts on the ‘fundamentally neutral’ attitude of giving each of the royal opponents the title of *basileus*: “eine Rücksicht, die gegenüber Philipp nach 197 und gegenüber Antiochos nach 188 nicht mehr nötig gewesen wäre”.⁵¹ The TKI would therefore date back to 201 BC, i.e. when the Rhodians had good reason to act cautiously towards Antiochus III – then appearing as a *megas* conqueror (see *infra*) – and shortly before Philip V arrived in Caria. Such ‘neutrality’, according to Dreyer, was to suffer a serious blow (also) when Philip occupied Bargylia τοῦ χειμῶνος ἤδη καταρχομένου⁵² in that same year. As a result, the TKI would precede in a very short time the full understanding of the Syro-Macedonian connivance in the international arena.⁵³ Such understanding was the sudden spreading of a “shocking conviction” (*doxa ektarasousa apantas*).⁵⁴

The making of the agreement is generally dated by scholars as the winter of 203/202.⁵⁵ As is well known, those years were of crucial importance in the history of the Hellenistic kingdoms. As Huss has reminded us in his book devoted to Ptolemaic Egypt,⁵⁶ Antiochus III had then just completed his great expedition to the Upper Regions (212-205), thus appearing – according to Polybius, who normally held Hellenistic kings in low esteem – to be worthy of king-

⁴⁷ See Thornton 1995.

⁴⁸ Wiemer 2001a, 9. See also Wiemer 2001b, 84 (see also pp. 137-49); Wiemer 2002, 212; Bresson 2003, 186 and Boulay, Pont 2014, 51.

⁴⁹ Jouguet 1937, 195. See in general McDonald 1967; McDonald, Walbank 1969; Poláček 1971; Paltiel 1979; Stasse 2009; Payen 2016; 2020.

⁵⁰ Eckstein 2008, 156, 178, for his part, proposed approximately 195-185 BC. See also Blümel 2011, 125-6 no. 656 and Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 73 no. 46 (end of the 3rd or beginning of the 2nd cent.); LaBuff 2015, 128, 179 fn. 127 (it refers to events of the years 203-197, but is of slightly later date).

⁵¹ Dreyer 2002, 125.

⁵² Plb. 16.24.1.

⁵³ Dreyer 2002, 126 and fn. 35.

⁵⁴ App. *Mac.* 4.1. See *infra*.

⁵⁵ Schmitt 1964, 226-9; Ma 1999, 74; Eckstein 2005, 228; 2006, 110 and 2008, 129.

⁵⁶ Huss 2001, 473-4. See also Dreyer 2002, 119-20 and 2008, 224.

ship.⁵⁷ The Peace of Phoenice (205), as we read in Livy,⁵⁸ had freed Philip V from the First Macedonian War; and the Romans had decisively cut off Hasdrubal's expedition in Italy at the Battle of the Metaurus (207).⁵⁹ As for the Ptolemies – a dynasty whose very existence was now at risk, inasmuch as it depended on a single surviving child – Huss called what happened to them a “grim joke of history”.⁶⁰

On the contrary, Philip V could reasonably dream of revisiting the ancestral Antigonid dominance on the Aegean and the Straits, and the ‘Great’ Antiochus III could hope for the same regarding Coele-Syria, Asia Minor, and Thrace. There is no lack of clues or evidences. For instance, golden staters minted in the free Pamphylian city of Aspendus in Antiochus III's time can be interpreted as a bizarre Argead commemoration of Philip III, or better, as an act of courtesy to the fifth of this name. In his time, Seyrig did not exclude the possibility that a diplomatic conference may have taken place in this city, where the agreement may have been drawn up.⁶¹ The most important evidence is, however, the TKI.⁶²

Contrarily to Wiemer, Dreyer was also convinced of Antiochus III's personal presence in the towns mentioned in the TKI in the same months in which the Fifth Syrian War was going on. Contextually, Dreyer had an eye for the contingency of Antiochus' charismatic status as *Megas*:

Zum charismatischen Königtum gehört die Verpflichtung des Königs zum persönlich erfochtenen Sieg. Eine Delegation dieser Aufgabe barg immer die Gefahr einer Destabilisierung des herrscherlichen Charismas in sich. Auch für Antiochos war die persönliche Führung des Heeres eine stets erfüllte Pflicht.⁶³

⁵⁷ Plb. 11.34.16. Perhaps on the basis of the same tradition of 15.37.1-2, where Antiochus III starts his reign as a man “of great projects” (μεγαλεπίβολος κτλ.) but ends up well “below expectations” (καταδέεστερος αὐτοῦ). As Schmitt 1964, 235 fn. 2 pointed out, this does not necessarily mean that Antiochus delayed his attack on Coele-Syria.

⁵⁸ Liv. 29.12.11-16.

⁵⁹ Huss focused rather on the Roman conquest of Carthago Nova (209).

⁶⁰ Huss 2001, 474.

⁶¹ Seyrig 1963, 54-6.

⁶² For a recently discovered inscription perhaps not unrelated to these events (not to the agreement *per se*) on a local and memorial level, see Rossini 2020, 136-7.

⁶³ Dreyer 2002, 128. See also Dreyer 2008, 224-5.

3.3 Text

The syntax and meaning of ll. 1-7 are irretrievably lost. As mentioned earlier, only a few syllables and intelligible words (very different ones, depending on the editor) survive at the edges of the text. Blümel: βασιλέ]ως γ[υ]ναῖκα (l. 6), γίνεσθαι (l. 7). Wiemer: ἀπο]κατέσ]τα (l. 3), τῶν δικαίων (l. 6; ex Hallof). Ma, ex Crowther-Meadows: perhaps a form of δανεῖζω, as in l. 9 (l. 2); [ἀφ]ωρίσ[θη]?, “it was delimited”, referring to a territorial arbitration⁶⁴ (l. 3); χρ?]ηματος (l. 4); π]οιησάμενοι [ῶπ]ως τῶν δικαίων (l. 6).⁶⁵ LaBuff: εὔ perhaps preceded by a name or proper noun ending in -ημαιοσ and followed by perfect tense verb.

In the first legible lines (ll. 8-9), Blümel identified traces of a loan being made – about which, however, nothing precise can be ascertained. His incomplete reconstruction of l. 8⁶⁶ has been substantially offset by Wiemer’s: εὐχρησ]τήκειν πολλα]κίς αὐτοῖς καὶ εἰς [χρ]είας τὰς πο]λιτικ[ὰς αὐ]τῶν [ἄ]τοκα]⁶⁷ δεδανείκειν.⁶⁸ There is evidently no space for a third infinitive.⁶⁹ Here I follow LaBuff’s translation – “have often been of service to them and for their civic needs have made loans without interest” – because of the clear distinction between εὐχρησ]τήκειν (perfect infinitive of εὐχρηστέω, ‘to be of service’: a verb often related to loans)⁷⁰ and δεδανείκειν (from δανεῖζω, ‘to make loans’).⁷¹

Also worth noting is Wiemer’s ‘translation in progress’: first,

daß er/sie sich ihnen oftmals nützlich erwiesen und für Bedürfnisse ihrer Bürgerschaft (ein oder mehrere) Darlehen gewährt haben/haben, ohne Zinsen zu verlangen.

Then, with the addition of the words concerning the public reading of *psaphismata* on behalf of these things (ll. 9-10),

⁶⁴ See SEG LII, 1038.

⁶⁵ See also Dreyer 2002, 123-4 fn. 22.

⁶⁶]ΗΣΤΗ[.]!N πολλα[...]ΙΣΑ[...]τοις καὶ εἰς[πο]λιτικ[...]των[

⁶⁷ For the adverbial use of ἄτοκα, see Wiemer 2001a, 5 fn. 22.

⁶⁸ See Wiemer 2001a, 4: “Es geht also allgemein um Wohltaten, im besonderen aber um Darlehen. Das auf καὶ folgende εἰς wird folglich die Angabe des Zweckes eingeleitet haben, für den dieses Darlehen bestimmt war”. Compare it with Ma’s reading (ex Crowther/Meadows): εὐ]χρησ]τήκειν πολλα]κίς αὐτοῖς καὶ ΕΙΣ..4..Ω...[πο]λιτικῶ..ΤΩΝ. See also Ma 2002, 380.

⁶⁹ See Wiemer 2001a, 4.

⁷⁰ See Wiemer 2001a, 4 and fnn. 17-18.

⁷¹ LaBuff 2015, 125. For *daneizō*, see Behrwald, Brandt 2013, 207 fn. 15.

daß er/sie für Bedürfnisse ihrer Bürgerschaft (ein oder mehrere) Darlehen gegeben habe/haben, ohne Zinsen zu verlangen, und die diesbezüglichen Dekrete wurden verlesen.⁷²

In fact, Wiemer concluded that the letters ΠΑΡΑΝ[at the end of l. 9 must belong to some form of the verb *paranagignōskō*, “to read publicly” (applicable to *psēphismata*, *epistolai*, *synthēkai*...).⁷³ Here I follow LaBuff’s reconstruction καὶ τὰ ψαφίσματα τὰ ὑπὲρ τοῦ[των παραν[εγν]ώσ[θη]εν. This short statement may look like a side annotation.⁷⁴ Moreover, although the syntax and actual meaning of the last three lines cannot be restored at all, this last choice accords well with what can be understood from the scanty remains of l. 15: παρανα]γινώσκοντας ἐπιστο[λὴν or ἐπιστο[λάς, “reading publicly a letter” or “the letters”.⁷⁵ The public reading of documents is therefore mentioned twice within seven lines.

In short, the lost lines at the beginning of the TKI must have dealt with some benefits that someone had done to someone else, perhaps to a *polis* and/or its *politai*.⁷⁶ Wiemer strongly suspected that the wealthy (and self-absorbed) Rhodians were the lenders.⁷⁷

On the other hand, the first translation of the genitive absolute in the key passage of l. 10 (quoted above) identifies the ‘prime mover’ of the war which is the background to the entire fragment: “da sich Krieg eingestellt hat für König Antiochos gegen König Ptolemaios”.⁷⁸ So does Ma’s version: “when war broke out from King Antiochos against King Ptolemy”.⁷⁹ The same cannot be said for LaBuff’s translation: “when war arose between King Antiochos and the king Ptolemy who now reigns”.⁸⁰ Indeed, as noted by Wiemer, σ]υσσάντος is

⁷² Wiemer 2001a, 5, 7. According to the initial (and immediately discarded) hypothesis παραν[αγν]ώσ[θη]εντα: “gemäß den Dekreten, die bezüglich dieser Dinge verlesen worden waren”. See also *BE* 2002, 392: “(attendu qu’il est avéré *vel sim.*) que (tel personnage ou telle communauté) leur a souvent rendu service et leur a prêté de l’argent sans intérêt pour les besoins de la communauté civique et qu’il a été donné lecture des décrets relatifs à ces prêts”.

⁷³ But see also LaBuff 2015, 125.

⁷⁴ See Wiemer 2001a, 8.

⁷⁵ Wiemer 2001a, 6 and fnn. 32-5 with many examples from inscriptions, papyri, and historians.

⁷⁶ See Wiemer 2001a, 4-5.

⁷⁷ Wiemer 2001a, 5-6 with historical examples. See also Wiemer 2002, 206 fn. 49.

⁷⁸ With a second-century example from Polybius: ‘Ρωμαίοι [...] συνεστήσαντο πόλεμον πρὸς Καρχηδονίους (2.1.1; also Isoc. 10.49: Greeks and barbarians τηλικούτων συνεστήσαντο πόλεμον).

⁷⁹ Ma 2002, 380.

⁸⁰ LaBuff 2015, 125. See also Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 75 no. 46 (in the Translation: “When a war had brought king Antiochos and king Ptolemaios [...] into conflict”; in the Commentary: “the war of king Antiochos against king Ptolemy”).

the first word of a new sentence with the words τοὺς παρὰ βασιλέως Ἄντι[ό]χο[υ] as its subject and κυριεῦσαι as its verb, while πρὸ τοῦ was followed by a noun infinitive phrase.⁸¹

Soon after the start of Antiochus III's war against Ptolemy V, but shortly before Philip V arrived in Caria in the second half of 201, the Syrian troops seized two small towns, probably near Bargylia. Philip had already attacked the Ptolemaic base on Samus,⁸² and we know that, on his advance, he occupied the Rhodian Peraea, Bargylia, and Iasos, but also Heraclea at Latmus, Euromos, and Stratonicæa.⁸³ According to Wiemer's reading of the stone, Philip also reached the Ptolemaic⁸⁴ town of Theangela (in the hinterland of Bargylia, east of Halicarnassus), but subsequently handed it over to Antiochus' men before being blockaded⁸⁵ in Caria (winter 201/200). Apart from Bargylia and Theangela, Eckstein listed the following places as taken by Philip from the Ptolemaic hegemonic system: Samus, Miletus, Amyzon, Cos, Calymnus, Heraclea at Latmus, and perhaps Cnidus, Chios, and Paros.⁸⁶

L. 13 is the last one that is satisfactorily legible: Θεαγγέλα καὶ συμπολιτεύεσθαι Κιλλαρεῖς καὶ Θ[. It bears traces of a *sympoliteia* being arranged - as near as we can tell - by the Carian towns of Theangela (formerly Syangela),⁸⁷ Kildara (literarily 'the Killareans' from the variant spelling Killara), southeast of Bargylia,⁸⁸ and a third one of which only the initial Θ has survived.⁸⁹ Could it be Thodasa, or

⁸¹ Wiemer 2001a, 2, 7. See also Dreyer 2002, 124, 126.

⁸² See e.g. Habicht 1957, 233-41 no. 64 and Eckstein 2008, 151-3.

⁸³ See Wiemer 2001a, 4 fnn. 10-15 (references), 12 and Wiemer 2002, 207. See also *infra*, fn. 117.

⁸⁴ See Wiemer 2002, 180.

⁸⁵ But Walbank 1967, 529 doubted that Philip V was blockaded.

⁸⁶ Eckstein 2008, 150-63, 179.

⁸⁷ See Strabo 13.1.59 (τῶν δ' ὀκτὼ πόλεων τὰς ἕξ Μαύσωλος εἰς μίαν τὴν Ἄλικαρνασσὸν συνήγαγεν, ὡς Καλλισθένης ἱστορεῖ: Συάγγελα δὲ καὶ Μύνδον διεφύλαξε); Plin. *HN* 5.107 (*Sex oppida contributa ei [scil. to Halicarnassus] sunt a Magno Alexandro: Thangela, etc.*) and Steph. Byz. s.v. Θεάγγελα (πόλις Καρίας). See Marek 1982 (the Ptolemaic *stratēgos* Iason, son of Minnion, honoured in Theangela); Franke 1984; Blümel 1998a, 179; 2000, 96; Wiemer 2001a, 9-10 and Hansen, Nielsen, *Inventory*, 1133 no. 931. In reference to the TKI, see Boulay, Pont 2014, esp. 49-51 and LaBuff 2015, 122-4.

⁸⁸ See Blümel 1992 (letter of the Ptolemaic minister Tlepolemus to Kildara in 246: *SEG* XLII, 994); Kobes 1995; Blümel 1998a, 170; Wiemer 2002, 180; Hansen, Nielsen, *Inventory*, 1122 no. 901 (but "Killareis" as "a toponym is not attested") and LaBuff 2015, 122-3.

⁸⁹ For *sympoliteiai* in Hellenistic Asia Minor, see e.g. Reger 2004; Schuler 2010 and LaBuff 2010 (esp. on Caria).

rather Theangela itself?⁹⁰ Another candidate is e.g. Themissus.⁹¹ Unfortunately, no definitive answer is possible, also because we know of many Carian toponyms beginning with *theta*.

As for Theangela, we know that its

ruins sit atop the mountain delimiting the plain [below] to the south, thus orienting the city northward. While we can only speculate about the borders to the north, it seems probable that Theangela's territory stretched at least as far as the route leading east and northeast toward Killara, thus making them potential neighbors.⁹²

Perhaps, the *sympoliteia* destined to augment the Theangelean *dēmos* stemmed from an autonomous decision which followed the withdrawal of the Macedonian troops from Theangela. In short, it might have been

an attempt to recuperate from any damages that an invading army, whether hostile or 'friendly,' may have incurred, by combining resources with another community.⁹³

It is, apparently, the only event not tied to a king.⁹⁴ It goes without saying that this is more a hypothesis than a certainty. Given the massive presence of royal troops in the area, it is also possible that this union was decided or 'instigated'⁹⁵ by a higher superior central authority, i.e. by royal decree as in other attested cases,⁹⁶ or that some royal approval was sought.⁹⁷ This is precisely one of the many doubts surrounding the TKI, which is just as volatile as the period involved.

Due to the annoying gap between ll. 12 and 13, it is not clear whether the infinitive συμπολιτεύεσθαι depends on πρὸ τοῦ in the previous line.⁹⁸ The demonym Κυλβισσεῦσι ('to the Kylbisseans') in l. 16 refers to a place, perhaps south of Bargylia, whose toponym is

90 *Contra*, see Reger 2004, 147 fn. 9.

91 So Reger 2004, 147 and fn. 9; LaBuff 2015, 128 and fn. 126 with prev. bibl. (cautiously) and Boehm 2018, 10 fn. 28.

92 LaBuff 2015, 122.

93 LaBuff 2015, 128-9.

94 LaBuff 2015, 128.

95 SEG LI, 1496. Capdetrey 2007, 435 had no doubt about its imposition.

96 See Wiemer 2001a, 11 and Reger 2004, 147-8. For the case of Miletus in this regard, see Ma 2002, 382 with prev. bibl. See in general Herrmann 2001.

97 LaBuff 2015, 128. See also Reger 2004, 147 (in order to increase security).

98 See Dreyer 2002, 124 fn. 28 (*contra* Wiemer).

not attested.⁹⁹ In short, ll. 10-13 inform about four actions (the outbreak of the war, the Seleucid conquests, Philip V's arrival, and the *sympoliteia*) on at least three chronological stages (the outbreak, the conquests, and Philip's arrival).¹⁰⁰ In this sense – Ma remarked – the document would focus “on precedence and order of events, no doubt to prove some legal point”.¹⁰¹

Once Wiemer had proposed the major restoration παρα[δ]ο[θή]μειν Ἄ]ντι[ό]χωι, his interpretation of lines 10-13 could finally fill the gap between l. 12 and 13:

als aber König Antiochos ein Krieg gegen König Ptolemaios, der jetzt regiert, entstand, hätten die Truppen von König Antiochos (die Orte) [---]ja und Thodasa in Besitz genommen, bevor Theangela von König Philippos an Antiochos übergeben wurde¹⁰² und (bevor) die Sympolitie der Kildareis mit den Th[---] bestand ...¹⁰³

Dreyer and LaBuff's objections to Wiemer's crucial reading seem acceptable enough.¹⁰⁴ However, if three coincidences are a proof, Antiochus III is depicted here as an aggressor. Moreover, Philip V's presence as a participant in action in the very next line – again, a matter of royal spacetime – blends with a highly suspect geopolitical context, given that the general consonance with the literary tradition on these events does not go unnoticed.

As I will make clear in the conclusions, my opinion is that the key-stone could be the version handed down by Polybius himself – via Rhodes and Alexandria.

99 See Blümel 1998a, 171 (“Vermutlich südlich von Mylasa in der Nähe von Kildara und Uranion”); Blümel 2000, 96; Wiemer 2001a, 6-7 fn. 36 and Hansen, Nielsen, *Inventory*, 1116 no. 887. Perhaps an alternative spelling for Κυβλισσείζ? See Blümel 2001, 96; *SEG LI*, 1496 and *BE* 2001, 409. For the places mentioned, see also Descat 1994, 66-8.

100 So Dreyer 2002, 124.

101 Ma 2002, 381.

102 I.e. παρα[δ]ο[θή]μειν Ἄ]ντι[ό]χωι.

103 Wiemer 2001a, 3. See the translation in *BE* 2002, 392: “mais (ou d'autre part), une guerre ayant opposé le roi Antiochos au roi Ptolémée – celui qui règne actuellement –, les (troupes) envoyées par le roi Antiochos se sont rendues maîtresses de sa et de Thodasa, avant que Théangéla ne fût remise par le roi Philippe à Antiochos [...] et avant que les Killareis ne s'unissent en sympolitie avec les Th----”. Wiemer also had the opportunity to intervene (pp. 9-10) in the old controversy about whether Theangela lost its autonomy and was eventually incorporated by Halicarnassus. The point is that, according to his reading, the TKI shows that Theangela became Seleucid as early as 201, while we know that Halicarnassus remained *socia Ptolomaei* (Liv. 33.20.11-2) until at least 197. Therefore it is not possible that this constitutional *synoikismos* occurred at the time of Philip V's Asian expedition. See also *SEG LI*, 1496; *BE* 2002, 392; Boulay, Pont 2014, 49, 51 and LaBuff 2015, 129-31. But see Descat 1997 (and Boulay, Pont 2014, 51).

104 *Contra*, see Dreyer 2002, 123 and LaBuff 2015, 126, 128. See also *supra*, fn. 29.

3.4 Historical Contextualisation

3.4.1 A Premise

According to some, the badly damaged and in many places illegible inscription reveals that, during a Seleucid offensive against Ptolemaic possessions in southwestern Asia Minor, Philip V openly handed over to Antiochus III's forces the town of Theangela, which he himself had previously conquered. Although it is in line with the literary tradition on these events, this particular reading is not accepted by all, but seems to refer to a well-known context. In the meantime, the soldiers of King Antiochus – who perhaps was in Coele-Syria at that time and seems to have an apparently 'passive role' in the TKI¹⁰⁵ – “had occupied [...] and Thodasa” (ll. 10-13). Apart from the difficult interpretation of these moves, they have now become a common and shared notion.¹⁰⁶ In short, it is quite clear that the TKI contained a detailed and now fragmentary description of major political events which affected western Caria on the eve of the Second Macedonian War (200-197).¹⁰⁷

Likewise, it is self-evident that, at some point between the third and second century, the Rhodian government¹⁰⁸ eventually came to know¹⁰⁹ about the same Syro-Macedonian connivance against Egypt and the child king Ptolemy V that Polybius and others later described in big words:¹¹⁰ ποτι (= πρὸς) βασιλῆ Π[το]λεμ[αῖ]ον τὸν νῦν βασιλεύοντα. That they regarded Antiochus III as the aggressor – συυστάντος δὲ πολέμου βασιλεῖ Ἀντιόχῳι ποτι βασιλῆ Π[το]

¹⁰⁵ So Dreyer 2002, 124.

¹⁰⁶ See e.g. Marek 2016, 221; Chrubasik 2016, 68 fn. 7 and Unwin 2017, 158 fn. 196.

¹⁰⁷ So Wiemer 2001a, 8. See *infra*, fn. 121.

¹⁰⁸ But e.g. also the Athenians (see Eckstein 2005, 233 fn. 24 and Eckstein 2008, 206-11). For Rhodes and the Ptolemies in the 3rd cent., see Wiemer 2001b, 97-109. For the Rhodian interests in Caria in the Hellenistic age, see Bresson 2003.

¹⁰⁹ See Eckstein 2008, 177, 184-5, 189, 200.

¹¹⁰ Plb. 3.2.8; 15.20; 16.1.8-9; Liv. 31.14.5; App. *Mac.* 4.1-2; Pomp. Trog. prol. 30; Just. *Epit.* 30.2.8; Porph. *BNJ* 260 F 45 (*ap.* Hieron. *Comm. in Dan.* 11.13-14); Joh. Antioch. *FHG* IV.558 F54 (= F 129 Roberto = F 76 Mariev). Perhaps a reference to it is to be found, with all the 'trappings' of officialdom, in the honorary decree for Ptolemy V on the Rosetta Stone, *OGIS* I no. 90, ll. 20-21: “he disposed that cavalry, infantry forces, and ships should be sent out against those who invaded Egypt both by sea and by land” (προενοήθη δὲ καὶ ὅπως ἐξαποσταλώσιν δυνάμεις ἰππικαὶ τε καὶ πεζικαὶ καὶ νῆες ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐπελθόντας | ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον κατὰ τε τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ἠπειρον). See Virgilio, *Regalità ellenistica*², 227 fn. 548, who regarded the agreement as a matter of fact. For Polybius' important denunciation of the pact (15.20), see *infra*.

λεμ[αῖ]ον (ll. 10-11)¹¹¹ – is no less clear. Of course, Antiochus’ striking depiction as an aggressor in Bargylia as well as in the report provided by the alarmed Rhodian envoys at Rome in 201¹¹² did not escape the attention of critics.¹¹³ On the other hand, Dreyer expressed the view that the arbitration preceded by a very short time Rhodes’ ultimate understanding of the Syro-Macedonian connivance and that the statement in ll. 10-11 is therefore as unequivocal as it is intrinsically neutral.¹¹⁴ In this sense, however, the difference between coming to know something or being about to discover something does not seem decisive.

In short,

the handing over of Theangela by Philip V to Antiochos III (according to Wiemer’s restoration of the text) has been seen as the first real confirmation of Polybios’ description of a ‘secret¹¹⁵ pact’ between these two kings, concluded in the winter of 203/2, to conquer and share the infant Ptolemy’s non-Egyptian territories.¹¹⁶

As for Bargylia and its surroundings, we know from Polybios that these are the places where Philip V restlessly spent the winter of 201/200 wandering like a wolf (λύκου βίον ζῆν) after his raid against Pergamum.¹¹⁷ More pragmatically, inscriptions such as the TKI – al-

111 Translation: Ma 2002, 380. *Contra*, see Wiemer 2001a, 13: “Es heißt eben nicht, daß der Seleukide einen Krieg eröffnete oder begann, was mit Wendungen wie πόλεμον ἐκφέρειν oder πολεμῆν ausgedrückt wird. Vielmehr ist in wertneutraler Art und Weise davon die Rede, daß ihm ein Krieg gegen den Ptolemaer entstanden sei”. See also Wiemer 2001b, 84 and Dreyer 2008, 223. *Contra* Wiemer and Dreyer, see Eckstein 2008, 178 and fn. 240.

112 See *infra*.

113 See Eckstein 2008, 178.

114 Dreyer 2002, 126-7 and fn. 37. See also Dreyer 2008, 224.

115 See Plb. 3.2.8: συμφρονήσαντες Ἀντίοχος καὶ Φίλιππος ἐπὶ διαίρεσει τῆς τοῦ καταλειμμένου παιδὸς [*scil.* Ptolemy V] ἀρχῆς ἤρξαντο κακοπραγμονεῖν καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἐπιβάλλειν Φίλιππος μὲν τοῖς κατ’ Αἴγαιον καὶ Καρίαν καὶ Σάμον, Ἀντίοχος δὲ τοῖς κατὰ Κοίλην Συρίαν καὶ Φοινίκην. The choice of terms such as *symphroneo* (see Prandi 2003, 385 fn. 27) and *kakopragmoneo* seemed to underline Polybios’ view on the covert nature of the agreement. Bellezza (1962, 19 fn. 3) considered it to be a modern superstructure: she drew on *syntheke* and on the verb *paraspondeo* as employed in Plb. 15.20.6 (ἔτι γὰρ αὐτῶν παρασπονδούντων μὲν ἀλλήλους [*scil.* Philip and Antiochus]; see Rossini 2023). If not a covert nature (Will 1982, 115 defined it ‘seemingly secret’), surely an antagonistic one.

116 Blümel, van Bremen, Carbon 2014, 75, no. 46. See also Wiemer 2001b, 83-4; *BE* 2002, 392; Walbank 2002, 251 fn. 6; Wiemer 2002, 211-12 and *BE* 2003, 497.

117 Plb. 16.24. See Walbank 1967, 529-33. For Philip’s operations in the Aegean in these years, see in short Berthold 1975. See also Schmitt 1964, 243-8; Rigsby 1975, 408; Mastrocinque 1979, §7; Wiemer 2001b, 85-106 and Eckstein 2008, 150-68. For ancient sources, see Plb. 18.2.3, 18.8.9; 18.44.4; 18.48.2; 18.50.1; Liv. 33.18.19 (see *infra*); 33.30.3; 33.35.1-2; Plut. *Flam.* 12.2 and Polyaeus, *Strat.* 4.8.1. See also Dreyer 2002, 125-6 fn. 33.

beit in fragments - have the great advantage of showing us these places and towns at the heart of issues of superpower politics.¹¹⁸

As said, the information on the royal spacetime that we derive from the TKI draws attention to a local level, i.e. the Bay of Bargylia, as well as to Ptolemaic influence on western Caria.¹¹⁹ Nonetheless, this fragment emerges as an important testimony of a turning point in Hellenistic history. The reference is to the decades marked by Rome's earliest involvement in the eastern Mediterranean that Eckstein organically examined in terms of Mediterranean multipolar anarchy and interstate war eventually leading to unipolarity (ca. 190-170).¹²⁰ The nodal point is, of course, the old debate about the Rhodian appeal to Rome in 201 and the outbreak of the Second Macedonian War *ob iniurias armaque illata sociis populi Romani*.¹²¹ It is for this reason that the most important essay devoted to the TKI is Wiemer's one titled *Karien am Vorabend des 2. makedonischen Krieges*,¹²² with its focus on the outbreak of the Second Macedonian War.

3.4.2 Status Quaestionis

Up to now, Wiemer's fundamental contribution to the study of the TKI has only been mentioned.¹²³ First of all, Wiemer expressed the view that

der in der neuen Inschrift erwähnte gewaltsame Konflikt zwischen Antiochos III. und Ptolemaios V. war vielmehr ohne Zweifel der aus den literarischen Quellen bekannte sogenannte 5. Syrische Krieg, der wahrscheinlich im Jahre 202 ausbrach.¹²⁴

Ma countered this statement with another possible scenario and a cautious conclusion:

could the Seleukid advance in Karia in 203 BC been considered as an attack against Ptolemaic possessions, seen from the ground in

¹¹⁸ Ma 2002, 382.

¹¹⁹ See Bagnall 1976, 89-102; Wiemer 2001a, 10 fn. 53 and 2002, 179-81, esp. fn. 1.

¹²⁰ Eckstein 2006 and 2008. See also Ma 2002, 381.

¹²¹ Liv. 31.6.1. See in general e.g. Bickerman 1935; McDonald, Walbank 1937; Walbank 1940, 129-37, 310-16; Bickerman 1945; Baldson 1954; Dorey 1959; Ferro 1960; Bellezza 1962; Pédech 1962; Errington 1971; Berthold 1975-6 (the Rhodian appeal; also Wiemer 2002, 208-18 and Eckstein 2008, 198-201); Derow 1979; Hammond, Walbank 1988, 411-20; Meadows 1993; Warrior 1996; Eckstein 2005 and Mora Iglesias 2010. Of course, crucial reflections are to be found in Eckstein 2006 and 2008, *passim*.

¹²² Wiemer 2001a, esp. 9-14.

¹²³ For a summary, see Dreyer 2002, 122-3 fn. 19 and *BE* 2002, 392.

¹²⁴ Wiemer 2001a, 3. See also *BE* 2002, 392.

Karia and hence described as such by local actors? [...] it is all a question of what we would find surprising, worthy of comment, or normal (how can we know?), if we knew the full story.¹²⁵

For his part, Wiemer mentioned the problem of determining at whose expense (Egypt?) the Seleucid acquisition of Amyzon (ca. 24th May 203) was made for declaring it unlikely that the surviving lines refer to Antiochus' encroachments against Ptolemaic possessions in Caria. Such 'border skirmishes' would hardly be described in a Rhodian document as a full-fledged and open *polemos* between King Antiochus and King Ptolemy.¹²⁶ Since then, relevant studies have contributed to clarify this *vexata questio*,¹²⁷ which is also – no less than the issues posed by the TKI itself – a matter of royal spacetime.

In terms of the events narrated, it can be deduced that, by this time, several small towns in the hinterland of Bargylia, including Theangela, were in Ptolemaic hands.¹²⁸ For his part, Meadows was sceptical of such consequentiality, which remains hypothetical.¹²⁹ According to him, in fact, the genitive absolute $\sigma\upsilon\nu\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \kappa\tau\lambda.$ could have a merely temporal value. In general terms, it is with undeniable clarity that the same sentence informs us of a *polemos* waged by Antiochus III against Ptolemy V in an atmosphere of connivance with Philip V.

Wiemer paid close attention to the fact that, as far as we can see, the whole inscription is a long series of infinitives, and that only the phrase $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\grave{\alpha}\ \psi\alpha\phi\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha\ \tau\grave{\alpha}\ \acute{\upsilon}\pi\grave{\epsilon}\rho\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\{\tau\}$ ων παραν[εγν]ώσ[θει]ν is to be understood as direct speech. The other infinitives would rather be part of an indirect, i.e. reported, speech. But whose speech? In this sense, it is not difficult to think of an envoy to the Rhodian *ekklesia*, even though such a detailed record of a foreign ambassador's speech

¹²⁵ Ma 2002, 381.

¹²⁶ See Ma, Derow, Meadows 1995 (esp. 76-80) with prev. bibl. See also Dreyer 2002, 126; Wiemer 2002, 180-1 and Boulay, Pont 2014, 50.

¹²⁷ See in general Dreyer 2002 (the letter as a *terminus ante quem* for the Syro-Egyptian disputes in Asia Minor); Ma 2002, 292-4; 2003b; Dreyer 2008; Meadows 2008 and Eckstein 2008, 154-5.

¹²⁸ See Wiemer 2001a, 10-11. Marquaille 2008, 46 fn. 31 (citing van Bremen 2003, 9-10 and fn. 11): "New evidence has recently supplemented the list of Carian cities known to have been under Ptolemaic control: Kildara, Eyromos, Theangela, Thodasa, Xystis in the Harpasos Valley, Ouranis near Keramos, and probably Bargylia and Panamara". See also Eckstein 2008, 156 and Chrubasik 2016, 68 fn. 7.

¹²⁹ Meadows 2008, 119 fn. 18: "The new Rhodian arbitration for Bargylia [...] offers little help. The cities described therein as taken by the Seleucid forces (Kildara, Thodasa and Theangela) are further south and west, and, moreover, it remains unclear in two cases from whom they were taken. The fact that they were taken during a war against Ptolemy V does not prove that they were taken from him. Kildara and Thodasa, like Theangela, may have been Antigoniid prior to this".

in a decree would be unusual – no less than a popular resolution with such a long series of infinitives with narrative purpose.¹³⁰ At any rate, “the narrative in our document is not a matter of a full account of hostilities and military operations”.¹³¹ Wiemer found a compelling syntactical parallel in the lengthy text of a Rhodian arbitration in a territorial dispute between Priene and Samos in the second half of the 190s.¹³² On that occasion, the Rhodian judges recorded their own decision, as well as the historically-based¹³³ legal claims of the litigants, with long passages in indirect speech. In this sense, the *dikaia* mentioned in l. 6 (τῶν δικαίων) would be legal claims as well and the TKI itself would be the fragment of a Rhodian arbitration between Bargylia and an unknown neighbouring town which eventually lost the case.¹³⁴

Also because of the reasons mentioned above, these years are of the utmost importance for assessing royal agency over space and time, not only from the point of view of dynastic actors. In his *Méthode*, Pédech observed that the first real contact¹³⁵ between West and East is to be sought in the inconclusive Conference of Lysimachia between Roman legates and Antiochus III (196 BC) which we read about in Polybius, Livy, and Appian.¹³⁶ This was a very pragmatic interlude in the “coordinated attempt to destroy the Hellenistic system of balance of power that had endured since around 280”.¹³⁷ In fact, L. Cornelius Lentulus asked Antiochus – in Polybius’ words – to “withdraw from the cities subject to Ptolemy which he had occupied in Asia” (τῶν ὑπὸ Πτολεμαῖον ταττομένων πόλεων, ὅσας νῦν εἴληφε κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν, παραχωρεῖν).¹³⁸

130 Wiemer 2001a, 8 and fn. 38.

131 Ma 2002, 381.

132 *I.Priene* no. 37. See also Ager, *Arbitrations* no. 74 and Magnetto 2008. For a comparison, see also Bresson 2003, 186.

133 See Curty 1989 (with an eye to Polybius). For the importance of history (both in the form of mythical/historical accounts and historical memories) in these disputes, see Pagkalos 2017. Furthermore, let us recall e.g. Antiochus III’s century-spanning arguments at the Conference of Lysimachia (196): τὴν γὰρ τῶν τόπων τούτων ἀρχὴν μάλιστα πάντων αὐτῶ καθήκειν. εἶναι μὲν γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς τὴν δυναστείαν ταύτην Λυσιμάχου, Σελεύκου δὲ πολεμήσαντος πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ κρατήσαντος τῷ πολέμῳ πᾶσαν τὴν Λυσιμάχου βασιλείαν δορικτητὸν γενέσθαι Σελεύκου. κατὰ δὲ τοὺς τῶν αὐτοῦ προγόνων περισπασμούς ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς χρόνοις πρῶτον μὲν Πτολεμαῖον παρασπασάμενον σφετερίσασθαι τοὺς τόπους τούτους, δεύτερον δὲ Φίλιππον. αὐτὸς δὲ νῦν [...] ἀνακτᾶσθαι τοὺς ἰδίους δικαίους συγχρώμενος (Plb. 18.51.3-6). See Walbank 1967, 622; Ager, *Arbitrations* no. 77 and Canali De Rossi, *Ambascerie* no. 487.

134 Wiemer 2001a, 9 and fn. 43.

135 Pédech 1964, 512.

136 Plb. 18.49-52; Liv. 33.39-40 and App. Syr. 2.6-4.14. See Canali De Rossi, *Ambascerie* no. 483; Ager, *Arbitrations* no. 77 and Russo 2018, 16-20.

137 Eckstein 2006, 111.

138 Plb. 18.50.5. See also *supra*, fn. 133.

Polybius' indignant reaction to Antiochus III and Philip V's coordinated attempt¹³⁹ befitted such a turn of events. In the table of contents of Book 3, he specifies that, while conspiring (συμφρονησαντες) against Ptolemy V as well as because of it, Antiochus and Philip began to do evil (ἤρξαντο κακοπραγμονεῖν) and to lay hands (καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἐπιβάλλειν)¹⁴⁰ on land: Philip on the Aegean islands, Caria, and Samos; Antiochus on Coele-Syria and Phoenicia (Φίλιππος μὲν τοῖς κατ' Αἴγαιον καὶ Καρίαν καὶ Σάμον, Ἀντίοχος δὲ τοῖς κατὰ Κοίλην Συρίαν καὶ Φοινίκην).¹⁴¹ Τοῖς κατ' Αἴγαιον is a stylistically imperfect textual emendation first proposed by Niebuhr.¹⁴² It is meant to replace the manuscript tradition τοῖς κατ' Αἴγυπτον on the basis that neither Antiochus nor Philip would have complied with any ambition of such magnitude.¹⁴³ So, it has been thought that a staggering imbalance would have ensued in the post-Alexandrine world. Yet to focus on the territorial entity of their 'target' is instrumental, in my opinion, in understanding the rhetoric of Polybius' underlying and morally expressed 'what if'.¹⁴⁴

In line with his refutation of modern scholarly scepticism about the historicity of the Syro-Macedonian agreement¹⁴⁵ and with his positive acceptance of Polybius' point of view on a 'world-shattering' event, Eckstein rejected the emendation with various arguments: not least Polybius' reference (16.10.1) to Philip V's failure to 'complete' (τελεεῖν) his voyage to Alexandria in 201.¹⁴⁶ At 16.10.1 Polybius states that it is clear that Philip was 'like a madman' because he did not sail to the city just after his naval victory over the Rhodians near the island of Lade,

139 Plb. 15.20.

140 Could this καὶ be an exegetic conjunction suggesting self-attribution?

141 Plb. 3.2.8. For Phoenicia, see Dreyer 2008.

142 Niebuhr 1822, 106 fn. 2. However, among Niebuhr's early readers, Droysen (1831, 8, 15-16) had no doubt that Philip V actually disputed Egypt: being the Macedonian king, Philip would obviously have aspired to the integrity of Alexander's kingdom. The additional readings κατὰ Κιόν and the more elegant Αἴγαιον, with no adjective, have also been proposed. In his time, Costanzi 1911, 281-2 accepted that Polybius could have referred to the Aegean islands as *ta kat' Aigaion*. It has been recently ruled out by Eckstein too. See also Schmitt 1964, 252-3; Walbank 1967, 472 and Huss 1976, 219 fn. 303. For the terms of the agreement, see also Hammond, Walbank 1988, 412 and fn. 1.

143 So also Wiemer 2001a, 12 and Dreyer 2002, 124.

144 Of course, rhetoric is as central to historiography as judgement. In this sense, see Farrington 2015.

145 See Magie 1939; De Regibus 1952; Bellezza 1962 and Errington 1971. Passages by other scholars are quoted by Eckstein 2008, 129-31.

146 Eckstein 2008, 139-41 with prev. bibl. (esp. Schmitt 1964, 152-3). Ferro 1960, 40-1 fn. 25 thought the same on the basis of the same passage. See also Walbank 1967, 512. For other modern proponents of the historicity of the agreement, see those listed in Eckstein 2008, 130 fn. 38. Gera (1998, 21-3), Dreyer (2008, 222-9), Thornton (2014, 60: on the basis of the TK1) and Muccioli (2019, 104) should be added.

off the coast of Miletus.¹⁴⁷ Did he plan to invade Egypt and to take it over,¹⁴⁸ as Antiochus IV did thirty-three years later? If we follow Polybius' perspective, the answer should definitively be in the affirmative.

The problem is complicated by the fact that in a parallel passage from Appian's *Macedonica* we read that, in the autumn of 201, the Rhodians shared with Rome a rather shocking conviction:

that Philip and Antiochus, king of Syria, had made mutual promises: that Philip should help Antiochus to conquer Egypt and Cyprus – then ruled by the fourth Ptolemy, surnamed Philopator,¹⁴⁹ who was still a boy – and that Antiochus should help Philip with Cyrene [Caria?],¹⁵⁰ the Cyclades islands and Ionia.¹⁵¹

It was especially the next phrase – “this very conviction, so upsetting to all, the Rhodians denounced to the Romans” (τήνδε τὴν δόξαν, ἐκταράσσοιεν ἅπαντας, Ῥόδιοι μὲν Ῥωμαίοις ἐμήνυσαν) – that persuaded modern sceptics that the agreement was just a Rhodio-Pergamene fabrication that went so far as to fool Polybius himself by means of the Rhodian historians Zeno (*BNJ* 523) and Antisthenes (*BNJ* 508).¹⁵² Indeed, that perilous situation would have proved as detrimental to the helpless Ptolemy V as to Rhodes' interests.¹⁵³ Given that the public reading of documents is mentioned twice within seven lines (ll. 9-10, 15), my impression is that there is little hidden or unspoken, at least from the point of view of those involved in the arbitration. In this case, the second occurrence – παρανα]γινώσκοντας ἐπιστο[λὴν or ἐπιστο[λὰς – seems to be the most significant.

Apart from that, Schmitt tried to explain apparent contradictions by proposing a harmonisation of Polybius with Appian, as if the for-

147 See also Dreyer 2002, 137-8.

148 See Walbank 1967, 472; Errington 1971, 339-40 (*contra*); Will 1982, 117 (*contra*). See now Nicholson 2020, 58.

149 Appian's good source did not correspond to an equally good excerptor: Ptolemy V is here confused with his father, maybe because the historian named them both. See Goukowsky 2011, 189 fn. 35 with prev. bibl.

150 Tacitly following Costanzi 1911, 282 fn. 2, Goukowsky 2011, 189 fn. 36 suspected Κυρήνην to be a misreading for Καρίαν. For a further discussion, see Bellezza 1962, 36-9.

151 App. *Mac.* 4.1: ὅτι Φίλιππος καὶ Ἀντίοχος ὁ Σύρων βασιλεὺς ὑπόσχοιντο ἀλλήλους, Ἀντίοχῳ μὲν ὁ Φίλιππος συστρατεύσειν ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον καὶ ἐπὶ Κύπρον, ὃν τότε ἤρχεν ἔτι παῖς ὢν Πτολεμαῖος ὁ τέταρτος, ὃς Φιλοπάτωρ ἐπώνυμον ἦν, Φιλίππῳ δ' Ἀντίοχος ἐπὶ Κυρήνην [Καρίαν?] καὶ τὰς Κυκλάδας νήσους καὶ Ἰωνίαν. See Meadows 1993, 50-2; Wiemer 2001a, 13; Dreyer 2002, 121 and fn. 66 and Goukowsky 2011, 189, esp. fn. 37 (comm.).

152 For Zeno/Antisthenes and Polybius, see Wiemer 2001b, 19-32, 255-62 (prev. Ulrich 1898, 5-17, 37-41); Lenfant 2005; Wiemer 2013; Zecchini 2018, 35 fn. 13. For Antisthenes, see also Ferrary 2014, 250-64, esp. 250-4. For the Rhodian historiography in general, see Funke 1994.

153 See Eckstein 2008, 184-5.

mer handed down the *Realpolitik* that followed the premises we read about in the latter.¹⁵⁴ Fortunately, there is still another clue in Polybius' *Histories* that can lead back to a disloyal attitude of the Syrians and the Macedonians. At 16.1.8-9, the Seleucid governor of Cistauric Asia Minor, Zeuxis, pretends (ὑπεκρίνεται) to consider – or rather ignores?¹⁵⁵ – King Philip asking for help in Hiera Kome (Lydia) while en route to the coast after the invasion of Pergamum.¹⁵⁶ Most importantly, we are told that help was requested 'in accordance with the agreements' (κατὰ τὰς συνθήκας), but – unwilling to strengthen the foreign king – the governor only pretended to behave κατὰ τὰς συνθήκας, with close repetition.¹⁵⁷

In this slippery slope, Antiochus III and Philip V's mutual disloyalty¹⁵⁸ is not the only ambiguity – real or imagined. Wiemer, too, had to reject the hypothesis that Polybius¹⁵⁹ was taken in by a lie of the Rhodian propaganda as a highlight of the inconveniences associated with the Syro-Macedonian strengthening. Of course, the historian Zenon may have exaggerated the rumours circulating in 201 – but this is far from certain.¹⁶⁰ In between there is a broad spectrum of intermediary positions. A Syro-Macedonian cooperation¹⁶¹ in Caria can reasonably no longer be doubted¹⁶² and the thesis that Polybius wrongly interpreted some local *synthekai* between Philip V and Zeuxis as a cataclysmic political-military machination receives a severe blow. On the other hand, Wiemer continued to doubt Schmitt's proposed harmonisation of Polybius with Appian, as well as the Rhodians' belief – so to say – that the Fifth Syrian War had been part of a greater predatory war. Rather, the most obvious way out seemed to him and to Hatzopoulos to be the assumption that Syria and Macedonia agreed on the partition of Ptolemaic possessions in Asia Minor.¹⁶³

154 Schmitt 1964, 251-3. Had Philip V agreed or conceded to help Antiochus III seize Egypt, as reported by the Alexandrian historian, then the core of the Ptolemaic kingdom could only have been Philip's aborted *telos*, as in Polybius, in a context of deception and facade. See also Will 1982, 117 and Wiemer 2001a, 12 (*contra*).

155 But see Ma 1999, 75: "with Zeuxis' reluctant agreement".

156 See Walbank 1967, 502-3.

157 Modern sceptics have regarded the *synthekai* in Plb. 16.1.8-9 as a local, anti-Pergamene agreement of little importance (see e.g. Errington 1971, 341-2, 348-9, 351). If so, it would remain otherwise unnamed.

158 See now Rossini 2023.

159 Plb. 3.2.8 and 15.20.

160 Wiemer 2001a, 14. See also Wiemer 2001b, 85; Dreyer 2002, 122 fn. 18; Wiemer 2002, 42, 212 and Eckstein 2008, 189.

161 As for the stone, Dreyer 2002, 122 defined the cooperation as "ein nicht näher definiertes Zusammenwirken".

162 So also Dreyer 2002, 124.

163 Wiemer 2001a, 11-12; 2002, 212 and Hatzopoulos 2014, 102.

Finally, Eckstein's authoritative stance – expressed in his 2008 book *Rome Enters the Greek East* – was that of a complete acceptance of Polybius' version of the Syro-Macedonian pact, as well as of a diametrical opposition to the fortunate scepticism inaugurated by Magie. According to Eckstein, in fact,

- a. the events surviving in the TKI belong to Philip V and Antiochus III's large-scale aggression against the Ptolemies;
- b. Philip V was engaged in overt and active military cooperation with Antiochus III;
- c. this cooperation was neither a mere non-interference project nor a local agreement between Philip and Antiochus' right-hand man Zeuxis, as assumed by others;
- d. the Rhodian government came to know about it and never exaggerated it when breaking the upsetting news.¹⁶⁴

Had things gone differently – i.e. had Rhodes not appealed to Rome –, an ultimate contest between Philip and Antiochus might have been *in rebus* after the cooperation attested here.¹⁶⁵ In this sense, I would say, an interesting aspect of the TKI is precisely that it immortalised the development of two strategies of political affirmation or survival: the Syro-Macedonian relations, i.e. their premises, and Rhodes itself facing – or going to face, if Dreyer were right about the dating¹⁶⁶ – a *doxa ektarassousa apantas*.

4 A Final Reflection

In detailing the *status quaestionis*, I have tried to highlight some thematic nuclei enabling the following original reflection.

Always assuming Polybius' Rhodian source of information on this grim juncture in the history of Egypt, the few legible lines of the TKI also open up a significant historiographical perspective. As can be seen, it is interesting – but ultimately also disappointing due to the fragmentary condition of the new text – to compare the TKI with Polybius' indignant reaction to the Syro-Macedonian connivance. Both documents, in fact, point out to a full-fledged and open *polemos* waged by Antiochus III against Ptolemy V in an atmosphere of connivance with Philip V. In Bargylia, Ptolemy was 'the one now ruling', while Polybius' *ex eventu* denunciation ends with the same Ptolemy still happily on the throne after Fortune had revived (διώρθωσε) his

¹⁶⁴ Eckstein 2008, 155-6, 167, 177-9, 184-5, 189, 198 fn. 58, 200. See Thornton 2014, 60.

¹⁶⁵ See Eckstein 2006, 106-7 fn. 96.

¹⁶⁶ See *supra*, § 3.2.

kingship.¹⁶⁷ There is little doubt that the page in question is the most notable ancient voice on it. The comparison is therefore between a contemporary official document and a powerful reframing by an intellectual of the next generation; of course, neither is unbiased. Polybius' rather sophisticated page on Philip and Antiochus' complicity now deserves to be quoted *in extenso*:

Who would not be astounded? When Ptolemy [*scil.* IV] himself was alive and did not need their aid, they [*scil.* Antiochus III and Philip V] were ready to help him; but when he died leaving behind a small child [*scil.* Ptolemy V], and they both had the natural duty to cooperate to protect his kingdom, they instead incited each other and rushed to partition the child's power, to destroy the orphan. Nor did they trouble themselves, as tyrants do, about a weak excuse for that shame. Rather, they acted with such impudence and bestiality that they were eventually reduced to live what is called a fish's life, since, although fish belong to the same species, it is said that the destruction of the smaller ones provides nourishment and life to the larger. Therefore, who can look into this agreement as into a mirror without being persuaded that impiety towards the gods and brutality towards men, as well as the unrestrained greed of these two kings, is what he sees? However, among those who reasonably blame Fortune for human affairs, who would not be reconciled with her at this juncture, since she afterwards inflicted the right punishment on them and exhibited these kings' exemplary chastisement to their successors as a superlative way of correction? While they were still betraying each other, as well as dismembering the child's power, she alerted the Romans and justly and conveniently dispensed to them the same things they were unlawfully scheming against others. In fact, they were both promptly defeated with weapons: and not only hindered from lusting after the property of others, but also reduced to tributaries and stooped to follow the instructions of the Romans. Finally, Fortune revived Ptolemy's kingship within a very short time and, as for these two kings' dynasties and successors, in one case she caused them to be destroyed from the ground up and completely ruined; in the other case she involved them in almost the same misfortunes.¹⁶⁸

167 Considering Ptolemy V's image as resulting from these events, we know that in 199 BC (see Lorber 2006; Iossif, Lorber 2012, 213 and Lanciers 2014) the king took on the radiant epithet of *Theos Epiphanes*, i.e. that of a royal being coming out of dangerous clouds. In relation to initial difficulties, see Hazzard 1995; Lorber 2006; Iossif, Lorber 2012; Muccioli 2013, 285-6 with prev. bibl.; Lanciers 2014; Lorber 2021 and Christodoulou 2022, 342.

168 Plb. 15-20: Τοῦτο δὲ τίς οὐκ ἂν θαυμάσειε, πῶς, ὅτε μὲν αὐτὸς ὁ Πτολεμαῖος ζῶν οὐ προσεδίτο τῆς τούτων ἐπικουρίας, ἔτοιμοι βοηθεῖν ἦσαν, ὅτε δ' ἐκέινος μετήλλαξε

Polybius' denunciation of these two kings' villainy is a problematic teleological exegesis of Nemesis acting in history¹⁶⁹ – that motif that a modern thinker called *le gouvernement temporel de la Providence*. It stands as an actual historiographic reflection on the agreement, and beyond. In this meaningful chapter, which Will even called 'metaphysical',¹⁷⁰ Rome functions as an instrument of Tyche for punishing both Philip and Antiochus, who had incited each other in order to 'destroy the orphan' (ἐπανελέσθαι τὸν ἀπολελειμμένον)¹⁷¹ and to split his inheritance. They did so even without troubling themselves about the weak excuses that are typical of tyrants,¹⁷² as the historian polemically adds.¹⁷³

καταλιπὼν παιδίον νήπιον, ᾧ κατὰ φύσιν ἀμφοῖν ἐπέβαλλε συσφῶζειν τὴν βασιλείαν, τότε παρακάλεσαντες ἀλλήλους ὥρμησαν ἐπὶ τὸ διελόμενοι τὴν τοῦ παιδὸς ἀρχὴν ἐπανελέσθαι τὸν ἀπολελειμμένον, οὐδ' οὖν, καθάπερ οἱ τύραννοι, βραχεῖαν δὴ τινα προβαλλόμενοι τῆς αἰσχύνης πρόφασιν, ἀλλ' ἐξ αὐτῆς ἀνέδην καὶ θηριωδῶς οὕτως ὥστε προσφλεῖν τὸν λεγόμενον τῶν ἰχθύων βίον, ἐν οἷς φασιν ὁμοφύλοισι οὖσι τὴν τοῦ μείονος ἀπώλειαν τῷ μείζονι τροφήν γίνεσθαι καὶ βίον. ἐξ ὧν τίς οὐκ ἂν ἐμβλέψας οἶον εἰς κάτωτρον εἰς τὴν συνθήκην ταύτην αὐτόπτης δόξειε γίνεσθαι τῆς πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς ἀσεβείας καὶ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ὁμότητος, ἔτι δὲ τῆς ὑπερβαλλούσης πλεονεξίας τῶν προειρημένων βασιλέων; οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ τίς οὐκ ἂν εἰκότως τῇ τύχῃ μεμψάμενος ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπέων πραγμάτων ἐν τούτοις ἀντικαταλλαγείῃ, διότι ἐκεῖνοις μὲν ἐπέθηκε μετὰ ταῦτα τὴν ἀρμόζουσαν δίκην, τοῖς δ' ἐπιγενομένοις ἐξέθηκε κάλλιστον ὑπόδειγμα πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν τὸν τῶν προειρημένων βασιλέων παραδειγματισμόν; ἔτι γὰρ αὐτῶν παρασπονδούντων μὲν ἀλλήλους, διασπωμένων δὲ τὴν τοῦ παιδὸς ἀρχὴν, ἐπιστήσασα Ῥωμαίους, ἀκείνοι κατὰ τῶν πέλας ἐβουλεύσαντο παρανόμως, ταῦτα κατ' ἐκείνων δικαίως ἐκύρωσε καὶ καθηκόντως. παραυτίκα γὰρ ἐκάτεροι διὰ τῶν ὄπλων ἠτιηθέντες οὐ μόνον ἐκωλύθησαν τῆς τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἐπιθυμίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ συγκλεισθέντες εἰς φόρους ὑπέμειναν Ῥωμαίοις τὸ προσταττόμενον ποιεῖν. τὸ τελευταῖον ἐν πανύ βραχεῖ χρόνῳ τὴν μὲν Πτολεμαίου βασιλείαν ἢ τύχῃ διώρθωσε, τὰς δὲ τούτων δυναστείας καὶ τοὺς διαδόχους τοὺς μὲν ἄρδην ἀναστάτους ἐποίησε καὶ πανωλέθρους, τοὺς δὲ μικροῦ δεῖν τοῖς αὐτοῖς περιέβαλε συμπτώμασι. Translation by the Author.

169 Tyche's intervention pounced on the opponents bringing out a 'superlative' way of correction as a warning for their descendants. Such lesson consisted in alerting the Romans (ἐπιστήσασα Ῥωμαίους) about Philip V and Antiochus III rather than raising them against the two kings (see Eckstein 2005; 2006, 271 fn. 91 and 2008, 134 fn. 55). Having spurred each other to eliminate the child king and having gone straight into action, the two kings were (to be) eventually defeated in war and reduced to tributaries. This is a clear reference to the turning point of Cynoscephalae, to the aftermath of the Second Macedonian War, to Magnesia, to Pydna, and to G. Popilius Laenas' defiant ultimatum which prevented Antiochus IV from seizing Egypt in 168 BC.

170 Will 1982, 116.

171 See also Plb. 28.1.5, where the official Egyptian version was reported in the context of the Syrian and Egyptian embassies to Rome in the year 3 of the 152nd Olympiad (170/169). More than thirty years earlier – as Ptolemy VI believed (ὑπολαμβάνων) – Antiochus III had moved against the child Ptolemy V 'unjustly' (ἀδίκως) and 'taking advantage of his father's orphanhood' (συνεπιθέμενον τῇ τοῦ πατρὸς ὀρφανίᾳ). See Canali De Rossi, *Ambascerie* nos. 534-5 (and also Ager, *Arbitrations* no. 122).

172 See Walbank 1967, 473.

173 There have been notable epigones of Polybius's indignation, such as Bouché-Leclercq and Holleaux, who deemed it a fortuitous, dishonest, and scandalous agreement about which Polybius was honestly indignant. They preceded modern skepticism

Internal narratives and narrative purposes have been mentioned earlier. At 15.20, Polybius' narrative becomes rich in images as it moves from invective to *katastrophe*, i.e. a momentous overturning. Magie defined this page as no more than 'a homily', while De Regibus saw it as a generic assessment on human misery, and even an occasional piece not very different from the anecdotes handed down about Scipio Africanus' fate.¹⁷⁴ In more recent times, Prandi focused on Polybius' metaphor about the agreement as a mirror (κάτοπτρον) of impiety: she interestingly compared the whole chapter to a literary mirror - and thus a 'transfigured' document - and the agreement itself as a written text to look at and in which to read, among the formulas, the impiety and the cruelty of the contractors themselves.¹⁷⁵

Why compare this complex page with the incomplete sentences yielded by the ruins of Bargylia? While the latter are nothing but a particle of Rhodes' point of view on things, it is highly likely that Polybius reworked the official Ptolemaic version of events - which should not be overlooked.¹⁷⁶ As highlighted by Walbank and Thornton, in fact, Polybius probably inherited his father Lycortas' personal connection (perhaps of *xenia*) with the Ptolemaic dynasty: "it would indeed explain satisfactorily Polybius' extreme indignation over the pact".¹⁷⁷ In this sense, the assumed Rhodian source of information (Zeno, Antisthenes) and the Alexandrian version may have coexisted seamlessly in the historian's mind. As said, modern sceptics of the agreement assumed that the Syro-Macedonian connivance was just a Rhodio-Pergamene fabrication gone so far as to fool Polybius himself by means of the Rhodian historians. Do the texts considered here both echo a great Aegean conspiracy, given that one day something relating to Antiochus III's *polemos* against Ptolemy V and his cooperation with Philip V was read aloud publicly and immortalised on stone? "The most effective propaganda", Eckstein remarked about the TKI, "is usually the truth".¹⁷⁸ In view of the above, it is legitimate to think that the authorial perspective of the TKI, and perhaps even the lost sentences of the stone itself, had points in common with the 'Alexandrian perspective' as we know it.

about the pact. See Bouché-Leclercq 1913, 169 and Holleaux, *Études V*, 334. For the moralism of this page, see also Eckstein 1995, 88, 195 and Dreyer 2013, 236-7.

174 Magie 1939, 32 and De Regibus 1952, 99. For Plb. 15.20 in general, see now Eckstein 2005; Guelfucci 2010, 457, 462-3; Deininger 2013, 85-6; Dreyer 2013, 236-7; Thornton 2020, 253-4, 257; Nicholson 2020, 58; Thornton 2023, 237-8 and Rossini 2023.

175 Prandi 2003, 385-6.

176 The honorary decree for Ptolemy V on the Rosetta Stone hands down the Ptolemaic version as well (see *supra*, fn. 110).

177 Walbank 2002, 253; Thornton 2020, 45-6, 90-3, 256-7 and 2023, 237-8.

178 Eckstein 2008, 178.

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