Cyzicus. Honorific decree with exemption from taxes

Description: marble stele broken on the top bearing an archaic decree (text A) reinscribed in the first century BC (text B). The copy B is fully preserved, while of the archaic text A only two lines survive (dimensions: h:0.5 m w:0.65 m)

Layout: boustrophedon

Letters: Milesian alphabet

Origin: Cyzicus

Dating: 525-500 BC

Findspot: Cyzicus

Current location: Istanbul, Archaeological Museum

Reference edition: IMT Kyz Kapu Dağ 1447

Other editions: Mordtmann 1880, 92-98, no. 2; P. Cauer, *Delectus* 488; Bechtel 1887, 108; Roberts 1887, I, no. 147; Hoffmann 1898, 61, no. 134; C. Michel, *Recueil* 532; H. Collitz, *SGDI* 5522; Solmsen 1910, 51; Bleckmann 1913, no. 28; W. Dittenberger, *Syll.*³ 4; Vollgraff 1922, 37; *SEG* 1 445; E. Schwyzer, *DGE* 732; H.W. Pleket, *Epigraphica* 21; Hainsworth 1972, no. 72; Hübner 1993, 256; Hübner 1993, no. 256; H. Van Effenterre, F. Ruzé, *Nomima* I 32; Pulvirenti 2019

Photographs: Mordtmann 1880, 92 (fac-simile); H. Roehl, *IGA* 491 (fac-simile); H. Roehl, *Imagines* 20 (fac-simile); Jeffery, Johnston, *LSAG*² , pl. 72 (fac-simile)

Translations: Austin, Vidal Naquet 1972, 333-334, no. 90 (French); Austin, Vidal Naquet 1977, 307, no. 92 (English); H. Van Effenterre, F. Ruzé, *Nomima* I 32 (French); K. Brodersen, *HGIU* 18 (German); Dillon, Garland 1994, no. 10.25 (English); U. Fantasia in Migeotte 2003a, 175 (Italian); van Wees 2013, 28 (English); Pulvirenti 2019, 27 (Italian)

Bibliography: Toepffer 1891, 411-432, esp. 418; Toepffer 1897, 211; Wackernagel 1893, 299-303, esp. 299-301; Wackernagel 1904, esp. 9; Swoboda 1890, 48 (B); Larfeld 1907, 358-359; Wilhelm 1939, 345-368, esp. 362; Wreeken 1953, 28-29; Andreades 1931, 161-162; Nixon, Price 1990, 145; Jeffery, Johnston, *LSAG*² , 367, 372; Gehrke 1993, 58; Hölkeskamp 1999, 172-173; Migeotte 2014, 256, 271; Habicht 2014, 169; Dubois 2014, 603-608

A

      [τὴν δὲ στ]ήλην τήνδε πόλις Μ-

      ανῆ ἔδωκε τῶι Μεδίκ[εω].

B

      ἐπὶ Μαιανδρίου·

      πόλις <Μανῆ> <ἔδωκε> <τῶι> Μηδίκεω καὶ τοῖσιν Αἰσήπου παισὶν

      καὶ τοῖσιν ἐκγόνοισιν ἀτε<λ>είην καὶ πρυ-

      τανεῖον· δέδοται παρὲξ ναύτο

5   καὶ τὸ τάλαντο καὶ ἱππονίης καὶ

      τῆς τετάρτης καὶ ἀνδραποδωνίης·

      τῶν δὲ ἄλλων πάντων ἀτελές· καὶ ἐπὶ

      τούτοισιν δῆμος ὅρκιον ἔταμον· τὴν

δὲ στήλην τήνδε πόλις Μ[α]νῆ ἔδ[ω]κ[ε]

10   τῶι Μηδίκεω.

Apparatus criticus: A l. 1: *τὴν δὲ στή]λην* Mordtmann, Roehl, *IGA*, Roberts, Bechtel, Michel; *Μανῆ<ι>* Michel. B l. 2: *Αἰσ[ώ]που Mordtmann* | *πόλις Μηδίκεω lapis, Vollgraff* : *πόλις <Μανῆ τῶι>* Roehl, *IGA*, Michel, Bechtel : *<ἔδωκε>* Wackernagel; *M<ε>δίκεωSGDI*. l. 3: *ἀτεδείην* lapis. l. 4: *NAY:IΠO* lapis : *ναυωρίου* Mordtmann : *ναυπηγίου* Roehl, *IGA* : *ναύΤουSyll.³*, *DGE*, Hainsworth, *Nomima* : *ναύσσου* Bleckmann, Vollgraff, Pleket. l. 7: *ἀτελέ<α>ς* Mordtmann, Roehl, *IGA*: *ἀτελέ<α>ς <εἶναι>* Cauer. l. 9. *[Μά]νη* Roehl, *IGA*, Roberts : *M[α]νῆ* Michel. l. 10: *M<ε>δίκεωSGDI*.

Translation:

A

The city gave this stele to Manes son of Medikes.

B

In the archonship of Maiandrios. The city has given to the son of Medikes and to the sons of Aisepos and to their descendants exemption from taxes and public maintenance in the prytaneum. (The exemption from taxes) has been given, except for the nausson, the tax paid for the use of public weights and measures, the sale fee for horses, the one-quarter tax and the sale fee for slaves; they will be exempted from all others; and about these exemptions the people swore an oath over the sacrificed victims. The city gave this stele to Manes son of Medikes.

Commentary:

Relying on the writing, the first copy of the decree (A), written boustrophedon, can be dated back with certainty to the end of the sixth century BC (525-500 BC; s. J. H. Mordtmann 1880, 94; L.H. Jeffery, A. Johnston, *LSAG²*, 367). The second inscription dates back to the first century BC (Mordtmann, ibid., 93). It can be assumed that Decree A, which was no longer readable or comprehensible in the first century, had been rewritten by the will of the descendants of the beneficiaries of the original decree, in order to emphasize, at their own time, the merits of their ancestors. According to C. Habicht (2014, 169), the honors granted to the sons of Medikes and Aisepos are to be attributed to an event recounted by Athenaeus (1.54 = *FGrHist* 472 F6), citing as the source the historian Agatocles of Babylon: Cyrus the Great gave seven cities to Pytharchus of Cyzicus who, feeling proud of this gift, tried to establish a tyranny in Cyzicus, but its inhabitants began a riot in order to prevent Pytharchus from carrying out his project. On this background, Aisepos and Medikes' merits could be understood: they probably stood out as opponents of the tyrannical regime. This might explain the importance of their feats still in the first century BC. By contrast, it is hardly conceivable that Medikes and Aisepos were two aristocrats exiled due to a coup d'etat, as suggested by E.S. Roberts. Certainly, such reconstruction could be theoretically possible and it cannot be entirely ruled out. Nevertheless, given the lack of evidence in this sense, the hypothesis suggested by Habicht proves more cautious, since it relies on a precise testimony.

A l. 1 *Μανῆ*: The name is certainly Phrygian, as it emerges from the testimony of Strabo (7.3.12; on the name, s. Robert 1963, 123, 290, 365, 532; on the origin and evolution of the name, s. Wilhelm 1909, 35-37). The absence of the iota subscript, typical of the dative, seems to be explained as a consequence of an elision before a word starting with a vowel (Mordtmann 1880, 95).

l. 2 *Μεδίκεω*: The cutter of the second inscription of the decree made the mistake of copying the name *Μεδίκης* with eta in lieu of epsilon. However, the ionic dialects of Asia since the 6th century have two different graphemes for the two phonemes and the long vocal value (ē) of the H sign predominates on the aspirate, since the Eastern Ionic dialects are psilotic (Jeffery, Johnston, *LSAG²*, 28). Therefore, the correct form is *Μεδίκεω* and not *Μηδίκεω*. For this name, cf. *IG* XII 5, 1060, l. [1], an inscription from Ceos dating back to the beginning of the fifth century BC.

B l. 1 *ἐπὶ Μαιανδρίου*: In all likelihood this is the archon, both if we consider that later inscriptions from Cyzicus are dated alternatively by the name of the archon or that of the hipparch, and if the similarity of the archaic constitution of Cyzicus with that of Athens is extended also to this element (s. Mordtmann 1880, 96).

l. 2 *πόλις <Μανῆ> <ἔδωκε> <τῶι>*: This restoration is absolutely necessary. First, it is scarcely conceivable that the accusatives *ἀτελείην* and *πρυτανεῖον* depend on the perfect middle-passive *δέδοται*, so it is necessary to assume that an active verbal tense of a verbum dandi has been carelessly omitted by the cutter. Accordingly, the aorist active *ἔδωκε* proposed for the first time by J. Wackernagel (1904, 10) seems appropriate, although W. Vollgraff (1922, 38) wrongly approved the ellipse of the verbum dandi, citing as parallels some Homeric verses. Secondly, as for *Μανῆ τῶι*, restoration proposed for the first time by H. Roehl (*IGA* 491) and then revived and

widely discussed by J. Wackernagel (ibid.), it seems necessary as well. Such restorations seem to be fully supported by the last line of the decree A. Similarly, the proposal of W. Vollgraff (ibid., 38-42), who considered that the expression πόλις Μηδίκεω καὶ τοῖσιν Αἰσήπου παισίν is here in lieu of πόλις τοῖσι Μηδίκεω καὶ Αἰσήπου παισίν by virtue of the rhetorical figure called ἀπὸ κοινοῦ seems unconvincing. The problem is that Vollgraff cites mostly poems as parallels, and the few prose texts he takes into account do not seem particularly suitable (e.g. Polyb. 6.18.7). Above all, he does not cite any epigraphic parallel. However, Vollgraff is right in arguing that the clause should end after πρυτανεῖον, otherwise we would be forced to admit that the cutter has written δέδοται in lieu of ἔδωκε or δέδωκε, which would be very hard to explain.

Πόλις: It is worth noting that the πόλις itself appears here as the authority by which the decree has been issued. This testifies that the city, that is the δῆμος, in the 6th century BC already represented a legal-formal entity and thus that the citizenry had already acquired a relatively high level of institutionalization (s. Gehrke 1993, 58 et al., Hölkeskamp 1999, 173).

Αἰσήπου: Αἴσηπος seems preferable to Αἴσωπος proposed by Mordtmann, as Αἴσηπος is also the name of the main river of Mysia (s. *RE*, s.v. Αἴσηπος), which seems to also explain the existence of the personal name Αἰσηπόδωρος, attested in another inscription coming from Cyzicus (IMT Kyz Kapu Dağ 1456 A, vol. 73; B, 1, 60).

l. 3 ἀτελείην: It is very difficult to determine what taxes Medikes and Aisepos' descendants were exempt from, since we do not know whether they were citizens, metics or foreigners who had distinguished themselves in benefitting the city. In the latter case, they were probably exempt from the payment of custom duties, which were applied to the import and export both of goods for personal use and of trade-related goods (ἀτέλεια πάντων χρημάτων ὧν ἂν εναασσάγηι καὶ ἐξάγηι; even though they were often exempted from paying only customs duties on goods destined for personal use, and in this case we find the formula εἰς τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον or ἐπὶ κτήσει / χρήσει, s. Migeotte 2014, 110-111, Bresson 2016, 291). If Medikes and Aisepos were foreigners in the city, it can be assumed that in addition to the exemption from customs duties, they could be exempt from liturgies (s. Migeotte 2014, 107-109). The thorniest case is certainly that of citizens: inscriptions often make a general reference to ἀτέλεια, without specifying what taxes it concerned. It can be assumed, however, that if they were citizens, they were exempted from liturgies (s. Migeotte 2014, 104-105) or from the payment of customs duties on imports and exports of products intended for trade (indeed, citizens were exempt from payment of customs duties on ἐπὶ χρίσει products, but in many cities they were required to pay them on commercial imports and exports, s. Bresson 2016, 290-291). Furthermore, if we take as a term of comparison the situation in archaic Athens and admit that a tax on crops was also imposed in Cyzicus (on the subject, s. Bresson 2016, 105), it can be assumed that the ἀτελείη granted to the descendants of Medikes and Aisepos also included the exemption from the obligation to deliver a percentage of their harvests to the city.

Πρυτανεῖον: For other references to the prytaneion of Cyzicus, s. Liv. 41.20.7. The word, as it is written, has a mistake, as supposedly in the original it was written with η (πρυτανήιον) according to the rules of the ionic dialect (cf. *IG* XII 5, 1060, ll. [1], 2). The cutter of the second inscription of the decree, probably influenced by κοινή, had used epsilon instead of eta. As Mordtmann rightly pointed out (1880, 94), the expression implies σίτησις. Indeed, with all likelihood, this decree refers to the honor given to the benefactors of the city of having meals in the prytaneion at the expense of the city (the expression found in many decrees is indeed εἶναι / δοῦναι αὐτῷ σίτησιν ἐν πρυτανείωι). This honor occurs in many other areas, including, obviously, Athens (on the issue, s. Schöll 1872, 14-54; Osborne 1981, 153-170; Henry 1981, 100-110; Rhodes 1984, 193-199). In this decree, the mention of πρυτανεῖον is remarkable for two reasons: first of all, it is not specified, as it would be expected and it was in fact, that not all the descendants of Medikes and Aisepos would benefit from this honor, but only the eldest (this is what occurs in all attested cases: cf. e.g. *IG* II² 385, l. 17, 450b, l. 7, 513, l. 8, with the exception of *IG* II² 937, on which v. Osborne 1981, 166 ff.). This omission is probably explained by the particularly brief form of the decree (on which, s. Swoboda 1890, 47-48), a characteristic shared by a contemporary decree from Ceos (*IG* XII 5, 1060, ll. [1], 2). Another noteworthy element is that the honor of the meals at the prytaneion is granted to the sons alone, apparently because their fathers were dead (cf. Plut., *X Orat* 850f; 852e).

L. 4 ναύτο: The term has created many problems, primarily because of the particular grapheme with which it is written: a tau with two vertical lateral bars (such a grapheme corresponds to a double sibilant or xi: Roberts 1887, I, 10 and Schwyzer 1939, I, 149 identified it with the letter named σὰν πῖ, σάμπι by late grammarians; Larfeld 1907, 358-359, brought it back to ssade / san, while Jeffery, Johnston, *LSAG*², 38-39 considered it to be a letter of Carian origin, and both Wackernagel 1893, 300, and Dittenberger, *Syll.*³ 4 erroneously thought that the word ναῦτον was not Greek but Carian in origin). The most compelling interpretation is that proposed by L. Dubois (2014, 605-606), according to whom the word contains in itself the suffix -σοος, which indicates transit, passage, exactly as in μηλοσόη, defined by Hesychius as ὁδὸς δι᾽ἧς πρόβατα ἐλαύνεται. Consequently, the name ναῦσσος / ναῦτος, as formed by the union of ναῦς and the suffix -σοος, originally designated a place of

transit for the ships, hence the place where the ships were placed to enter the port or to leave it. Subsequently, according to the scholar, the name started meaning a tax probably due to a small crew of technicians who, on board a smaller boat, had to guide the maneuvers of the ship when it entered the port and when it left it. Dubois's hypothesis seems to be confirmed by the testimony of Aeneas Tacticus (10.12), who mentions the ἀνολκή (the hauling up of a ship) and the καθολκή (the drawing down of a ship) as concessions to ναύκληρος whose ship had carried some goods in a city that had run out of them. This means that hauling a ship up and putting it back in the water were not free operations. The only problem with this hypothesis is that the existence of this small crew of technicians is not attested anywhere. Accordingly, even retaining Dubois' linguistic interpretation (and thus keeping the reference to ἀνολκή and καθολκή maneuvers), it seems more reasonable to assume that with ναῦσσον / ναῦτον the ναύκληροι paid the use of the equipment of the port to haul up the ships. Indeed, we know of the existence of the ὁλκός, which could have the shape of a fixed winch (Hdt. 2.154, 159; Eur. *Rh.* 146, 673) as well as that of a mobile machinery capable of towing ships (Thuc. 3.15). It does not seem to be chance that ὁλκός is the very name of a tax attested in later inscriptions (s. Vélissaropoulos 1980, 219). In addition, it also seems to be excluded that the harbors had personnel responsible for executing such operations, since it was often the crew of the ship itself which dealt with them (s. Launey 1933, 398; for other interpretations of the word on issue, s. Mordtmann 1880, 92, who proposed to correct the reading ναῦτου with ναυωρίου; Toepffer 1891, 418; Id. 1897, 211, who, relying on an identity established by Hesychius between ναῦσθλον and ναῦλον (s.v. ναῦσθλον), interpreted ναῦσσον / ναῦτον as the equivalent of a transport tax; he is substantially followed by Nixon and Price 1990, 145 and by Dillon and Garland 1994, 10.25; Migeotte 2014, 256, who interprets the term ναῦλλον occurring in *IG* IX 2, 161A, l. 74, identifying it with ναῦσσος / ναῦτος, while the term probably means the sum paid to Nicocles, the individual who had rented his own ship out; Wreeken 1953, 28-9, who, assuming that the term ναῦσσον, similar to νεοσσός, ἔπισσαι, μέτασσαι, περισσός, thought that it had a common origin with the verb κεῖσθαι and that therefore ναῦσσον / ναῦτον was a tax to pay for a ship's stop at the port).

l. 5 ταλάντου: the term must be interpreted in its original meaning, namely "balance" (*LSJ*[1]). In this decree, reference is made to the tax that those who intended to use the public balance were required to pay (the same term appears in a Thasian inscription, most likely with the same meaning, *IG* XII Suppl. 349, ll. 10-12). The public balance, although not by the same name, seems to be also referred to in an inscription of Delos (*I.Délos* 509; *NCIDelos* 11, l. 2, which refers to the ξυληροὶ σταθμοί, the public balance for timber). A reference is made in *I.Magnesia* 128 to the contract awarded to a private person responsible for collecting the tax for the public balance (on which s. Wilhelm 1915, 38-43; Migeotte 2014, 271), even though the inscription is seriously damaged. V. Chankowski (2007, 319) maintains that the τάλαντον was a lump-sum tax collected on trade or sailing.

Ἱππωνίης: Indirect tax on the sale of horses. It is one of those in Athens that were called ἐπώνια, taxes on commercial transactions between private individuals (v. Poll. 7.15: τὰ δὲ καταβαλλόμενα ὑπὲρ τῶν πιπρασκομένων τέλη ἐπώνια λέγουσιν; Harp., s.v. ἐπώνια: τέλος ἐστὶ τὸ ἐπὶ τῇ ὠνῇ διδόμενον; *Anecd. Bekk.* 255, ἐπώνια μὲν τὰ ἐπὶ τῇ ὠνῇ προσκαταβαλλόμενα; with Migeotte 2014, 265-71, 513-14). Ἱππωνίη does not seem to have any other attestations. The connection, proposed by Dittemberger (*Syll.*[3] 4), with the ἱπποτροφία, a liturgy mentioned in a 2nd century BC inscription coming from Priene (*I.Priene 2014*, 144, *Syll.*[3] 1003, l. 26) seems to be far from convincing, as the ἱπποτροφία was not a tax, but it consisted in the obligation of the wealthiest people in the cities to feed horses at their own expense, especially those used in races (on ἱπποτροφία, s. Wilhelm 1911, 227-228; Robert 1969-1990, II, 1283). In any case, the existence of a tax on horse trade is certainly a sign of the importance that such a business was supposed to have in Cyzicus, and this is in turn understandable in the light of the importance that cavalry had in the city. Indeed, one of the most important civic charges, although attested in later times, is that of the ἱππάρχης, which appears as the eponymous magistrate in several decrees (s. e.g. IMT Kyz Kapu Dağ 1404; 1430; 1431).

l. 6 τετάρτης: This tax is a riddle for scholars. The most striking point is that it is exorbitant, as it amounts to 25%. The difficulty is to identify what this tax was paid on. The only parallel in the Greek world that comes to mind is a special tax that the city of Byzantium levied in a particularly unfavorable economic situation: in that case, the city required even the third part (33 1/3%!) of the earnings of θαυματοποιοί, μάντεις and φαρμακοπῶλαι ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1346 b 21-4). However, it was just an extraordinary tax. A. Andreades (1931, 161-162) provides two alternative possibilities of interpretation for our τετάρτη. Either it was a sort of rental fee paid by tenant farmers who cultivated state land (although in the classical age the lease never seems to have exceeded the 10% threshold); or it was a property tax that subdued populations of Asia Minor paid to Greek poleis, a practice widespread in many areas of the Greek world (e.g. Helots were required to deliver a part of their products to the Spartiates; Messenias, from the 7th century to the 369 BC, were required to deliver half of their crops to the Spartiates; Crete's περίοικοι also paid a tax in kind to the inhabitants of the Greek cities of the island ; the Penesti in Thessaly paid a σύνταξις to their masters; Mariandins had to pay a tribute to the citizens

of Pontic Heracleia; Phrygians had to pay a φόρος to the city of Zelea; some not identifiable βάρβαροι paid a ἀπαρχή to the city of Syracuse: for a summary on the subject, s. Migeotte 2014, 231-236). This interpretation is based on the hypothesis that the beneficiaries of the decree of Cyzicus were not citizens, but belonged to the Phrygian substratum occupying the area of Cyzicus before the foundation of the city. This hypothesis seems to be supported by the non-Greek origin of the name Manes, which was Phrygian (s. supra, commentary ad loc.). However, the problem remains for Aisepos, which is a Greek name. According to A. Wilhelm (1939, 362), the τετάρτη could be assimilated to the πέμπτη (the text was restored by Meritt 1935, 358 ff.), which recurs in a decree of the City of Colophon (*SEG* 19 699; McCabe, *Kolophon* 4, l. 31), a 20% tax levied on fish. Gleaning from the proceeds deriving from it (together with the proceeds from another tax, that on pastures and horse-breeding), the city of Colophon committed itself to returning the money lent by certain citizens for the construction of the city walls. On the basis of that interpretation, Wilhelm considers that the τετάρτη mentioned in the text of Cyzicus is an indirect tax levied on fish trade (the scholar interprets in this same sense the πέμπται mentioned in an arbitration of 300 BC, but on the difficulties that this reconstruction entails, s. A. Magnetto, *Arbitrati* 14, l. 1, esp. 93-94; Migeotte 2014, 240, no. 490). This would be supported by an Egyptian parallel: we know that in Egypt there were some taxes on fish: τετάρτη ἁλιέων (*BGU* 6.1315), ἰχθυικῶν ἁλιέων (*O.Wilck.* 2.331) and ἰχθυηρά ὠνή (*UPZ* 110.98; *P.Fay.* 42A, v. 2). This hypothesis is certainly tempting, especially if we consider the significant role that fish trade presumably played in a seaport like Cyzicus. However, this is only a hypothesis, as there is no certainty that the fish was taxed in Cyzicus, especially as in the parallels identified by Wilhelm the noun τετάρτη (or even πέμπτη, in the case of Colophon) is always followed by a term that determines its meaning and narrows its scope of application, whether it is ἰχθύων or ἁλιέων. The problem then remains open.

ἀνδραποδωνίης: This is an indirect tax on the sale of slaves. Like ἱππωνίη, ἀνδραποδωνίη also falls within those indirect taxes that in Athens were called ἐπώνια (s. supra, Comm. Ἱππωνίης). We do not have parallels in the archaic and classic Greek world. F. Bleckmann (1913, no. 28) indicates as a parallel a tax on ἀνδράποδα which is implicitly mentioned in an inscription from Teos (Robert 1976, 175-188; Chandezon 2003, 53). However, in this case it seems to have been a direct tax on the work of the slaves rented and not, as in this case, an indirect tax on their sale (s. Migeotte 2014, 272). The Hellenistic and Roman worlds provide us with a few appropriate parallels. A tax on slave sale seems to have existed in the Seleucid monarchy (where it was called ἀνδραποδικόν; s. Bikerman 1938, 117), in Ptolemaic Egypt (s. Rostovtzeff 1941, 322, Huss 2011, 215, 231-234; on the tax burden on the slave trade in Ptolemaic Egypt, s. Preaux 1939, 307-312), in 3rd century BC Acarnania (*IG* XI 1, 583, l. 32, for bibliography on this inscription, s. Migeotte 2014, 90, 222), and in imperial Rome (s. Cass. Dio 55.31.4, who mentions a levy of Augustus of a 2% tax, πεντηκοστή ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν ἀνδραπόδων πράσει, on the sale of slaves and Tac. *Ann.* 13.31, who instead mentions a 4% tax on slave sales levied by Nero, vectigal quintae et vicesimae venalium mancipiorum).

l. 7 δῆμος ὅρκιον ἔταμον: For this expression, cf. *Syll.*[3] 10; Meiggs, Lewis, *GHI* 32, ll. 43-45: κατό|περ τὰ ὅρκια ἔταμον καὶ ὡς γέγραπ|ται ἐν τῶι Ἀπολλωνίωι. The verb τέμνω literally alludes to the act of cutting up the victims during a sacrifice (*LSJ*). Here the expression in its entirety alludes to the sacrifice made to seal the oath (cf. Hom. *Il.* 2.124, *Od.* 24.483, Polyb. 21.24.3). This reference to an oath can be explained in the light of the community's need to make its own decisions binding for itself, in order to protect beneficiaries from any infringement, abolition or change of what has been decreed (s. Gehrke 1993, 60).

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