

Tenos. Honorary decree for Lucius Aufidius Bassus

Description: Rectangular complete marble stele (dimensions are h: 1.265 m w: 0.516 m), with lacunae of a few letters here and there throughout the text, mostly in the final part of the lines, minor enough to be restored with no effort and unanimously by scholars. A notable exception is the lower part of the stele, which is preserved in very poor condition (it took no little effort to get a completely satisfying reading of some parts of ll. 48-57). At a certain point (after l. 57), although certainly inscribed, it becomes unreadable because of its corroded and discoloured status, causing a significant lacuna for the last part of the document. After l. 57 there are six lines with indistinguishable signs of letters here and there; in addition Hiller von Gaertringen estimated the loss of about 26 other lines for the document to be complete, so on the whole about 32 lines of text have been lost. There is also a fragment of a copy of the stele (see *SEG* 29 756), broken on three sides, containing lines 36 to 57 (dimensions: h:0.36 m w:0.45 m d:0.065 m)

Layout: Non-stoichedon.

Letters: Hellenistic koinè

Origin: Tenos. Maybe standing in the agora or near a public monument of some sort. The other extant copy, in a much more fragmentary condition, would instead have been placed hypothetically in the sanctuary of the polyadic deities, Poseidon and Amphitrite, where all the most important decrees were most likely kept by the polis (see Étienne 1979, 147-148)

Dating: Both palaeography and orthography seem to be consistent with a 1st century BC dating, probably around 50 BC

Findspot: Found among the ruins of the ancient city of Tenos by Hawkins in 1795 (reported by Hiller von Gaertringen); Étienne 1979, 147 writes that: “elle fut trouvée dans la ville actuelle, c’est à dire au port de Ténos”, without citing any source of information. *SEG* 29 756 was identified and published as a copy of the decree by Étienne 1979, 147-148) while he was working on some unpublished inscriptions in the Museum of Tenos: he cites no findspot for the fragment. Although Étienne did not give an explanation for this, most likely the stone was without any indication of provenance and no news about context and circumstances of retrieval was recorded or preserved for the editor or the Museum staff. He did formulate an hypothesis about the original placement of the stone in the sanctuary of Poseidon and Amphitrite; maybe Étienne suspected the fragment was somehow found still in its original context. If so, he did not discuss the topic in his article

Current location: It was originally kept in the Library of the Trinity College in Cambridge, where the editor princeps found it and Hiller von Gaertringen reported it to be. The stone was moved to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge in 1970 (see *SEG* 25 965 and Nicholls 1970-71, 79 no. 6), where it is kept now as a long term loan with the accession number Loan Ant. 22. The fragmentary copy (*SEG* 29 756) is preserved in the Museum of Tenos (no. 307)

Reference edition: ll. 1-57: L. Migeotte, *Emprunt* 64; for the six further lines of the last part of the document, I used the reading by Hiller von Gaertringen (*IG* XII 5 860) in his transcription, but the reading of these letters is highly hypothetical (Migeotte judged there was nothing left but signs and did not attempt a reading)

Other editions: ed. pr. Dobree 1824, 141-143 (based both on autopsy and the use of some copies of the inscription made by other scholars he lists in his commentary); Rose 1825, Appendix VII, 395-399 no. VII (Dobree’s text); A. Böckh, *CIG* II 2335 (based on the same copies used by Dobree and on another copy by Müller); P. Le Bas, W.H. Waddington, *LBW* II, 1859; Georgantopoulos 1889, 47-49; E.L. Hicks, *GHI* 204 (based on autopsy); C. Michel, *Recueil* 394; *IG* XII 5 860 (Hiller von Gaertringen, based on two copies by Sinkler); Donati 1965, 52-53 no. 74; Bogaert 1976, 8-11 no. 3; Étienne 1979, 148-149 (fragmentary copy, ll. 36-57, see *SEG* 29 756); Étienne 1990, 136-138; Mendoni, Zoumbaki 2008, 214-215

Photographs: Mendoni, Zoumbaki 2008, pls. 35 and 36a

Translations: L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 223-224 (in French); reprinted in Étienne 1990, 138

Bibliography: Dareste 1884, 363-364; Wilhelm 1898, 230-231 no. 394; Billeter 1898, 94-98; Hatzfeld 1919, 84 and 205-209; Larsen 1938, 372-374; Robert, *OMS* IV, 203-205; Maróti 1962, 124-127; Bogaert 1968, 193-196; Bogaert 1979, 128-130 (on l. 21); Payne 1984, 277-278; Tréheux 1986, 425 (on *SEG* 29 756, l. 17); Nigdelis 1990, 161-162; de Souza 1999, 163-164

- [ἔδοξε τ]ῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ, πρυτάνεων γνώμη· ἐπεὶ [Λεύ-]
 κιος Αὐφίδιος Λευκίου υἱὸς Βάσσος διὰ παντὸς εὖνους ὦ[ν]
 διατελεῖ καὶ κατὰ κοινὸν τῇ πόλει καὶ καθ' ἰδίαν ἐκάστῳ τῷ[ν]
 πολιτῶν, πατροπαράδοτον παρειληφώς τὴν πρὸς τὸν δῆμο[ν]
 5 ἡμῶν εὖνοιαν, καὶ πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας τῇ πόλει παρέσχηται
 χρεῖας, μεγαλοπρεπῶς τε καὶ φιλαγάθως πολλῶν χρημάτων ἄφε-
 σιν πεποιήται· ὃ τε πατὴρ αὐτοῦ, καθ' ὃν καιρὸν ἐπιγενόμενος ὁ
 κοινὸς πόλεμος καὶ συνεχεῖς πειρατῶν ἐπίπλοι τὴν νῆσον οὐ-
 χὼς ἔτυχεν συνηνάγκασαν ὑπὸ τῶν δανείων ἐπιβαρηθῆ-
 10 ναι, μόνος καὶ πρῶτος τῶν συνηλαχότων, πρὸ πλείονος ἡγη-
 σάμενος τὴν τῆς πόλεως σωτηρίαν ἢ τὸ περὶ τὸν ἴδιον βίον
 λυσιτελές, χρημάτων πλῆθος, ὅσον προηρούμεθα, προθυμό-
 τата ἔδωκεν ἐξ ἐτοίμου τόκων πολὺ κουφοτέρων παρὰ τοὺς [ύ-]
 πάρχοντας τότε, τούτων τε συνπεριφορὰν ἐποιήσατο πάν-
 15 τα τὸν τῆς ζωῆς χρόνον, διετέλει τε λέγων καὶ πράττων
 διὰ παντὸς τὰ βέλτιστα καὶ συμφέροντα τῇ πόλει· ἐφ' οἷς ὁ δῆ-
 μος ἡμῶν, ἔργῳ λαβὼν πείραν τῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ γεγωνιῶν εὐε[ρ-]
 γεσιῶν παραχρῆμα τὰς καθηκούσας ἐψηφίσατο τιμὰς αὐτ[ῶ]·
 διαδεξάμενός τ' αὐτὸς ἐπηγωνίσατο τῇ πρὸς τὴν πόλιν εὐ-
 20 νοίᾳ, καὶ δύο μὲν συγγραφὰς καταλελειμμένας ὑπὸ τοῦ πα-
 τρὸς αὐτῷ κατὰ τῆς πόλεως ἔκτων τόκων, τὴν μὲν μίαν δρα-
 χμῶν Ἀττικῶν μυρίων χιλίων, τὴν δ' ἑτέραν Ἀττικῶν μυρίων ἐ-
 νακισχιλίων πεντακοσίων, ἐλοιπογράφησεν χωρὶς ἀργυρίου κοι-
 δῆς παρακληθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου· τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις δανείοις ἄνωθεν
 25 ἀπὸ τῶν συγγραφῶν δραχμιαῖον τόκον ἐξ εὐθυτοκίας ἵλκυσεν [ἐ-]
 τῶν καὶ πλείονων, καὶ συνχωρήσας πλῆθος χρημάτων ἱκανώτ[ε-]
 ρον, πάλιν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ πρὸς τὸν δῆμον ὑπερέθετ' εὐεργεσίᾳ· τὸ
 γὰρ συναχθὲν ἐκ τῆς ἐπιεικεστάτης ψήφου κεφάλαιον εἰς ἄλ-
 λον πενταετῇ συνεγράψατο χρόνον τόκου τετρωβόλου· δι-
 30 ελθόντος δὲ καὶ τούτου καὶ πλείονων ἄλλων ἐτῶν ἐπιγε[νο-]
 μένων, καὶ μὴ δυνηθέντων ἡμῶν διὰ τὰς ὑφ' ἐτέρων γειν[ο-]
 μένας ἐπιβαρήσεις ἀποδοῦναι τὰ ὀφειλόμενα αὐτῷ, καὶ διὰ
 ταῦτα συναθροισθέντων διαφορῶν πλείονων καὶ τῆς πό[λε-]
 ως ἐν τοῖς ἐσχάτοις ὑπαρχούσης κινδύνους, πάλιν ἐν τοῖς [πα-]
 35 ροῦσι καιροῖς ἡγησάμενος εὐσεβὲς καὶ μεγαλοπρεπὲς ὑπ[άρ-]
 χειν ἑαυτῷ τὴν προσήκουσαν τῆς πατρίδος ἡμῶν ποιήσασ[θαι]
 φροντίδα, ἀρχαίας νήσου καὶ ἱερᾶς ὑπαρχούσης, εἶναί θ' ἑαυτ[ῶι]
 πλούτου παντὸς κρεῖττονα πόλεως σωτηρίαν καὶ τὴν π[αρά]
 πᾶσιν ἀγαθὴν εὐφημίαν, πολλὰ πάλιν χρήματ' ἐπέδω[κε τῷ]

- 40 δῆμῳ, οὐ μόνον ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφειλομένων αὐτῷ μεγάλ[α ἀφ]ελώ[ν]
κεφάλαια, ἀλλὰ καὶ χρόνον εἰς τὴν ἀπόδοσιν ὧν ἐπέισ-
θη δούς ἐνδεκαετῇ, καὶ τοῦτον ἄτοκον, χάριν τοῦ κατὰ
τὸ δυνατόν, ὅσον ἐπ' αὐτῷ, τὴν νῆσον καὶ πάντας ἡμᾶς
ἐν αὐτῇ συντηρηθῆναι, γενόμενος τῶν μεγίστων ἡμεῖ[ν]
45 παραίτιος ἀγαθῶν· ἐπιδημήσας τε ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει πλεί-
ονα χρόνον σώφρονα καὶ σεμνὴν καὶ πᾶσιν προσηνῇ τὴν
ἀναστροφὴν ποιεῖται· ἐφ' οἷς οὐχ ἥττον ὁ δῆμος ἡμῶν αὐ-
τὸν καὶ διὰ ταῦτα θαυμάζει τε καὶ τιμᾷ, καὶ εἰλι[κρινῶ]ς [γ]νησ[ι-]
αν ἔχοντι πρὸς πάντας φιλοστοργίαν εὐχαρισ[τ]εῖ· ἐν τε
50 τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσιν ὧ[ς] δικαίαν καὶ εὐσεβῇ γνώμην ἔχων καὶ ἀ[ρ-]
μοζούσῃ παρρησίᾳ χρώμενος εἰς ἐπίστασιν καθέστακεν [ῥ-]
σον ἐπ' αὐτῷ τοὺς ἐπιβαροῦντας, καὶ τοῖς ἀδίκως κινδυν[εύου-]
σι δικαίαν παρέχεται βοήθειαν, [π]άν[τω]ς τε ἐν παντὶ καιρ[ῶ] πρό-
θυμον ἄτον ἐπιδίδωσιν ἐπὶ τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα· ὅ-
55 πως οὖν καὶ ὁ δῆμος ἡ[μῶν] φαίνεται τὰς ἐπιβαλλούσας
τοῖς εὐεργέταις ἀποδιδούς χάρι[τ]ας, πε[ρὶ δὴ τούτων], [ἀ-]
γαθῇ τύχῃ, δεδόχθαι τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ, ἐ[παινέσαι - - -]
[- - -]ΕΚΑΙΤΗΣ[- - -]
[- - -]ΟΥ[- - -]
60 [- - -]ΣΡΦΙΛΛΑΜ[- - -]
[- - - - - - - - -]
[- - -]Ι[- - -]
[- - - - - - - - -]
(*seqq. vv. fere 26 valde detriti*)

Apparatus criticus: l. 21: ἔκτων τόκων Étienne : ἐκ<τὸς> τῶν τόκων corr. Bogaert : ἐκ τῶν τόκων alii. l. 25: εἴλκυσεν Dobree : [ῥ]ισεν Boeckh. l. 47: ἡμῶν Étienne : [ῥ]ηλοῖ alii. l. 50: Ο. δικαίαν Étienne (unde ὧ[ς] δικαίαν Migeotte) : ὧν δίκαιος alii. καθέστακεν Wilhelm, Hiller von Gaertringen (transcriptio). l. 52: τοῖς ἀδίκως κινδυν[εύου]- Wilhelm. l. 53: [π]άν[τω]ς rest. Hiller von Gaertringen. l. 54: ἐπὶ τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα Hiller von Gaertringen. l. 56: χάρι<ιτ>ας corr. et rest. Hiller von Gaertringen.

Translation:

Resolved by the Boule and the Demos, proposal of the prytaneis: considering that Lucius Aufidius Bassus, son of Lucius, continues in all matters to be kind both to the city in common and to each of the citizens individually, having inherited his father's goodwill towards our people, and has rendered many and great services to the city and remitted several amounts of money with magnificence and goodness; considering that his father, at the time when the Common War had arisen and the incessantly recurring pirate raids forced our island to overburden itself with debts in no ordinary manner, he alone and the first among those who had drawn up a contract with us, placing the safety of the city before his own profit, lent us as much money as we proposed most eagerly, at much lower interest in comparison to those current at the time, and that he showed leniency about this matter for his whole life and continued saying and doing in any circumstance whatever was better and useful for the city and because of these good services our people, having actually experienced the benefits coming from his good deeds, immediately bestowed the proper honours on him by decree; considering that (Lucius Aufidius Bassus), after having succeeded his father contended in goodwill towards the city, and that two contracts left to him by his father towards the city at an interest rate of 1/6, one of 11,000 Attic drachms and the other one of 19,500 Attic drachms, he carried over without receiving any money, because the people begged him to do so, and for the other debts he drew a simple interest at the rate of one drachm for several years, going back to the time of the contracts; considering that, having granted a more considerable sum of money, he surpassed himself in good deeds towards the people again: the capital gathered according to the

fairest reckoning, he put under contract for another period of five years at an interest of 4 obols; considering that, as this period of time had elapsed and many other years gone by in addition, as we were not able to pay back the money we owed him because of charges imposed by others and because of this many profits had been accumulated and the city was in the utmost danger, considering again that in the present circumstances it would have been a sign of devotion and magnificence for him to bestow upon our country the proper care, as the island was ancient and sacred, and that his good reputation among people and the safety of the city meant much more to him than his wealth, he gave again a large amount of money to the people, not only remitting large amounts of capital from what we owed him but consenting to grant us a period of 11 years to give him back the money we persuaded him to give us, without imposing any rate of interest, in order to preserve, as far as it was possible for him, the island and us all on it, becoming to us the source of the greatest benefits; considering that he stayed in our city for a long period of time and behaved wisely, nobly and kindly towards anyone and our people don't admire and honour him less for this reason and are thankful to him for his absolutely genuine affection for everybody; considering that in any other matter, as he had a just and pious opinion and spoke with proper frankness, he stopped, as far as it was possible for him, those who overloaded us and gave the rightful support to those who were unjustly in danger; considering that he displays his zeal totally and in any circumstances when the interests of the city are at stake; in order to make clear that our people express the proper gratitude towards their benefactors. About this, with Good Fortune! The Boule and the demos decreed that (he) should be praised [- - -]

Commentary:

The date of the inscription is firmly anchored in the first half of the first century BC; there are no precise or explicit chronological data in the text, but the mention of a *κοινὸς πόλεμος* at l. 8 leaves two possible options: either the campaign against pirates by Pompey in 67 (so Boeckh in *CIG* II 2335; Dareste 1884, 363; Billeter 1898, 94; and Maróti 1962, esp. 125-126) or the war Rome and her allies fought against Mithridates from 88 to 84 BC (this historical context is preferred by Hiller von Gaertringen in *IG* XII 5 860; Bogaert 1968, 193 with n. 346; L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 224). So the activity of Lucius Aufidius Bassus' father on Tenos can be dated as roughly between 88 and 67 BC. After that, several years must have gone by before the proposal and approval of a decree for his son; although an exact assessment of how many years is impossible, the decree in honour of Lucius Aufidius Bassus can be dated to around the middle of the century with a good degree of likelihood. The stele carries precisely the text of this honorific decree for Lucius Aufidius Bassus, issued by the community of the Tenians. The part of the document which focuses on the motives why this man deserved such an honour provides a very detailed account of these reasons and dwells at length upon them (a bit verbosely), from l. 1 to l. 54, i.e. the largest part of what remains. The hortatory intent is limited to a short formula between l. 54 and 56, then the resolution formula is preserved (both the Boule and the Demos of Tenos are involved in the resolution). However, the part in which the honours awarded to Lucius Aufidius Bassus presumably were listed has been lost (Hiller von Gaertringen estimated the extent of this missing final portion of the document to be about 30 lines). According to the hypothesis of Payne 1984, 278; these might have been of proxeny status, other honours attendant with proxeny, title of Benefactor and perhaps even the dedication of a statue. Perhaps the lost lines also contained dispositions for the inscribing and the collocation of the stone(s) with the text of the honorific decree. The plural "stones" in the previous sentence may be a correct guess, since there are two known inscriptions from Tenos – *IG* XII 5 860 and *SEG* 29 756 – carrying the same text of the decree. It is likely that at least two copies of the decree were provided for, perhaps to be displayed in two different "significant" places in the topography of the city (one in the agora and the other in the polyadic sanctuary, as suggested by Étienne 1979, 148), such was the will of the Tenians to properly honour their benefactor and to make him and his family a public example of generosity.

As to the family of the honorand, in this case - even if it is not so surprising or uncommon - family history matters: indeed, there are two prominent personalities making their appearance in the document, and next to Lucius Aufidius Bassus, the honorand of this decree, there is his father Lucius Aufidius. Lucius Aufidius Senior has been identified with a homonymous banker previously known on Delos at the end of the 2nd century/beginning of the 1st century BC (Hatzfeld 1919, 43; Hatzfeld 1912, 19 no. 4; *I.Délos* 1728, cf. Bogaert 1976, no. 6; *I.Délos* 1729; Hatzfeld and Roussel 1910, 398-399 nos. 44-45). From the text of the inscription, it can be assumed that at least for a limited period of time he moved his business to Tenos and maybe died here. This most probably happened towards the end of his life and may have involved only a part of his business. For a more detailed commentary on the career of this man, see Bogaert 1968, 190 and 195-196 and, more recently, Mendoni, Zoumbaki 2008, 212-213. Most importantly, the elder Lucius Aufidius was also a great benefactor of the Tenians, and the decree states (l. 18) that he too was properly honoured as such by a decree. Although this earlier text is not extant, it was evidently taken into account - with all its content and the history of the relationship between the Tenians and the honorand of that decree - when his son was to be honoured, and it was most likely not very different in character and tone from the one dedicated to his son. After the death of the father, his son took over his financial and maybe banking business on Tenos. Most

importantly for those who drew up the text of this decree, Lucius Aufidius Bassus was the worthy successor of his father with respect to his behaviour towards the city of Tenos, following his father's path in generously financing it in hard times. Judging from the extent of Lucius Aufidius Bassus' patience and generosity towards the Tenians, L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 228 was right in assuming he could rely on a considerable personal wealth, most likely as a result of his father's and his own efforts in business, or he would not have taken such risks. Maybe Lucius Aufidius Bassus was not staying on Tenos anymore when this decree was passed, since his stay is referred to in the aorist past (l. 45 ἐπιδημήσας), although his behaviour towards the Tenians is described in the present tense (so Bogaert 1968, 196 and L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 225). In any event, with this decree and the decree for Lucius Aufidius Senior, the Tenians showed how much they cared about their relationship with the Aufidii family and how great was their desire to maintain a strong bond with their benefactors. For a more detailed commentary on the life and activity of Lucius Aufidius Bassus see Mendoni, Zoumbaki 2008, 214-218. These introductory elements should allow the reader to frame the inscription in a broader picture; the following commentary will mainly focus on discussing economic aspects related to this inscription. In order to give a full and clear account, the text will be considered in small portions commented upon separately:

Il. 1-7: The text sums up in general terms the reasons why Lucius Aufidius Bassus is honoured by the people of Tenos; his "good deeds" consisted mainly in financial benefits towards the city, since "he remitted several amounts of money" (l. 7).

Il. 7-18: This rather long digression on the activity of the honorand's father on the island is not only meant to make a proper display of a significant family precedent for the goodwill of Lucius Aufidius Bassus towards the city and of the good financial relations between Tenos and the family (see discussion above), but it is also necessary to go back to the loans granted by the father to Tenos to give some measure of the son's generosity. When there was the "Common War" and the pirates tormented the island with their continuous raids, the city went deeply in debt, probably because it had to face high defence expenditures and maybe also to give some contribution, financial or material, to the military actions. The city drew up written contracts with its creditors about these loans (l. 10 τῶν συνηλαχότων). Lucius Aufidius Senior, alone among those creditors, made the sum agreed upon immediately available to the city and granted a rate of interest that was more favourable than that current at the time. What's more important, the text states he "was patient" about this matter throughout his whole life: he probably granted delays in payment to the city on various occasions, and maybe remissions of a part of the debt. Because of this, the city had already paid him an honour similar to the one it was bestowing on his son.

Il. 19-23: At his father's death, Lucius Aufidius Bassus inherited two credits the former had with the Tenians. These credits had been granted at an interest rate of 1/6 (ἐκτῶν τόκων; see further in the commentary for the textual and interpretative problems posed by this expression), about 16.7 %, which is per se rather high, but reasonable enough if compared with rates known from other contemporary and similar situations, when the transaction was between ruthless Roman financiers and Greek cities which were in such a miserable state to be forced to accept much heavier conditions, without any possibility to pick and choose or alternative. An example is the transaction between the city of Gytheion and the Cloutii (IG V 1 1146 and L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 90-96 no. 24), which initially set a rate of interest of 48%. So in this case the creditor (Lucius Aufidius Bassus' father) was undoubtedly generous in a certain way.

The reading ἐκ τῶν τόκων at l. 21 gave commentators no little trouble in the past: it was not easy to understand what the meaning of two written contracts (συγγραφαί) inherited by the son "as a result of the interest"/ "because of the interest". The expression συγγραφή/συγγραφαί ἐκ τῶν τόκων has no parallel in ancient sources. Some commentators hazarded that these contracts were stipulated from accumulated interest (Billetter 1898, 95 and Dareste 1884, 363) or because of unpaid interest (Hatzfeld 1919, 205 n. 3), but these hypotheses are very far from satisfactory and find no basis in ancient documents of economic nature, as already stated above. According to L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 226, the term συγγραφή: "dans le crédit public ... désigne toujours le contract original réglant les conditions de l'emprunt". In general, such a strict limitation for the term may be questioned; from mid-4th century BC, it is used quite flexibly to define several types of transactions and the term itself without further specification can hardly be taken as a "label" to classify the type of transaction that was registered in that document, let alone the conditions the two parties agreed upon during the transaction (cf. Bianchini 1979). In 1st century BC, four additional cases are known where Greek cities were granted loans by Romans - L. Migeotte, *Emprunt* 24, 75, 95 and 105, and in these cases the lexical choices to denote the involved "contracts" and transactions are either συγγραφή or συνάλλαγμα. Nevertheless Migeotte's interpretation fits very well in this specific case, especially if you accept the reading ἐκτῶν by Étienne (cf. infra) instead of ἐκ τῶν: in this commentary the συγγραφαί mentioned at l. 20 are interpreted as the original contracts stipulated between Lucius Aufidius Senior and the city to regulate the conditions of the loans he granted to the Tenians.

Bogaert 1979, 129 suggested a different solution by connecting the expression ἐκ τῶν τόκων at l. 21 (probably a mistake for ἐκ<τός>) with the verb ἐλοιπογράφησεν at l. 23: in his interpretation Lucius Aufidius would have

allowed the capital to remain in arrear, but would have remitted the outstanding interest (his translation: “et deux contrats laissés à lui par son père contre la cité, il les a inscrits pour solde excepté les intérêts”). The solution of the problem comes with the reading *ἐκτων τόκων* by Étienne 1979, 146, which is accepted in the text by Migeotte and is based on good comparison in ancient use (singular or plural genitive case is frequently used for expressions indicating interest rates, see L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 226 n. 326 and 270 n. 40; loans at an interest rate of 1/6 are rarely, but certainly attested, see Étienne 1979, 146): both the translation and the commentary here given are based on this reading. According to this interpretation, the son inherited two contracts from his father at an interest rate of 1/6 and although he had the right to exact repayment according to the terms of the contracts, he granted the city a moratorium. He didn’t exact the money the Tenians owed him (he didn’t get back the capital his father lent; it isn’t certain if he remitted the outstanding interest or not) and simply extended the loans at the same rate of interest; in the current translation “he carried them over”. (The verb *λοιπογραφέω*, known only from epigraphic and papyrological sources, has not always been correctly interpreted by commentators: see Dareste 1884, 363, “il en fit remise gratuitement”, followed by Hatzfeld 1919, 84 and 208, n. 2 and 3, and Ziebarth 1929, 116 n. 113; for the correct meaning inscrire pour solde see Bogaert 1979, 129; L. Robert, *OMS* IV, 204 and L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 226 n. 328).

The sums at Il. 22-23 (11,000 and 19,500 Attic drachms) evidently represent the capital Lucius Aufidius Senior originally lent to the Tenians (Bogaert 1968, 193; Bogaert 1979, 129; L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 226-227), and not, as Hatzfeld 1919, 205 no. 3 supposed, the joint amount of the capital and the accumulated interest.

Il. 24-25: The text reads *ἄλλα δάνεια*: apart from Billeter, who thought this was the capital Lucius Aufidius Senior originally lent to the Tenians, in opposition to the *συγγραφαί* of I. 20, which according to his interpretation were contracts regarding only accumulated interest on that original capital (Billeter 1898, 96 n. 1), all previous commentators simply assumed this to be other, different credits Lucius Aufidius Bassus inherited from his father, in addition to those two mentioned separately at I. 20 (see for example Bogaert 1968, 194 and Hatzfeld 1919, 208 with n. 3). L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 226 emphasizes the strong opposition *μέν-δέ* in the Greek text, between *καὶ δύο μὲν συγγραφὰς καταλειμμένας ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶι* (Il. 20-21) and *τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις δανείοις* (I. 24): he suggests that it is possible that the city incurred these debts more recently and not with Lucius Aufidius’ father, but directly with Lucius Aufidius himself. In any case, these contracts expired as well, but the city managed again to get a moratorium from Lucius Aufidius and, most importantly, a significant reduction of the interest rate to a drachm per mina and per month, with retroactive effect, i.e. backdating to the time these contracts had been drawn up. The text states explicitly that the interest is simple (*ἐξ εὐθυτοκίας*), and this probably suggests that the creditor had originally required a compound interest to be registered as a condition in the contracts. This switch from compound to simple interest was a major advantage to the city, and a very generous concession by Lucius Aufidius Bassus.

I. 26: The text states that Lucius Aufidius Bassus granted to the city “a more considerable sum of money” and this is open to two different interpretations: either the same concession as in Il. 24-25 (Hatzfeld 1919, 208-209 esp. n. 4; Bogaert 1968, 194) or (better: cf. comparative *ἰκανώτερον*) another, different credit granted to the city by Lucius Aufidius Bassus, and in this case he granted a more considerable sum of money than the sums involved in the previous transactions (Dareste 1884, 363; Billeter 1898, 97-98, L. Migeotte, *Emprunt*, 226-227).

Il. 27-29: Here there is another major concession by Lucius Aufidius Bassus to the Tenians: he grants them a renewal of all the debts the city has accumulated over time towards him and his father, by drawing up a contract lasting 5 years at a very favourable interest rate of 4 obols (8%). Presumably, it was no simple matter to handle: they had to resort to “the fairest reckoning” to establish exactly the status of the debts, capital and unpaid interest involved in the different transactions over time.

Il. 30-45: This is the apex of Aufidius’ generosity towards the Tenians: the time being long overdue, the city is still not able to pay him back, even at the very favourable conditions he had granted them in the last transaction (Il. 27-29). Tenos is in “utmost danger”, probably under constant threat of an attack during the Roman civil wars, debt laden and very likely victim of war requisitions/tributes (I. 31 ... because of charges imposed by others ...). In these circumstances, the text says, Lucius Aufidius Bassus remitted a large part of the debt and granted an interest-free respite of 11 years for the payment of the money the city still owed him. He clearly, completely, gave in to the Tenians’ pleas: it is no surprise to find him honoured as a saviour of the island and the citizens. Perhaps the Tenians also owed him another important kind of “financial” support during the rough times of the civil wars: at I. 51-52 the text says that Lucius Aufidius Bassus “stopped, as far as it was possible for him, those who overloaded (*ἐπιβαροῦντας*: note the same lexical choice as in I. 31, *τὰς ὑφ’ ἐτέρων γειν[ο]μένους ἐπιβαρήσεις*) the Tenians. It could be inferred that Lucius Aufidius Bassus went so far as to choose in some case to exploit his influence to try to prevent overwhelming Roman pressure (or more in general, other less accommodating creditors’ claims) from completely wrecking the finances of Tenos, maybe by acting himself as a sort of intermediary/negotiator on behalf of the city.

To conclude, probably Tenos was at last able to repay what was left of its debts, honouring the deadline, otherwise there would have been mention of further transactions between the city and Aufidius Bassus in order

to display the full amount of his generosity.

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