

Telmessos. Honorary decree for Ptolemy son of Lysimachos

Description: White-marble stele with surmounting pediment and base, slightly broken on both sides and already cut in half vertically when discovered. h: 1 m w: 0.41 m d: 0.105 m

Layout: No peculiarities. Formula ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ centered at the top of the decree text

Letters: Hellenistic koinè. Letters h: 0.01 m

Origin: Originally located in the sanctuary of Artemis at Telmessos, as can be inferred from I. 37

Dating: issued in the seventh year of the kingdom of Ptolemy (i.e. Ptolemy III) son of Ptolemy (II) and Arsinoe (240 BC), on the second day of the month Dystros (February: Dittenberger et alii; May-June: Sherk), under the priesthood of Theodotos

Findspot: Found in 1889 by V. Bérard and M. Fougères in the village of Makri, ancient Telmessos, current Fethiye

Current location: The stone was transferred in 1890 to J. Louisidès's house at Makri, where it was copied by E. Kalinka in 1892, with the two halves still sticking together. At some time before 1933 the right half was carried to the Izmir Museum. No extant traces of the left half

Reference edition: E. Kalinka, *TAM II/1*, 1

Other editions: ed. pr. Bérard 1890, 162-167; Strack 1897, 236, no. 51 (only lines 1-10, without division marks); C. Michel, *Recueil* 547; W. Dittenberger, *OGIS* 55; Kotsidu 2000, no. 290 (Kalinka's text with German translation); Domingo Gygax 2001, 143-199 (Kalinka's text with German translation and commentary); Chandezon 2003, 251-258, no. 63 (Kalinka's text with apparatus criticus and French translation)

Photographs: Fac-simile of the entire monument in E. Kalinka, *TAM II/1*; photo of the right half of the stone in Robert 1933, 491, tav. XXX B, and Segre 1938, 187 fig. 2

Translations: Austin 1981, no. 271 [Cambridge 2006², no. 270] (in English); Burstein 1985, no. 100 (in English); Kotsidu 2000, no. 290 (in German); Bertrand 1992, no. 103 (in French); Domingo Gygax 2001, 143 ff. (in German); Chandezon 2003, 251-258, no. 63 (in French); Sartre 2003, 62 [Paris 2004², 63] (in French); Migeotte 2003a [repr. 2014], 177 no. 4 (in Italian; transl. by U. Fantasia)

Bibliography: (further references will be provided in the commentary below) Wilhelm 1894, 911; Wilhelm 1898, 209-211; Holleaux 1942, 364-404; Mahaffy 1896, LII-LV; Laqueur 1904, 82-89; Sokoloff 1904, 107-110; Rostovtzeff 1910, 278-279; von Stern 1915, 427-444; Rostovtzeff 1922, 42-55; Pridik 1932, 72-85; Robert 1933, 491; Hill 1923, 211 ff. [non vidi]; Hill 1933, 229-230; Segre 1936, 359-368; Kalinka 1936, 148-152; Segre 1938, 181-208; Rostovtzeff 1941, 336-337; Magie 1950, II, 762-764; Bengtson 1964-1965, 324-325; Bagnall 1976; Huss 1976, 192, 203-204; Huss 1998, 229-250 (esp. 245-247); Wörrle 1978, 201-246; Piejko 1980, 260 note 14; Piejko 1982, 99 note 8; Savalli 1987, 129-137; Sherk 1992, 225-226; Bertrand 2005, 39-49; Billows 1995, 100-104, 110; Kobes 1996, 78-80, 241-244, 253-255; Papazoglou 1997, 100-104, 122-123, 180-181; Behrwald 2000, 63-68; Domingo Gygax 2001, 143-199, 201-206; Migeotte 2003b, 297-313 (esp. 306-308); Tietz 2003, 308-310; Huss 2011, 161-166, 238-239; Migeotte 2014, 404

Critical notes: SEG 12 502, 32 1310, 37 1229, 40 1279, 47 2357, 48 1560, 50 1716, 51 1835, 52 1753, 53 1363, 53 2144; R. Flacelière, J. et L. Robert, BE 1939 380-381; J. et L. Robert, BE 1954 230; 1967 573; P. Gauthier, BE 1988 434; 2004 97; D. Rousset, BE 2013 396

ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ.

[βα]σιλεύοντος Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολε-

- [μ]αίου καὶ Ἀρσινόης θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν ἔτους
 [έβδ]όμου μηνὸς Δύστρου ἐφ' ἱερέως Θεοδό-
 5 [το]υ τοῦ Ἡρακλείδου, δευτέραι, ἐκκλησίας κυ-
 [ρί]ας γενομένης, ἔδοξε Τελμησσέων
 [τ]ῇ πόλει· ἐπειδὴ Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Λυσιμά-
 [χ]ου παραλαβὼν τὴν πόλιν παρὰ βασιλέ-
 [ως Π]τολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου κακῶς
 10 [διακε]μένην διὰ τοὺς πολέμους ἔν τε τοῖ[ς]
 [ἄλλοις] ἐπιμελόμενος διατελεῖ κοινῇ τε τῶν
 [πολιτ]ῶν καὶ ἰδίαί ἐκάστου [κ]αὶ ὁρῶν ἐν πᾶσιν
 [θλιβο]μένους ἀφεῖκεν ἀτελεῖς τῶν τε ξυλί-
 [νων] καρπῶν καὶ ἐννομίων, ἐποίησε δὲ καὶ τῆς
 15 [σιτ]ηρᾶς ἀπομοίρας καὶ ὀσπρίων πάντων καὶ κέ[ν(?)]-
 [χρ]ου καὶ ἐλύμου καὶ σησάμου καὶ θέρμων, πρό-
 [τε]ρον τελωνομένους σκληρῶς, κατὰ τὸν
 [νό]μον τελεῖν δεκάτην μετροῦντας ΝΑΤΑ
 [τῶ]ι τε γεωργῶι καὶ τῶι δεκατῶνῃ, τῶν δὲ λο[ι-]
 20 [π]ῶν τῶν συνκυρόντων τῇ σιτηρᾷ ἀπομ[οί-]
 [ραι] ἀφῆκεν πάντων ἀτελεῖς· δεδόχθαι Τελ-
 [μη]σσεῦσιν ἐπαινέσαι τε Πτολεμαῖον ἐπὶ π[ᾶ-]
 [σι(?)]ν εὐνοίας ἔνεκεν ἣν ἔχων διατελεῖ εἰς τὴν
 [πό]λιν τὴν Τελμησσέων καὶ ἰδρύσασθαι ὑ-
 25 [πέ]ρ αὐτοῦ Διὶ Σωτῆρι βωμὸν ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ ἐν
 [τῶ]ι ἐπιφανεστάτῳ τόπῳ[ι] καὶ θύειν κατ' ἐνια[υ-]
 [τὸ]ν ἐν μηνὶ Δύστρῳ τῇ ἐνδεκάτῃ βοῦν τρι-
 [έ]την, συμπορεύεσθαι δὲ πάντας τοὺς π[ο-]
 [λ]ίτας καὶ τοὺς παροίκους ἐπὶ τὴν θυσίαν· ἂν
 30 [δὲ] μὴ συντελῇ ὁ ἄρχων καὶ οἱ πολῖται τὴν
 [θυ]σίαν κατ' ἐνιαυτόν, ἀμαρτωλοὶ ἔστωσαν
 [θεῶ]ν πάντων καὶ ἀποτ<ι>νέτω ὁ ἄρχων ἱερὰς
 [τοῦ] Διὸς τοῦ Σωτῆρος δραχμὰς χιλίας, ἐὰ[ν]
 [μ]ὴ διὰ πόλεμον εἴργηται τὴν θυσίαν συν-
 35 [τελεῖ]ν· τὸ δὲ ψήφισμα τοῦτο ἀναγραφάτω ὁ ἄρ-
 [χ]ων εἰς στήλην λιθίνην καὶ στησάτω ἐν τῶι
 [τῇ]ς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερῶι ἐν τῶ[ι] ἐπιφανεστάτῳ τό-
 [πῳ]ι, τὸ δὲ γενόμενον ἀνήλωμα ἀνενεκάτ[ω]
 τῇ πόλει.

Apparatus criticus: l. 4: Δύσ[τ]ρου Bérard, Dittenberger, Michel. l. 10: [διακε]μένην rest. Dittenberger : [ποιου]μένην Berard. l. 13: [θλιβο]μένους rest. Dittenberger : [ἐφθαρ]μένους Bérard; ἀτε[λε]ῖς Bérard, Dittenberger. l. 14: [ἐ]ποίησε Bérard, Dittenberger, Michel. l. 15: [σιτ]ηρᾶς rest. Bérard, prob. Dittenberger : [οἶν]ηρᾶς Mahaffy, Michel. ll. 15-16: κέ[ν/χρ(?)]ου rest. Kalinka (TAM II) : κέ[γ/χρ]ου Dittenberger. l. 18: ΝΑΤΑ lapis : πάντα, αὐτά, νεατά prop. Mahaffy, rei. Dittenberger : ν<ε>ατά Michel : ἔναντα dub. Kalinka (TAM II) : ναστά (i.e. μέτρα) Arnim apud Kalinka (TAM II) : μετῶν τὰ δίκαια Rostovtzeff, *Studien zur Geschichte des römischen Kolonates* : μετροῦντας <ἔ>νατα Kalinka, WS, 1936, p. 148, rei. Robert, *Études Anatoliennes*, 404 n. 5 (cfr. SEG 12 502) : <κατὰ τὰ δυ>νατά Segre, ASAA 27-29, 1949-1951, 328-330, rei. Robert, BE, 1954, no. 230

: μετρῶν τὰ δέοντα Bengtson, Kokalos, 10-11, 1964-1965, 325 n. 15 : μετροῦντας <τὰ δυ>νατά Piejko, Berytus, 30, 1982, 99 n. 8 (cfr. SEG 32 1310). II. 22-23: ἐπὶ π[ᾱ/σι(?)]ν Kalinka (TAM II), Piejko, Gnomon, 52, 1980, 260 n. 14; rei. Pridik, Klio, 25, 1932, 73 : ἐπι[.] 5.]ν Bérard : ἐπιγ[.] / [.]ν Dittenberger : ἐπι[μελη/τήν] Michel, dub. seq. Sokoloff (qui autem prop. ἐπι[στρατεγός]), rei. Holleaux : ἐπίγ[ο/νο]ν Holleaux : ἐπίτ[ροπον] Pridik, rei. Robert, BCH, 57, 1933, 491 (ubi autem legendum esse Γ vel Π confirmat) : ἐπὶ π[λεῖο]ν Segre, *Un nuovo documento*, 364, rei. Robert, *Études Anatoliennes*, 404 n. 5. I. 26: τόπωι Bérard, Dittenberger, Michel. I. 29: ἐάν Bérard, Dittenberger, Michel. I. 32: ΑΠΟΤΝΕΤΩ lapis : ἀπο[τι]ν[έ]τω Bérard, Dittenberger, Michel. I. 33: Διὸς τοῦ Σωτήρος Kalinka (TAM II) : Διὸς Σωτήρος Bérard, Dittenberger, Michel. I. 34: εἴ[ργη]ται Bérard, Dittenberger, Michel.

Translation:

With good fortune.

In the reign of Ptolemy (III) son of Ptolemy (II) and Arsinoe, the Brother-Sister Gods, in the seventh year, on the second day of the month Dystrus, under the priesthood of Theodotus son of Heraclides, at a plenary meeting of the assembly, resolved by the city of Telmessos:

since Ptolemy son of Lysimachus, when he took over the city from King Ptolemy son of Ptolemy (and found it) in a bad [condition] because of the wars, and (since) in [other matters] he continues to show care publicly for the [citizens] and in private for each individual, and seeing that the citizens were [hard pressed] in every way, he granted them exemption from [taxes] on the products of trees and pasturing; and whereas previously they were harshly taxed on the grain dues, all pulses, millet, sesame and lupine, he made them pay a tithe in accordance with the law, measuring out [- - - to the] farmer and the collector of the tithe, and he exempted (them) from all the other taxes attached to the [tax] on grain;

be it resolved by the people of Telmessos, to praise Ptolemy for the goodwill in all circumstances (?) which he continuously shows towards the city of Telmessos, and to set up on his [behalf] an altar to Zeus the Saviour in the most conspicuous place in the agora, and to sacrifice every year on the 11th of the month Dystrus a three-year-old ox; all the citizens and the resident foreigners (paroikoi) shall assemble together for the sacrifice. [And] if the magistrate (archon) and the citizens do not perform the sacrifice every year, they shall be guilty in the eyes of all the [gods], and the magistrate shall be fined 1,000 drachmas which shall be consecrated to Zeus the Saviour, [unless] he is [prevented] by war from [performing] the sacrifice.

The magistrate shall inscribe this decree on a stone stele and place it in the sanctuary of Artemis in the most conspicuous place, and the resulting expense shall be charged to the city.

(translation by Austin, *The Hellenistic World*, slightly modified)

Commentary:

For the identification of the honored Ptolemy with the son of Lysimachos the Diadoch, born at the beginning of the 3rd cent. BC and rival of Ptolemy Keraunos for the Macedonian kingdom see Holleaux 1942, 364ff. For his early biography see Trog. *Prol.* 24, Iust. 24.2.10-3.1.10, Porph. *FGrHist* 260 F 3.10-11 (succession to the Macedonian throne); SEG 25 516 (dedication of a statue of Arsinoe II by Ptolemy on his father's behalf), Holleaux 1942, 397-402 (dedications to Delos). This identification is accepted by most scholars since Segre 1938, revisited the epigraphical evidence concerning Ptolemy and his family. An honorary decree from Telmessos for Ptolemy's friend Leimon (ca. 265-256 BC, Segre 1938, 183) testifies to the prominent role played at Telmessos by the former already before the mid-3rd cent. BC. Another honorary decree from Telmessos dated 220 BC testifies to the epistolary intercession of a certain Lysimachos – most likely Ptolemy's son – for Aristaeas son of Kleandros (Segre 1936, 359). The so-called 'Eriza decree' issued by Antiochos III (C.B. Welles, *RC* 36-37; see Robert 1949, 5-18 for dating to 193 BC) appoints as priestess of the divine Laodike a certain Berenike, daughter of another Ptolemy son of Lysimachos, who is probably the grandson of the Ptolemy mentioned in the inscription under consideration. Most likely, the same individual is recorded by Livy among the terms of the Peace of Apameia (37.56.4-5) as former owner of an ager, although the interpretation of the passage is controversial (see esp. Magie 1950, 763-764; Wörle 1978, 221-222; and, with good points, Domingo Gygax 2001, 201-206). Before Apameia, this last Ptolemy son of Lysimachos seems to have sold plots of land to the Kardakes – military colonists of Antiochos III – as can be inferred from a letter of Eumenes II (for further details see Segre 1938, 190-208); finally, he is recorded as the dedicator of a phiale at Delos in 189/8 BC (*I.Delos* 442 B 94-95).

The decree from Telmessos shows that Ptolemy obtained (*παραλαβών*, I. 8) the city from the king Ptolemy III in 240 BC, just after the 3rd Syriac War (246-241 BC), which is possibly referred to in I. 10. The abovementioned documents testify to the pre-eminent position held by Ptolemy already in the twenty years preceding the decree and then by his family at least until his second descendant Ptolemy. The Ptolemy in this text is praised for having promoted an important fiscal reform which abolished or reduced taxes on local products. Considering

that Ptolemaic fiscal policies were normally taken care of by the *διοικητής* helped by a *ὑποδιοικητής* and several local *οἰκονόμοι* (see Bagnall 1976); for the situation in Ptolemaic Lycia: *P.Tebt.* 8.15-18, 29-33; Wörrle 1977, 43-66 and Wörrle 2010, 359-396), Ptolemy's reform is characterized by a high level of autonomy, which resembles that of high Ptolemaic officials (see Savalli 1987). At the same time, Ptolemy can be compared to the Hellenistic dynasts because of the position maintained by his family at Telmessos for a long time and because he minted coins marked by his initials ΠΤ (see Hill 1923, and Hill 1933). However, the official Ptolemaic dating form of the honorary decree makes it unlikely that the city was subject to a dynastic power independent from the Ptolemaic kingdom. Therefore, Ptolemy of Telmessos can more likely be seen as the recipient of a royal gift, i.e. a *δωρεά*, which consists of the city itself. The holder of a *δωρεά* formally acts like a monarch and retains strong political power in his own territory, without the king's sovereignty being dismantled. He is also entitled to the fruits of his territory through collection of taxes, but at the same time he is compelled to send part of the income to the king (for *δωρεά* in Ptolemaic documents see e.g. *P.Cair.Zen.* 59206.61-68, 59352; *P.Enteuxeis* 60; *P.Rev.* 43.11-18; etc., with Criscuolo 2001). The *δωρεά*-hypothesis is supported by another honorary decree from Telmessos for Ptolemy II dated 282/1 BC, in which the king is praised for promising not to hand the city over as a *δωρεά*: according to this interpretation (Wörrle 1978, contra Meadows 2012) Ptolemy III would have simply realized a project that his predecessor Ptolemy II had set aside. When Antiochos III conquered the city in 197/6, the extension of the *δωρεά* was likely reduced to the ager held by Ptolemy the grandson mentioned by Livy, while the new Syrian king exercised full sovereignty on the rest of Telmessos (see Wörrle 1979, 83-111 for a royal letter attributed to Antiochos).

According to Ptolemy's fiscal reform, the Telmessian citizens are granted tax exemption (*ἀτέλεια*) on the products of trees (*ξύλινοι καρποί*) and pasture land (this is the exact meaning of the plural *ἐννόμια*, while the corresponding tax is called *ἐννόμιον*; basically the reform grants the free right of pasturage, *ἐπινομία*). Then the reform introduces a change in fiscal exaction concerning grain dues (*σιτηρὰ ἀπόμοιρα*), all kinds of pulses, millet, sesame and lupine (*ῥσπρια, κέγχρος, ἔλυμος, σήσαμον, θέρμιοι*): while prior to the reform the citizens were subject to heavier taxation (this is the meaning of the expression *τελωνουμένους σκληρῶς*, l. 17), after it a normative and regular situation (*κατὰ τὸν νόμον*), which should be deemed as pre-existing, is re-established. According to this *νόμος* the citizens are expected to pay a tithe on the above mentioned foodstuffs: the payment is regulated by a procedure of measuring, which however cannot be defined better due to a mistake of the engraver (*μετροῦντας NATA*, l. 18: no proposed emendation is satisfactory). Considering the two following datives in l. 19, *[τῶ]ι τε γεωργῶι καὶ τῶι δεκατῶνι*, it can be inferred that the measurement of the tithe had to be performed in conditions of parity and frankness both for the contributor and the collector, so that nobody paid or collected more or less than the due amount. Finally Ptolemy grants the exemption on the «remaining taxes which pertain» (*τὰ λοιπὰ τὰ συγκύροντα*, l. 20) to the *σιτηρὰ ἀπόμοιρα*, i.e. on additional fees to the grain tax, which probably refer to the chaff and the forage derived from the harvest (see Schuler 2004, 532). Unfortunately we know nothing about Ptolemaic taxation in Telmessos before Ptolemy's reform. Nevertheless, we can easily affirm that royal taxes, not civic ones, are concerned in the decree, since a public praising for reduction and exemption would have otherwise been meaningless. In order to make this point clearer, an excellent comparison can be drawn with the case of Herakleia at Latmos, the citizens of which asked Antiochos III to maintain the benefits deriving from certain kinds of income – SEG 37 859 B15-17, C1: *ὅπως ὑπάρχη <.. ? > / τὰ τέλη καὶ ἔγγαια καὶ τὰ εἰσαγωγία καὶ ἐξαγωγία | ----- / πρ]ᾶσις* – and at the same time to be exempted from taxation on land products, pasturage and hives – ibid. C4-5: *ἀξιῶσοντας δὲ καὶ ἀτέλειαν συγχωρῆσαι τῶν τε ἐκ τῆς γῆς καρπῶν πάν/των καὶ τοῦ ἐννομίου τῶν τε κτηνῶν καὶ τῶν σμηνῶν*: this different approach suggests indeed that the first request concerned civic taxation and the second one royal taxation (on this case, with further notes on the rest of the text, cf. Chankowski 2007, 326-327, and in general 322-328 for the relations between civic and royal fiscal matters in Hellenistic Asia Minor). Among the taxes mentioned in the Telmessian decree, the *ἀπόμοιρα* and the *δεκάτη* deserve further comment. The first one is known in Ptolemaic Egypt with the name *ἔκτη* since 263 BC and with the name *ἀπόμοιρα* since the so-called 'Revenue Laws' issued by Ptolemy II (259/8 BC). It consists of one-sixth (or exceptionally one-tenth) of the amount of the products of vineyards and gardens, allocated to the worship of the divine Arsinoe II (see Mahaffy 1939; Préaux 1939, 171-181; Clarysse, Vandorpe 1998; and Bingen 2007, 169-170). For further evidence of this duty see SEG 12 550 (Ptolemaic Cyprus), Robert, *Sinuri* 73 (late Hecatomnid age), Wörrle, (Wurster) 1997, 447-449 (a *σειτική ἀπόμοιρα* in 2nd-cent. AD Lycia). The tithe is considered by [Arist.] *Oec.* 1345b 28 ff. as the most important source of income in satrapal economy and is attested in several documents during the period of the Hellenistic kingdoms; as SEG 36 1216 shows, it was exacted in Lycia during the Hecatomnid age. The fact that Ptolemy did not abolish the tithe suggests that it was the part of the whole income of the *δωρεά* owed to the king. For a hypothesis regarding the continuity from Achaemenid to Hellenistic fees in Asia Minor see Corsaro 1985, 84-85.

In my opinion the very reason for the economic breakdown of Telmessos was the war preceding the institution

of the *δωρεά*. In the text of the decree the fiscal reform is strongly connected to the desperate situation in which Ptolemy obtained the city as a gift (Il. 9-13, with the excellent integrations *κακῶς [διακει]μένην* and *[θλιβο]μένους*), and Il. 33-35 show that the people of Telmessos deeply felt war as an impending threat over their community. Since there is no evidence of battles in the vicinity of Telmessos during the 3rd Syriac War, it is worth considering that by virtue of its fertility the city may have been exploited as a supply center for the Ptolemaic army, or even – we may carefully suggest – destined to the quartering of the troops (or the stationing of the fleet: it should be remembered, indeed, that the city enjoyed a favorable geographical position and was endowed with a good harbor; see Wörrle 1980, 63-72). Moreover, there is evidence that a Hellenistic king, most likely Antiochos III, granted Telmessos the *ἀνεπισταθμία* (Wörrle 1979, 83-111; see also above), i.e. the exemption from the duty of billeting, which suggests that previously the city could actually have been exploited for this purpose. Not only is such a context (exploitation of Telmessian products for the supply of the army, possible billeting) fully coherent with the state of deep distress in which the city was found by Ptolemy, but it would explain well why the fiscal reform concerns only foodstuffs and pasturage and why it restores a normative situation for the exaction of the tithe (Il. 17-19). During wartime the regular tax exaction could have turned into a roughly irregular and heavier collection due to the emergency of the moment. The expression *πρό/[τε]ρον τελωνομένους σκληρῶς* reveals that it was perceived as oppressive and almost unlawful. The lack of control on collection possibly led to abuses (cf. Domingo Gygax 2001, 182): hence the necessity to re-establish the correct procedure of exaction for the tithe at Il. 17-19. In general, for the impact of war on agriculture and, more specifically, of troop-billeting on Hellenistic communities, see Chaniotis 2008, 121-129, with discussion of relevant cases and bibliography. If this reconstruction is true, it is possible to affirm that the main purpose of Ptolemy's economic reform was actually the post-war recovery of the city.

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Author: Marco Santini

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