

Herausgegeben von:

Thomas Corsten  
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# TYCHE

Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte  
Papyrologie und Epigraphik

**HOLZHAUSEN**

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## I N H A L T S V E R Z E I C H N I S

Lincoln H. B l u m e l l — Chiara A l i b e r t i: Two Greek Inscriptions from Karanis (Taf. 1–2) .....	1
Dan D e a c — Radu P e t c u: A Magical Amulet from <i>Durostorum</i> (Moesia Inferior) (Taf. 3–4) .....	7
Vincent G a b r i e l s e n: A New Inscription Attesting to Associations from the Necropolis of Rhodes With an Appendix by Nicos C h r i s t o d o u l i d e s (Taf. 5–10) .....	15
Klaus H a l l o f: Der Beginn der attischen Panathenaïdenära (Taf. 5) .....	41
Giulio I o v i n e: Three Latin Business Documents from the <i>Papyrus-sammlung</i> of the Austrian National Library at Vienna ( <i>ChLA</i> XLIV 1296; 1310; 1303 + XLV 1348) (Taf. 11–12) .....	45
Giulio I o v i n e: A Latin Private Document on Papyrus ( <i>ChLA</i> XLIV 1300 <i>recto</i> ) (Taf. 13) .....	59
Aikaterini K o r o l i: Ein griechischer Lieferungskauf über Schilfrohr aus dem spätantiken Hermopolites (Taf. 15) .....	73
Sophie K o v a r i k: Der Notar Elias im Herakleopolites (Taf. 16–17) .....	81
Csaba L a ' d a — Amphilochos P a p a t h o m a s: Eine griechische Gestellungsbürgschaft aus dem spätantiken Herakleopolis (Taf. 18) .....	93
Ludwig M e i e r: Sprechende Steine, Gesang und ‚professionelles‘ Wissen: Kulturhistorische Überlegungen zur Grabsäule des Seikilos (I. Tralleis 219) (Taf. 14) .....	101
Federico M o r e l l i: Per o contro il nemico? Le ragioni di un carpentiere e la cronologia dell'invasione araba secondo P.Vindob. G 39718 = PERF 550 (Taf. 19–20) .....	119
Federico M o r e l l i: I vestiti nuovi del dandy Apollonios. Tessuti di lusso in P.Giss. I 21 .....	131
Pantelis N i g d e l i s: A Honorific Inscription from Amphipolis for the Sappaeian King Sextus Iulius Cotys (Taf. 21–22) .....	139
Johannes P l a t s c h e k: Zur Lesung von Kap. 27 der <i>lex Troesmensium</i> ...	151
Marjeta Š a š e l K o s: The Death of Decimus Brutus. The Strange Case of his Artillery and the Iapodes (Taf. 23) .....	167
Manfred G. S c h m i d t: Inscriptiones Dresdenses Latinae. Inschriften aus dem Albertinum (Taf. 24–29) .....	181
Peter S i e w e r t: Hocharchaische Opfervorschrift für das Kronos-Fest in Olympia (BrU 7) (Taf. 30) .....	189
Sergey K. S i z o v: The συναρχίαι in the Achaian federation and its member cities .....	225
Alexander T h e i n: <i>Percussores</i> : a study in Sullan violence .....	235

Bemerkungen zu Papyri XXX (<Korr. Tyche> 832–854) .....	251
Adnotationes epigraphicae VIII (<Adn. Tyche> 61–73) .....	269
Buchbesprechungen .....	283
<p>Nathan B a d o u d, <i>Le Temps de Rhodes. Une chronologie des inscriptions de la cité fondée sur l'étude de ses institutions</i>, München 2015 (M. Debidour: 283) — Emma B r i d g e s, <i>Imagining Xerxes. Ancient Perspectives on a Persian King</i>, London 2015 (F. Alidoust: 285) — Boris C h r u b a s i k, <i>Kings and Usurpers in the Seleukid Empire. The Men who would be King</i>, Oxford, New York 2016 (Ph. Egetenmeier: 288) — Romano C o r d e l l a, Nicola C r i n i t i, <i>Parole su pietre. Epigrafia e storia nella Sabina settentrionale di età romana</i>, Perugia 2014 (C. Cenati: 291) — Magali d e H a r o S a n c h e z (Hrsg.), <i>Écrire la magie dans l'antiquité. Actes du colloque international (Liège, 13–15 octobre 2011)</i>, Liège 2015 (C. Campedelli: 293) — Christine D e l a p l a c e, <i>La fin de l'Empire romain d'Occident. Rome et les Wisigoths de 382 à 531</i>, Rennes 2015 (R. Selvaggi: 296) — Roland F ä r b e r, <i>Römische Gerichtsorte: Räumliche Dynamiken von Jurisdiktion im Imperium Romanum</i>, München 2014 (G. Kantor: 299) — Oliver G r o t e, <i>Die griechischen Phylen. Funktion – Entstehung – Leistungen</i>, Stuttgart 2016 (A. von der Decken: 301) — Wolfgang H a v e n e r, <i>Imperator Augustus. Die diskursive Konstituierung der militärischen persona des ersten römischen princeps</i>, Stuttgart 2016 (T. Klär: 304) — Andrea J ö r d e n s (Hrsg.), <i>Ägyptische Magie und ihre Umwelt</i>, Wiesbaden 2015 (T. Nowitzki: 306) — Noel L e n s k i, <i>Constantine and the Cities. Imperial Authority and Civic Politics</i>, Philadelphia 2016 (H. Brandt: 309) — Christoph L u n d g r e e n, <i>Regelkonflikte in der römischen Republik. Geltung und Gewichtung von Normen in politischen Entscheidungsprozessen</i>, Stuttgart 2011 (H. Heftner: 310) — Federicomaria M u c c i o l i, <i>Gli epiteti ufficiali dei re ellenistici</i>, Stuttgart 2013 (G. Weber: 313) — Roland O e t j e n, <i>Athen im dritten Jahrhundert v. Chr. Politik und Gesellschaft in den Garnisonsdemen auf der Grundlage der inschriftlichen Überlieferung</i>, Düsseldorf 2014 (C. I. Chrysafis: 316) — Kalliopi K. P a p a k o n s t a n t i n o u, <i>Συμβολή στη μελέτη των λειτουργιών της δικαστικής απόφασης στην αρχαία Ελλάδα. Beitrag zum Studium der Funktionen des gerichtlichen Urteils im antiken Griechenland</i>, Thessaloniki 2015 (G. Thür: 318) — Michael R a t h m a n n, <i>Tabula Peutingeriana, eingeleitet und kommentiert</i>, Darmstadt 2016 (E. Weber: 319) — Klaus R o s e n, <i>Attila. Der Schrecken der Welt</i>, München 2016 (G. M. Berndt: 321) — Florian S t e g e r, <i>Asklepios. Medizin und Kult</i>, Stuttgart 2016 (F. Weise: 323) — Reinhard S t r a d n e r, <i>Noreia. Der militärwissenschaftliche Ansatz zur Lokalisierung des norischen Stammeszentrum</i>, Salzburg 2014 (St. Seitschek: 326) — Mariette d e V o s R a a i j m a k e r s, Redha A t t o u i, <i>Rus Africum, Tome III: La Via a Karthagine Thevestem, ses milliaires et le réseau routier rural de la région de Dougga et TébourSouk</i>, Bari 2015 (E. Weber: 329).</p>	
Indices .....	331
Eingelangte Bücher .....	339

Tafeln 1–30

Die *Annona Epigraphica Austriaca* erscheint auf der Homepage des Instituts für Alte Geschichte der Universität Wien (<http://altegeschichte.univie.ac.at/forschung/aea/>) und wie bisher auch in der Zeitschrift *Römisches Österreich*.

PANTELIS NIGDELIS

## A Honorific Inscription from Amphipolis for the Sappaeon King Sextus Iulius Cotys

Plates 21–22

The presence of the last Sappaeon kings and dynasts (see stemma on p. 149) in Amphipolis was until recently known only from two inscriptions. The first is a funerary inscription commemorating a certain Philotimos, “servant of King Rhoemetaces”.<sup>1</sup> The other is carved on the marble revetment of a pedestal for a statue offered to the city by a number of persons, among them a Sappaeon king whose name was also Rhoemetaces. The identity of the Rhoemetaces named in the funerary inscription and of the persons listed in the votive inscription continues to be the subject of much scholarly controversy and will be discussed at a later point.

New fuel was added to this debate, and in general to the study of the history of relations between the Sappaeon kings and the city of Amphipolis, by the discovery, in 1984, of a revetment of a honorific statue base found in the city’s Gymnasium. Its text reads as follows (pl. 21):

MA Λ 24. Slab of fine-grained white marble 0.63 m high, 0.835 m long and 0.195 m thick. Broken only at the bottom right corner. All surfaces well worked and the bottom face perfectly smooth. Two mortices and a tenon on the top face; one mortise on the bottom. Front and sides end in projecting raised bands. Letter height 0.022 m, line spacing 0.01 m.<sup>2</sup>

Σέξτον Ἰούλιον Κότυν, βασιλέως Ῥοιμητάλκου  
ύωνόν, βασιλέως Πολέμωνος καὶ βασιλίσσης  
Πυθοδωρίδος θυγατρίδου, δυνάστου Κότυος  
4 καὶ βασιλίσσης Τρυφαίνης υἱόν, τὸν ἀρχιερέα  
καὶ ἀγωνοθέτην τῶν Σεβαστῶν,  
οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ γυμνασίου νέοι προστατοῦντος  
Κυίντου Σπελλίου Οὐοπέισκου.

<sup>1</sup> See L. Laugier, *Stèle funéraire de Philoteimos*, in: S. Deschamps-Lequime, K. Charatzopoulou (éds), *Au royaume d’Alexandre le Grand. La Macédoine antique*, Paris 2011, 62 No. 6 : Φιλότειμος βασιλέως Ῥοιμητάλκα / δοῦλος / ὑπὸ τῆς γυναικὸς Μούσης τέ[θαμμαί vel -θαπται].

<sup>2</sup> The inscription is mentioned by: K. Δ. Λαζαρίδη, *Ανασκαφές και έρευνες στην Αμφίπολη*, ΠΑΑΗ 139 (1984) [1988] 38 No. 5; eadem, *Το Έργον της Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας κατά το 1984*, Athens 1985, 24 No. 5; eadem, *Το Γυμνάσιο της Αμφίπολης*, in: *Μνήμη Δ. Λαζαρίδη. Πόλις και χώρα στην Μακεδονία και Θράκη*, Thessaloniki 1990, 254 (SEG XL 522e); eadem, *Το Γυμνάσιο της Αρχαίας Αμφίπολης*, Αρχαιολογικό έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη 1 (1987) 316; Δ. Λαζαρίδης, *Αμφίπολις*, Athens 1993, 67.

*The young men of the gymnasium who exercised under the supervision of Quintus Spellius Vopiscus (erected this statue) in honour of Sextus Iulius Cotys, high priest and agonothetes of the Augusti, grandson of King Rhoemetalces, grandson on his mother's side of King Polemon and Queen Pythodoris, and son of King Cotys and Queen Tryphaena.*

The statue was erected by the young men of Amphipolis who exercised in the gymnasium (οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ γυμνασίου νέοι),<sup>3</sup> to honour Sextus Iulius Cotys, high priest and *agonothetes* of the imperial cult (ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ ἀγωνοθέτης τῶν Σεβαστῶν) in the city.<sup>4</sup> The explanation for the exceptional honour paid to him must be the great success of the games he organised in his associated role of *agonothetes*. This would also explain why the monument is dated by the name of the *prostates*, who was in charge of training the young men for the games, rather than the *gymnasiarch*.<sup>5</sup> Quintus Spellius Vopiscus is otherwise unknown, but judging by his Latin *gentilicium* and *cognomen*, unattested in Amphipolis<sup>6</sup>, he must have been a member of the city's Italian community.<sup>7</sup>

This may be the first appearance of Quintus Spellius Vopiscus in the prosopography of the city, but there is no ambiguity regarding the honoree, whose genealogy (parents and grandparents) identifies him as Cotys IX, son of Queen Antonia Tryphaena (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> A 900), daughter of Polemon I, King of Pontos, and Queen Pythodoris. The fact that Queen Tryphaena is named here without her *gentilicium* is not surprising, for she is mentioned in the same way in other Greek inscriptions as well as on coins of the kingdom of Pontos, of which she was also queen.<sup>8</sup> Strabo tells us that Tryphaena married Cotys VIII (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 1554), son of Rhoemetalces I (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> R 67), king of all

<sup>3</sup> For the meaning of this expression see P. Nigdelis, *Μία επίδοσις εις ἔλαιον ἀπὸ τὴν Ἀμφίπολη στα τέλη τοῦ 2<sup>ου</sup> αἰ. π.Χ. Παρατηρήσεις στο νηφίσμα SEG 30, 1980, 546*, in: *Πρακτικά του Α΄ Πανελληνίου Επιγραφικῆς Συνεδρίου 22–23 Oct. 1999*, Thessaloniki 2001, 98.

<sup>4</sup> For another attestation of the same office see B. Καφταντζής, *Ἱστορία τῆς πόλεως Σερρών καὶ τῆς περιφερείας τῆς (ἀπὸ τῶν προϊστορικοῦς χρόνους μέχρι σήμερα)*, Athens 1967, vol. I 87 No. 15: οἱ νέοι / ... ἀρχιερέα ... καὶ ἀγωνοθέτην / καὶ τῆς Ἀμφιπολιτικῶν πόλεως, ... / Τι(βέρια) Κλαύδιον Διογένους ὄν // Κυρίνα Διογένη ... (Serres, 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD).

<sup>5</sup> For the office of *prostates* in Amphipolis see *SEG* LI 787: ... οἱ νέοι / Ἀπελλῶν Διογένους, / προσστατήσαντα ἑαυτῶν / καὶ γυμνασιαρχήσαντα ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων (of AD 4/5), cf. *SEG* XXXIII 501 (dated to AD 76/77 or 192/193). For his responsibilities see F. Queyrel, *Inscriptions et scènes figurées peintes, sur le mur de fond du xyste de Delphes*, BCH 125 (2001) 333–387 here 372–374.

<sup>6</sup> *Nomen gentis* and *cognomen* are not indexed in A. Tataki, *The Roman Presence in Macedonia. Evidence from Personal Names* (Μελετήματα 46), Athens 2006.

<sup>7</sup> For the Italian community in Amphipolis see P. M. Nigdelis, P. Anagnostoudis, *New Honorary Inscriptions from Amphipolis*, GRBS 57 (2017) 295–324, here 312–313.

<sup>8</sup> See *JGR* IV 145 = *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 798 ll. 18–19: ... δεδῶχθαι τῶι δήμῳ ἐπηνῆσθαι ... καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτῶν Τρύφαινα ... See also the silver coins of the Kingdom of Pontos struck either in the name of Tryphaena alone (dated to the regnal years 17 or 18) or in association with her son king Polemon II. They bear two kind of legends, i.e. ΤΡΥΦΑΙΝΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ or ΤΡΥΦΑΙΝΑ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑ; see A. Burnett, M. Amandry, P. P. Ripollès, *Roman Provincial Coinage*, London 1992, vol. I (44 BC–AD 69) 568–569 No. 3807 and 3810–3812.



Thrace.<sup>9</sup> The marriage took place either circa 5 AD<sup>10</sup> or circa 12/13 AD.<sup>11</sup> After the death of the Thracian king Rhoemetaces I in AD 12/13, Augustus divided his kingdom between his son Cotys VIII (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 1554) and his brother Rhescuporis III (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> R 60).<sup>12</sup> In AD 19 the latter, unhappy with the division, seized and murdered his nephew Cotys. Later that year Rhescuporis was exiled to Alexandria by the Senate, to which Cotys' widow, Tryphaena, had appealed for retribution for the murder of her husband; in the end, Rhescuporis was killed while attempting to escape.<sup>13</sup> These two deaths led to a new distribution of the Thracian kingdom, the governance of which was assigned to Rhoemetaces II (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> I 517), the murderer's son, and the young sons of Cotys VIII, (by order of birth) Rhoemetaces III (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> R 68), Polemon II (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> I 472) and Cotys IX (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 1555), with the former praetor Trebellenus Rufus acting as their guardian because they were minors.<sup>14</sup> During this period they lived in Rome and were raised with Caligula as his companions.<sup>15</sup> As a result, when Caligula ascended the throne of Rome, he "restored them to the kingdoms which were theirs by right of descent from their fathers and ancestors",<sup>16</sup> giving Thrace (or the southern part of it) to Rhoemetaces III, Pontos to Polemon II, and Lesser Armenia along with a part of Arabia to Cotys IX.<sup>17</sup>

The honorific inscription of Amphipolis raises two main questions: 1) What was the relation between Sextus Iulius Cotys and Cotys IX? and 2) When was the inscription written? In theory, it could be argued that it concerns another son of Tryphaena, but the *gentilicium* Iulius borne by members of the Sappaeon dynasty, specifically C. Iulius

<sup>9</sup> Strabo 12.3.29.

<sup>10</sup> See K. Clinton, N. Dimitrova, *The last Thracian Kings: New Evidence*, in: M. Slavova, N. Sharankov (eds), *Monuments and Texts in Antiquity and Beyond. Essays for the Centenary of Georgi Mihailov (1915–1991)* (Studia Serdicensia V), Sofia 2016, 90.

<sup>11</sup> See V. Cojocaru, *Once more about Antonia Tryphaina*, *Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology* 1 (2014) 15–20, here 19.

<sup>12</sup> Tac., Ann. II 64.

<sup>13</sup> Tac., Ann. II 65–67 and III 38.

<sup>14</sup> Tac. Ann. II 67 *Thraecia in Rhoemetacen filium, quem paternis consiliis adversatum constabat, inque liberos Cotyis dividitur; iisque nondum adultis Trebellenus Rufus praetura functus datur qui regnum interim tractaret ... Rhescuporis Alexandriam devectus atque illic fugam temptans an ficto crimine interficitur.*

<sup>15</sup> See *IGR* IV 145 = *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 798 ll. 6–7: ... τοὺς Κότυος δὲ παῖδας Ῥοιμητάκην καὶ Πολέμονα καὶ Κότυν συντρόφους καὶ ἐταίρους ἑαυτοῖσι γεγο/νότας.

<sup>16</sup> See *IGR* IV 145 = *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 798 l. 7: ... εἰς τὰς ἐκ πα<τέρ>ων καὶ προγόνων αὐτοῖς ὀφειλομένας ἀποκαθέστακεν βασιλείας.

<sup>17</sup> Cass. Dio 59.12.2 ἐν δὲ τούτῳ Σοαίμῳ μὲν τὴν τῶν Ἰτυραίων τῶν Ἀράβων, Κότυϊ δὲ τὴν τε Ἀρμενίαν τὴν μικροτέραν καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο καὶ τῆς Ἀραβίας τινά, τῷ τε Ῥοιμητάκῃ τὰ τοῦ Κότυος καὶ Πολέμωνι τῷ τοῦ Πολέμωνος υἱεῖ τὴν πατρῶαν ἀρχήν, ψηφισαμένης δὴ τῆς βουλῆς, ἐχαρίσατο. On the meaning of the expression τὰ τοῦ Κότυος Clinton, Dimitrova, *The last Thracian Kings* (n. 10) 91 argue that Rhoemetaces III should have received the southern part of Thrace below Mt Haemus (including the Greek cities), like his father, and Rhoemetaces II, Rhescuporis' son, the rest of Thrace. For sources relating to the last Sappaeon dynasts see R. Sullivan, *Thrace in the eastern dynastic network*, *ANRW* II 7.1 (1979) 207–211 and idem, *Dynasts in Pontos*, *ANRW* II 7.2 (1980) 925–930 concerning Polemon's kingship.

Rhoemetalces I or II or even III, Iulius Polemon II and C. Iulius Rascus,<sup>18</sup> strongly suggests that the reference is to Cotys IX, whose full name is now proven to be Sextus Iulius Cotys. Evidently this change of *praenomen* (all his relatives were Gaii) was made in order to avoid confusion with his homonymous father Cotys VIII, who should be also a Gaius Iulius.<sup>19</sup> Interestingly the same *praenomen* and *nomen gentis*, i.e. Sextus Iulius, occur also in a very fragmentary inscription erected by the city of Cyzicus and the Italian community of that town in honour of Sextus Iulius [---].<sup>20</sup> The latter is undoubtedly a member of the Sappaeon dynasty, since Antonia Tryphaena is mentioned in the same inscription. Sergey Saprykin restored the text in a way that identifies Sextus Iulius with a brother of Rhoemetalces II, son of Rhescuporis III,<sup>21</sup> unknown from other

<sup>18</sup> The *gentilicium* Iulius is borne by the following Sappaeon dynasts and kings: I) C. Iulius Rhoemetalces see a) Brélaz, *CIPh* II. 1, No. 3: *C(aio) Iulio Roeme[talci] / regi regis Raescup[ol]/ris f(ilio) ...* from Philippi; b) *CIL* VI = *ILS* 849: *Iulia Tyndaris / C(ai) Iuli regis Rhoemetalces liberta ...* from Rome; c) *IG* X 2 1, 133 ll. 3–5: ... ἱερέως καὶ ἀγω/[νοθέτου] Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ / [Γ(αίου) Ἰουλίῳ] Ῥοιμη[τάλκου] ... from Thessaloniki (restored by L. Robert, *Les inscriptions de Thessalonique*, RPh 48 [1974] 213–215) and d) *IG* X 2 1, 32 ll. 1–5: ἡ πόλις κ[αὶ οἱ συμπραγματευόμενοι] / Ῥωμαιῶ[ι, ἐπὶ ἱερέως καὶ ἀγωνοθέ]του Αὐτ[οκράτορος Καίσαρος θε]οῦ υἱοῦ [θεοῦ Σεβαστοῦ δυνάστου ?] Γαίου / Ἰουλίῳ Ῥοιμητάλκου? ... from Thessaloniki (restored by H. L. Hendrix, *Thessalonians Honor Romans*, Diss. Harvard, Cambridge 1984, 366–386). II) Iulius Polemon see e) *P.Lond.* III 1178: ... ἐμ[α]ρ[τυ]ρεῖτε ἐπ’ ἐμοῦ Γαίῳ Ἰουλίῳ Ἀντιόχῳ τ[ῷ Κομμαγηνή]ς βασιλεῖ καὶ Ἰουλίῳ Πολέμωνι τῷ Πόντου ... (imperial rescript from Claudius dated to AD 47) and III) C. Iulius Rhascus see f) N. M. Dimitrova, *Theoroi and initiates in Samothrace. The epigraphical evidence* (Hesperia Supplement 37), Princeton 2008, 115–118 No. 46 = *SEG* LXI 704: Ἐπὶ βασιλείῳς ... / Γαίος Ἰούλιος Ῥάσκ[ος] / Ῥοιμη[τάλ]κου [υἱὸς καὶ] / [Α]ντων[ία Τρύφαι]να ... from Samothrace. The identification of almost all the persons listed above is highly controversial. For the persons attested in the first three sources see D. C. Braund, *Rome and the Friendly King. The Character of the Client Kingship*, London 1984, 41–42 and recently A. Raggi, *The First Roman Citizens among Eastern Dynasts and Kings*, in: T. Kaizer, M. Facella (eds), *Kingdoms and Principalities in the Roman Near East*, Stuttgart 2010, 81–97, especially 92–94. For the identification of Iulius Polemon of Pontos (item e) with Polemon II, son of Cotys, see Braund, *op. cit.* 42 and 48 n. 17. Concerning C. Iulius Rhas[us] (item f) see Clinton, Dimitrova, *The last Thracian Kings* (n. 10) 90–94, who identify C. Iulius Rhascus with an otherwise unattested son of Rhoemetalces II (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> I 517) son of Rhescuporis and Pythodoris, daughter of Cotys VIII and Tryphaena, while S. Kirov, *Gaius Iulius Rhascos*, *ZPE* 178 (2011) 215–220 argued that he was the son of Rhoemetalces III (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> R 68).

<sup>19</sup> Since in all probability his father, Rhoemetalces I, received Roman *civitas* from Augustus; see Raggi, *First Roman Citizens* (n. 18) 94.

<sup>20</sup> See J. Mordtmann, *Zur Epigraphik von Kyzikos*, *MDAI* (A) VI (1881) 40–41 and F. W. Hasluck, *Inscriptions from Kyzikos*, *JHS* 23 (1903) 91.

<sup>21</sup> See S. Saprykin, *On the History of the Pontic Kingdom under the Polemonides*, *VDI* (1993), 25–49 (in Russian), here 44: Ὁ Κυζικηνῶν [δῆμος καὶ οἱ πραγματ/ε]υόμενοι ἐν τῇ [πόλει Ῥωμαιῶ] / Σέξτον Ἰούλιον [Κότυν? Ῥησκουπούριδ]/ος δυνάστου Θρα[κῶν υἱόν, υἱ]/ωνόν [Κότυος?] καὶ θυγατ[ριδοῦν Θρα/κ]ῶν δυν[άστου Ῥοι]μητ[άλκα, ἐπὶ βασι/λί]σση[ς (τοῦ) Πόντου Ἀντ]ων[ίας Τρύφαι]νης, βασι[λέων] θυ[γατρὸς κα]ί/ι μητρὸς etc. Since the honoree was a nephew of Tryphaena, one might consider for line 6 the restoration ἀνεψιῶν (instead of ἐπὶ etc.). The title βασίλισσα borne by Tryphaena necessitates a dating of the inscription after September of AD 38 (the beginning of her co-regency with her son Polemon, king of Pontos). Concerning

sources. The change of *praenomen* compared to that borne by other members of the same dynasty who were Roman citizens is also noticeable in the nomenclature of other dynastic families, e.g. the Polemonids.<sup>22</sup> However, the reason(s) for the choice of the specific *praenomen* Sextus by these two Sappaeen dynasts is/are not clear.<sup>23</sup>

The date of the honorific inscription is determined by the reference to Tryphaena as queen. Based on numismatic evidence we infer that the title refers to the period when she was co-regent with her son Polemon II in Pontos, starting in September of AD 38 (first year of their co-regency AD 38–39).<sup>24</sup> It must therefore be dated after September of AD 38. The fact that Sextus Iulius Cotys is mentioned without his royal title should not astonish us: in a dedicatory inscription from Cyzicus, where Tryphaena and her two older sons Rhoemetalces and Polemon are named as queen and kings of Thrace and Pontos respectively, Cotys appears again with no title.<sup>25</sup> The likelihood is that in both cases they refer to the interval between Caligula's naming of Cotys as king of Lesser Armenia and his ascending the throne, some months after his mother and his brother, Polemon II, ascended theirs in September of AD 38,<sup>26</sup> and evidently after he attained

the genealogy of the last Sappaeans see Clinton, Dimitrova, *The last Thracian Kings* (n. 10) 87 with n. 5, 89 with n. 19 and 93 with n. 36, whom I am following above. For another version see the articles by M. Tačeva, *Corrigenda et addenda ad RIR* (III, 1898: R 40–2, 50–52; II 2 1936: C 1552–1554; IV 2, 1966, J 517) *pertinentia*, *Acta centri historiae Terra Antiqua* 2 (1987) 210–213 and eadem, *The last Thracian Independent dynasty of the Rhascuporids*, in: *Studia in honorem Georgii Mihailov*, Sofia 1995, 459–469.

<sup>22</sup> See for example the names of the two sons of M. Antonius Polemon I, son of King Polemon I of Pontos (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> P 531) and Queen Pythodoris (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> P 1114): their full nomenclature are M. Antonius Polemon II and L. Antonius Zenon.

<sup>23</sup> Concerning changes of *praenomen* whithin a family/*gens* see O. Salomies, *Die römischen Vornamen. Studien zur römischen Namengebung* (Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 82), Helsinki 1987, 250–252. In most of these cases the new *praenomen* was that of their maternal grandfather or of an uncle. Given the freedom that existed in the choice of the Roman nomenclature we cannot exclude other reasons for such a choice, e.g. the desire to honour a Roman magistrate connected to the family.

<sup>24</sup> For the starting year of her co-regency on the grounds of her and her son's coinage see *RPC* I (44 BC–AD 69) 567–569 and W. Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* (Historia-Einzelschriften 81), Stuttgart 1993, 99–104.

<sup>25</sup> See *JGR* IV 147: [Ποσειδῶνι Ἱσθμίωι χαριστήριον] / ... ἀναλώμα[τι] / [τ]ῶι [τ]ε ἔα[υτῆ[ς]] καὶ τῶι τοῦ υἱοῦ βασιλέω[ς] Θρά[κης] // [Ῥ]οιμητάλκαι τοῦ Κότυος καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτ[οῦ] / [β]ασιλέω[ς] Πόντο[υ] Πο[λ]έμονος καὶ Κότυος δ[ν]ό[ματι] Ἀντωνία Τρύφαινα ... . Cf. the remarks already made by F. W. Hasluck, *An Inscribed Basis from Cyzicus*, *JHS* 22 (1902) 131 and *PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 1555.

<sup>26</sup> For this date see the bibliography of n. 24. Rhoemetalces III, the eldest of the three brothers, is mentioned as βασιλεύς in the Athenian ephebic catalogue *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1967 ll. 1–5: οἱ ἐφηβεύσαντες ἐν τῷ ἐπ[ι] / βασιλέω[ς] Ῥοιμητάλκα νε(ωτέρου) / ἄρχοντος ἐνιαυτῶι ... see also *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 2292 ll. 27–29: ἐπὶ Ῥοιμητάλκα νε(ωτέρου) / [Ῥ]αίου[ς] Καῖσαρ ἀβ[τ]ο/κράτωρ ἀνεδεί[χθη]. For his term of office as eponymous archon in the Athenian year AD 36/37, which implies that he was proclaimed king by Caligula appr. in spring 37, see L. Robert, *Deux epigrammes de Philippe de Thessalonique*, *JS* 1982, 139–162, here 145–146 and recently O. Thomas, *Ephebes Reunited. A New Edition of IG II<sup>2</sup> 1967*, *ZPE* 157 (2006) 71–76.

the prescribed age for assuming his regal duties.<sup>27</sup> However, the date of the honorific inscription can be more closely determined by using the evidence of a well-known decree of Cyzicus honouring all Tryphaena's sons (by birth order) as βασιλεῖς.<sup>28</sup> The decree was passed on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of Thargelion, when Gaius Caesar was hipparchus (Θαργηλιῶνος θ', ἐπὶ Γαίου Καίσαρος ἱπάρχεω<ι>), a date which has been variously calculated as the 9<sup>th</sup> of May in the year 37, 38 or 39.<sup>29</sup> Of these, only the last is in fact possible, since the honorific inscription from Amphipolis shows that Cotys IX was not called βασιλεύς until at least September of AD 38. Consequently the latter should be dated some time between September of AD 38 and May of AD 39, undoubtedly before he ascended the throne of Lesser Armenia.<sup>30</sup>

The inscription in honor of Sextus Iulius Cotys puts the other two available inscriptions from Amphipolis attesting members of the Sappaeon dynasty into a new perspective. With regard to the identity of the Rhoemetalces mentioned in the funerary inscription for the slave Philotimos, who was buried by his wife in Amphipolis, it has been justly observed that it is difficult to know which Rhoemetalces was meant, although judging by the lettering on the stele he must have been either Rhoemetalces II, son of Rhescuporis, or his cousin Rhoemetalces III, son of Cotys VIII, both kings of Thrace.<sup>31</sup> Since we now know that Sextus Iulius Cotys was a magistrate of Amphipolis and that Rhoemetalces III appears to have played an active role in the votive inscription to be discussed in the following paragraphs, it seems probable that Philotimos belonged to the household of the latter. Besides, on the available data at least there is no indication that Rhoemetalces II had anything to do with the city, which is not surprising, since the territory over which he and his family ruled did not border Macedonia but was located in northeastern Thrace.<sup>32</sup> If this is the case, then the fact that the Rhoemetalces of the funerary stele had the title of king justifies a dating between the spring of AD 37, when he should have acquired that title,<sup>33</sup> and AD 46, the year of his assassination by his wife.

<sup>27</sup> Being the youngest of the three brothers and having ascended his throne between September of AD 38 and May of AD 39 (see in text) Cotys must have been born in AD 19 or 20, while his maturity (18<sup>th</sup> year) would have taken place by the end of AD 37 or in the beginning of AD 38.

<sup>28</sup> *IGR* IV 145 = *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 798 ll. 18–19: δεδόχθαι τῷ δήμῳ ἐπιηῆσθαι μὲν τοὺς βασιλεῖς Ῥομητάλκην καὶ Πολέμωνα καὶ Κότυν καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτῶν Τρύφαινα.

<sup>29</sup> For the various suggestions see the review given by Clinton, Dimitrova, *The last Thracian Kings* (n. 10) 90; they rightly date it to AD 39 on the basis of Polemon's accession to the throne of Pontus (September, AD 38).

<sup>30</sup> Clinton, Dimitrova, *The last Thracian Kings* (n. 10) 96, conclude independently that Cotys "presumably received his throne either late in 38 or (much more likely) in 39".

<sup>31</sup> See J. Papastavru, *Amphipolis. Geschichte und Prosopographie* (Klio Beiheft 57), Leipzig 1936, 146 No. 88; V. Velkov, *Zur Frage der Sklaverei auf der Balkan Halbinsel während der Antike, Geschichte und Kultur Thrakiens und Mösiens*, Amsterdam 1988, 113–126, here 123; Laugier, *Stèle* (n. 1); and Tačeva, *Rhascuporids* (n. 21) 465 and n. 12.

<sup>32</sup> See above n. 17.

<sup>33</sup> See above n. 26.

The second text is a votive inscription carved on the revetment of a pedestal for a statue, which was found in the acropolis of Amphipolis in 1920 during operations to bring to light an Early Christian church.<sup>34</sup>

Its fragmentarily preserved text runs as follows (pl. 22):

[-----]  
 [---- Ἄρ]μενίας τῆς προστεθείσης ὑπὸ  
 [Γαΐου Καίσα]ρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ Πολέ-  
 4 [μων-----]ς εὐσεβῆς πατῆρ<sup>v</sup> καὶ Πολέμων  
 [----- φιλο]πάτωρ<sup>v</sup> καὶ Ῥοιμητάλικης φιλόκαισαρ  
 [---<sup>ca 8-10</sup> - ] τῆ Ἀμφιπολιεῖτων πόλει διὰ τὴν  
 [--- πρὸς τὸν] οἶκον αὐτῶν εὐνοϊάν τε καὶ τειμήν.

The inscription has been the subject of diverse and conflicting interpretations, mainly because of the presence of two Polemons, for whom four different identifications have been proposed: (1) the persons named are Polemon II, son of Tryphaena and king of Pontos, and his otherwise unattested sons Polemon and Rhoemetalces;<sup>35</sup> (2) the two Polemons are M. Antonius Polemon, king of Olba, son of Polemon I king of Pontos and Pythodoris, and his son;<sup>36</sup> (3) the two Polemons are Polemon and Marcus Antonius Polemon, son and grandson respectively of Antonius Zenon, the brother of Polemon I;<sup>37</sup> (4) the reference is to the son and grandson of Polemon I, making the first Polemon in the Amphipolis inscription (the ‘pious father’) M. Antonius Polemon I, the Antonius Polemon *philopator* of coins minted in Laodicea circa 5 BC, and the second (the [*philo*]pator) M. Antonius Polemon II, king of Olba, to whom the Romans assigned part of Armenia in AD 60.<sup>38</sup>

Two observations that have not to date received the attention they merit put the discussion on a firmer footing. Specifically, a) part of the top of the slab has been removed to enable it to be re-used,<sup>39</sup> and b) the Rhoemetalces who is called *philocaesar*

<sup>34</sup> E. Πελεκίδης, *Ἀνασκαφαὶ καὶ ἔρευναὶ ἐν Ἀμφιπόλει*, PAAH 1920, 88 fig. 1 (REG 37 [1924] 348; SEG III 498); P. Collart, P. Devambez, *Voyage dans la région du Strymon*, BCH 55 (1931) 181–184 No. 11 (*Bull. ép.* 1948, 181); Ch. Edson, *Notebook*, No. 781; Καφταντζής, *Ἱστορία τῆς πόλεως Σερρών ...* (n. 4) No. 653. Cf. Papastavru, *Amphipolis* (n. 31) No. 70, 7; Sullivan, *Pontos* (n. 17) 929; V. P. Jajlenko, *Polémon, roi d’Arménie*, PBH 92 (1981) 168–178 (SEG XXXI 620 and *Bull. ép.* 1982, 214); Tačeva, *Corrigenda* (n. 21) 211; Saprykin, *History of the Pontic Kingdom* (n. 21) 26–29; Tačeva, *Rhascuporids* (n. 21) 464–465; PIR<sup>2</sup> R 68; P. J. Thonemann, *Polemo, Son of Polemo*, EA 37 (2004) 144–150, here 146–147 (SEG LIV 598).

<sup>35</sup> See Sullivan, *Pontos* (n. 17) 929. Cf. Papastavru, *Amphipolis* (n. 34) 144: “Sie können entweder Sohn und 2 Enkel eines der 3 Brüder, die der Ehe des Königs Cotys (VIII) mit der Antonia Tryphaena entsprangen, sein oder — weniger wahrscheinlich — Kinder des Rhoemetalces II., der mit deren Schwester Pythodoris der Jüngeren vermählt war”.

<sup>36</sup> See Jajlenko, *Polémon, roi d’Arménie* (n. 34) 168–178.

<sup>37</sup> See Saprykin, *History of the Pontic Kingdom* (n. 21) 26–29.

<sup>38</sup> See Thonemann, *Polemo* (n. 34) 146–147.

<sup>39</sup> See Collart, Devambez, *Voyage* (n. 34) 181. The observation is corroborated by the inspection we carried out.

(φιλόκαισαρ) in the 5<sup>th</sup> line is an easily identifiable person: his title permits us to identify him as the Rhoemetalces *philocaesar* who holds the same title in a list of *stephanophoroi* in Chios;<sup>40</sup> all the scholars who have specialised in the Sappaeon dynasty argue that the Rhoemetalces in that list is none other than Rhoemetalces III, son of Cotys VIII, king of Thrace and older brother of Cotys IX.<sup>41</sup> This last observation, together with the reference to Caligula (l. 3), means that the inscription must be dated before January of AD 41 (the date of Caligula's death), and consequently the persons named before Rhoemetalces could be his brothers and an otherwise unattested nephew bearing his brother's name, i.e. Polemon.

This new framework, taken together with a) the fact that the beginning of the text of the inscription has been lost and b) the inscription honouring Sextus Iulius Cotys, allow us to formulate an hypothesis regarding the time when this public monument was erected and the persons involved: because of Cotys VIII and Tryphaena's family's close connection with Amphipolis, which is attested in the three inscriptions,<sup>42</sup> the three brothers made a joint offering to the city, probably on the occasion of the proclamation of the youngest of them, Sextus Iulius Cotys, as king of Lesser Armenia, which for that reason was named right at the beginning of the text. If this hypothesis holds true, the votive inscription should be also dated between September of AD 38 and May of AD 39, but this time after Cotys IX ascended the throne of Lesser Armenia. In that case the inscription should be completed as follows:

[Σέξτος Ἰούλιος Κότυος υἱὸς Κότυς βασιλεὺς]  
 [Μικρᾶς Ἀρ]μενίας τῆς προστεθείσης ὑπὸ  
 [Γαίου Καίσα]ρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ, Πολε-  
 4 [μων βασιλεὺς] εὐσεβῆς πατὴρ ὕ και Πολέμων  
 [υἱὸς φιλο]πάτωρ ὕ και Ῥοιμητάλκης φιλόκαισαρ  
 [βασιλεὺς] τῆ Ἀμφιπολιτῶν πόλει διὰ τὴν  
 [πρὸς τὸν] οἶκον αὐτῶν εὐνοίαν τε και τεμῆν.

With the same time and event might be connected another very fragmentarily preserved inscription of Amphipolis whose texts could be restored as follows:<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See *SEG XVII 381 c. II.1* [---]η Στροῦθις / [βασιλεὺς Ῥο]ιμητάλκας / [vacat φιλό]καισαρ. Cf. *Museion* 1876, 36 No. 149 Ἀπολλώνιος Ἀπολλωνίου, στεφανηφόρος / [ἀπ]οδειχθεὶς εἰς τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν τὸν μετὰ στε/φανηφόρον βασιλέα Ῥοιμητάλκην ...

<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Sullivan, *Thrace* (n. 17) 210, although in *Pontos* (n. 17) 929 he argues that he should be an otherwise unknown son of Polemon II; Tačeva, *Rhascuporids* (n. 21) 464–465; Tačeva, *Corrigenda* (n. 21) 211; Robert, *Deux epigrammes* (n. 26) 145 and Kirov, *Gaius Iulius Rhascos* (n. 18) 218.

<sup>42</sup> See particularly the wording of the inscription: τῆ Ἀμφιπολιτῶν πόλει διὰ τὴν / [πρὸς τὸν] οἶκον αὐτῶν εὐνοίαν τε και τεμῆν.

<sup>43</sup> The fragment was found in Amphipolis and published by D. Hereward, *Inscriptions from Amorgos, Hagios Eustratios and Thrace*, *Palaeologia* (Kyoto) 14.2 (1968) here 142–143 No. 13, pl. 15 = *SEG XXV 714*. The editors of *SEG* suggest the following text: [--- Ἀρμενίας τῆς προσ]τεθε[ίσης ---] / [--- Γε]ρμαν[ικοῦ ---] / [--- φιλόκαισαρ και[---] / [--- τὴν εἰς αὐτὸ]ν εὐν[οίαν ---]; Jajlenko, *Polémon, roi d'Arménie* (n. 34) 172–173 restores the text differently:

[----- Ἀρμενίας τῆς προσ]τεθε[ίσης -----]  
 [ὑπὸ Γαίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ Γε]ρμαν[ικοῦ -----]  
 [----- φιλόκαισ]αρ καὶ [-----]  
 [----- διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν οἶκον αὐτῶ]ν εὖν[οιαν --]

Sextus Iulius Cotys' assumption of the office of high priest and *agonothetes* of the imperial cult in a Greek city outside Thrace was not an isolated instance. On the evidence we have it is the second known case of a member of the dynasty actively supporting the imperial cult, the first being Gaius Iulius Rhoemetalces, who is mentioned in a votive inscription from Thessaloniki concerning the *post mortem* gift — perhaps an *unguentarium* — of a Thessalonian named Poplius Cer[renius?]: it was dedicated to the city and its youth “when [Gaius Iulius Rhoemetalces, the dynast, was priest of the cult of Augustus]” in Thessalonica.<sup>44</sup> It was Louis Robert who suggested the relevant restorations, identified the dynast with Rhoemetalces II and dated the inscription to the “premier tiers du I<sup>er</sup> siècle” on the grounds of some prosopographical data concerning magistrates mentioned in it.<sup>45</sup> A few years later, again on the basis of prosopographical observations, Ioannis Touratsoglou argued that the inscription should be dated to AD 35–39 and the Thracian dynast identified as Rhoemetalces III.<sup>46</sup> If this identification is accepted,<sup>47</sup> then, given that Rhoemetalces is described as ‘dynast’, the date of the inscription can be narrowed to AD 35–37, since Rhoemetalces appears as *basileus* in the afore mentioned Athenian list of ephebes in the spring of the year 37.<sup>48</sup> This view is further supported but not proved definitely by the fact that the evidence to date suggests that, of the later Sappaeans, only Tryphaena and her children embraced the imperial cult. Tryphaena served as priestess of Livia (*Sebaste Neikephoros*) in Cyzicus in the reign of Tiberius as informs us the rationale of a city’s decree in her

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[Βασιλεὺς Ἀρμενίας τῆς προσ]τεθε[ίσης] / [ὑπὸ Γαίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ Γε]ρμαν[ικοῦ] / [Πολέμων καὶ Ῥοιμητάλκης φιλόκαισ]αρ καὶ [---] / [--- διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν οἶκον αὐτῶ]ν εὖν[οιαν --]. Unfortunately I was not able to locate the stone either in Amphipolis’ or in Kavala’s Museum.

<sup>44</sup> See *IG X 2 1*, 133: [ἔτους ν καὶ ν καὶ ν] ν Σεβαστοῦ. / [τὸ ἀλειπτήριον(?) τῇ πόλει] καὶ τοῖς νεοῖς Π(όπλιος) Κερ[ρήνιος(?)] (cognomen) κα[τὰ] διαθήκην ἱερέως καὶ ἀγω[νοθέτου] Αὐτοκρά[τορος] Καίσαρος θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ / [Γ(αίου) Ἰουλίου Ῥοιμη]τάλκου δυνάστου ... etc.

<sup>45</sup> See Robert, *Les inscriptions* (n. 18) 210–215 against Edson’s interpretation. If the restoration of *IG X 2 1*, 32 suggested by Hendrix, *Thessalonians* (n. 18) is correct, it would imply that Rhoemetalces hold the office for another year.

<sup>46</sup> See J. Touratsoglou, *Die Münzstätte von Thessaloniki in der römischen Kaiserzeit (32/31 v. Chr. bis 268 n. Chr.)*, Berlin 1988, 11 and n. 41 (= *SEG XXXVIII* 691). Working further the idea of Robert (see previous note) he notices that names such Ταῦρος Ταύρου ὁ καὶ Ῥήγλος and Ταῦρος Ἀμμίας ὁ καὶ Ῥήγλος in *IG X 2 1*, 126 and T. Μέμμιος Ζώσιμος in its contemporary *IG X 2 1*, 133 premise “die Anwesenheit des P. Memmius Regulus als legatus Augusti pro praetore” in the joint province of Moesia–Macedonia–Achaia. According to F. Papazoglou, *Gouverneurs de Macedoine*, *ZAnt* 29 (1979) 227–249, here 234–236 Regulus’ term of office in Balkans lasted between AD 35 and 39.

<sup>47</sup> See *PIR*<sup>2</sup> R 68 p. 66 and Clinton, Dimitrova, *The last Thracian Kings* (n. 10) 88, expressing doubts.

<sup>48</sup> See above n. 26.

honor (... λαβοῦσα παρὰ τῆς πόλεως ἱερητεῖαν αὐτῆ[ς] ...).<sup>49</sup> She together with her two older sons also organised games there associated with the cult of Aphrodite Drusilla, Caligula's deified sister, as is described in the afore-mentioned decree of AD 39 (... συνιερουργήσον/τες καὶ συνεορτάσοντες τῆι μητρί, ἐπιτελούση τοὺς τῆς θεᾶς νέας Ἀφροδείτης Δρουσίλλης ἀγῶνας ...).<sup>50</sup> What reasons the last members of this dynasty might have had for pursuing such activities on the soil of cities in Macedonia is an interesting question, but must be the subject of another article.<sup>51</sup>

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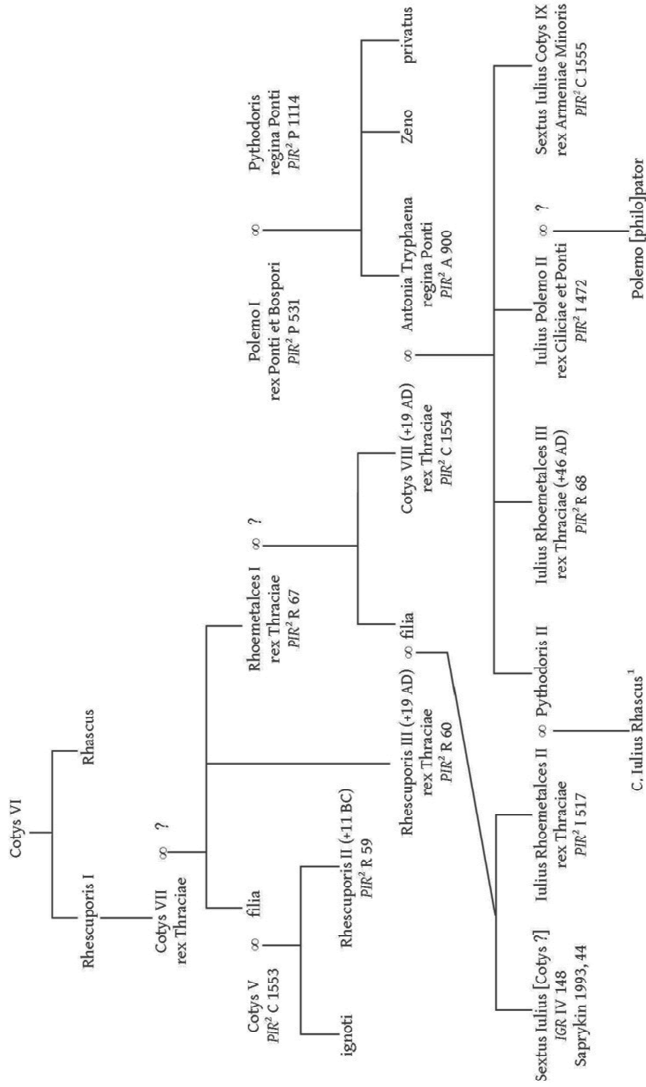
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<sup>49</sup> See *IGR* IV 144 ll. 4, cf. ll. 13–17.

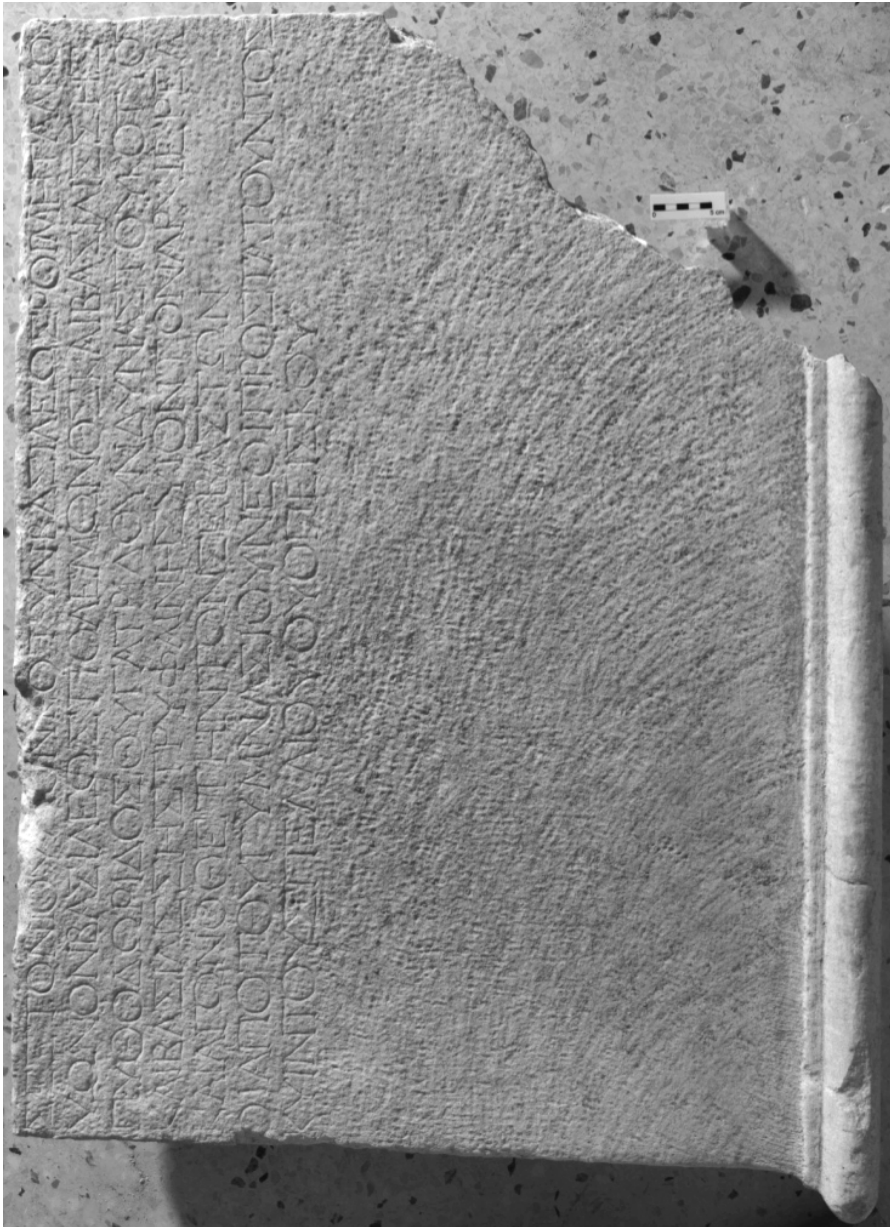
<sup>50</sup> See *IGR* IV 145 = *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 798 ll. 11–12.

<sup>51</sup> See my article *Last Sappaeian Kings and cities in Roman Macedonia*, in the *Proceedings of the International Symposium "The Black Sea Region in the Context of the Roman Empire"* 5–8 May 2016, (forthcoming).

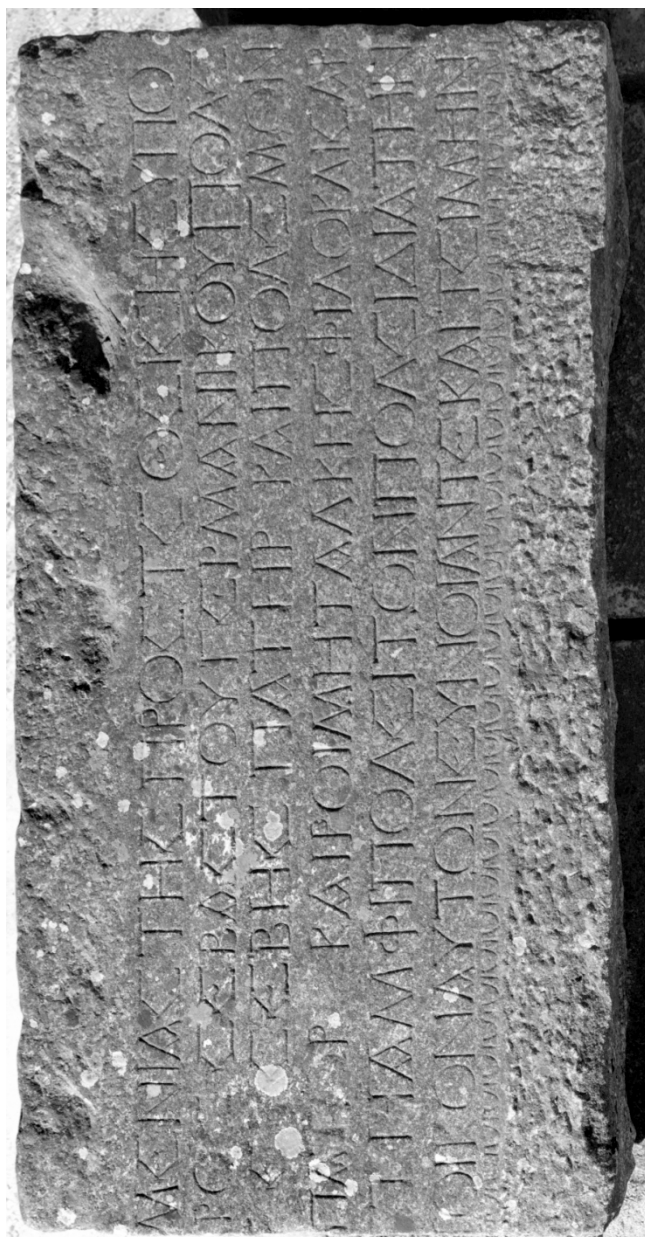




<sup>1</sup> See n. 18.



zu P. Nigdelis, S. 139  
Revetment of a honorific statue base



zu P. Nigdelis, S. 145  
Revetment of a pedestal for a statue