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The Stephanephorate of Apollo and the Historical Context of the Milesian Decree for Queen Apama (I.Didyma 480)

ABSTRACT: Soon after the Battle of Ipsos (301 BCE), the Milesians honoured king Seleukos I, his son Antiochos (I), and his wife, queen Apama, in gratitude for promising to rebuild the Apollo temple at Didyma and erecting a *stoa*. The decrees for Antiochos (I.Didyma 479) and Apama (I.Didyma 480) are largely extant, and the latter provides the chronological anchor for all three honours. It mentions Apollo as *stephanephoros*, under whom the financial officials (*anataktai*) were to procure the funds for the queen’s statue. In the standard edition of the text, Albert Rehm identified this stephanephorate with the year 299/8 BCE, but failed to see that it rather constitutes a *terminus ante quem* for the decree. The exceptional financial strain on the Milesians may already have resulted in postponing the order of the equestrian statue of Antiochos from perhaps fall 300 BCE to spring 299 BCE. This slightly adjusted timeline invites us to reconsider other aspects of dynastic history under the Diadochs. Contrary to the common opinion, the wedding of Seleukos and Stratonike, the daughter of Demetrios I, in 300 BCE does not constitute a *terminus ante quem* for honouring Apama, the first wife at a polygamous court, but rather a *terminus a quo*, since it sealed the reconciliation with Demetrios after the Battle of Ipsos. The Seleukid benefaction should be viewed within the context of a joint peace initiative that Demetrios and Seleukos started from Rhosos. It is also reflected in the mission of Nikagoras of Rhodes to Ephesos (I.Ephesos V 1453). In this context, the Milesian embassy was invited to the Seleukid court, offered the benefactions, and had their fellow citizens respond with three honorific decrees.

KEYWORDS: Miletos, stephanephorate of Apollo, Seleukos I, Apama, Antiochos I.

As the host of the famous sanctuary of Apollo (and Artemis) at Didyma, Miletos began to play a prominent role (again) during the campaign of Alexander ‘the Great’.¹ Its importance increased especially under Seleukos I Nikator (320/312–281 BCE), who boasted close links with the city’s patron god. Under the sole rule of his son Antiochos I Soter (281–261 BCE), this special relation culminated in the claim that Seleukos was Apollo’s son.² One of the prime documents attesting to the early relations between the royal family and the famous oracle site is an honorific decree for queen Apama, Seleukos’ wife and Antiochos’ mother. The present study revisits the date of the decree that has been ascribed most authoritatively to 299/98 BCE by Albert Rehm. While the timeframe here proposed is similar, the winter of (300/) 299 BCE, the argument and historical implications differ significantly: if we accept the previous

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¹ Strabo 17.1.43 = Kallisthenes F 14a; cf. Meeus 2020, 297f. See the next note for further references.

² Milesian oracles for Seleukos: App. Syr. 56.283 (on 334 BCE, a posthumous fiction) and Diod. 19.90 (on 313/12 BCE); cf. Lib. Or. 11.99. Didyma as the background of the dynastic sanctuary of Apollo at Daphne: Justin 15.4.7f. and Lib. Or. 11.94–100. Cf. Ogden 2017, 56–58, 64, 138–140, 271–280; also de la Nuez Pérez 2008, 334–337; Errington 2008, 133–135; Erickson 2011; 2014; forthcoming; Widmer 2016, 29f. Note that Nawotka 2019 argues for the creation of the myth around 300 BCE, while the general trend now converges to a date after 281 BCE.

Only this way, the pieces add up plausibly: the wedding sealed the reconciliation between Seleukos and Demetrios, enhanced the need to ascertain the role of his oldest son who had already been chosen to succeed his father, and further opened the path for diplomacy between Seleukos and Miletos, which was instrumental in propagating the dynastic arrangements. The new marriage cannot have taken place later than 300 BCE, as the sequence of events in Plutarch's *Life of Demetrios* implies. To this, we should add the chronological implication of the debt law of Ephesos, which Walser took as pointing to 299 BCE for the official end of the war, but which, according to his own logic, necessarily takes us to 300 BCE. It is hence most likely that the Seleukid benefactions in Miletos followed soon thereafter in summer or fall, and the expressions of gratitude by the citizens cannot be later than winter 299 BCE.⁴⁶

Let us finally return to the abovementioned ambassador Nikagoras, who had been sent to the Ephesians and all the Greeks to remind them of previous and ongoing goodwill. Quite spectacularly, Nikagoras had been sent out in the name of two kings, Demetrios and Seleukos, so that it is commonly accepted that his mission had started in Rhosos in 300 BCE, the location of the abovementioned dynastic wedding. Most likely, this same envoy visited Miletos as well and started the negotiation which then resulted in the benefactions of Seleukos, Antiochos and Apama. This embassy to the Greek cities reflects a much broader policy of appeasement, which is likewise reflected in the marriage alliance that Seleukos brought about for Demetrios with the daughter of Ptolemy I and the embassy of Demetrios' wife Phila to her brother Kassandros.⁴⁷

No reference to those major construction projects is made in the correspondence of 288/87 BCE, so that we should expect that they were finalized well before then. They may have been well advanced in 296/94 BCE when Seleukos elevated Antiochos to co-ruling kingship and handed over his youngest wife Stratonike to his son. The essence of the dynastic arrangement had been announced to the Greek world in Miletos as early as 300 BCE.⁴⁸

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⁴⁶ See n. 30 above on the wedding and the chronological implications of Plutarch's account. The chronological implications of the debt law (Syll.¹ 344 = Syll.³ 364 = Walser 2008, 26–35) are very uncertain. Walser suggests (94, 103f.) that the debt law seeks remediation for up to 25 months, namely from Posideon (1st month, Dec./Jan., probably 302/1 BCE) under the *prytaneia* of Demagoras (ll. 75–79, 83f., 98) through the *prytaneia* of Mantikrates (l. 98) to Lenaion (2nd month, Jan./Feb., probably 299 BCE) under Apollas (ll. 69–72, 98). None of the *prytaneiai* is known otherwise. Walser suggests that the beginning of this mitigation period was marked by the liberation of Ephesos under Demetrios, whereas the end date coincides with the reconciliation of Demetrios and Seleukos. But it makes little sense to exclude the devastation under Prepelaos from this timeframe. Demetrios hence arrived early in 301 BCE (month Posideon of Demagoras' year; similar Capdetrey 2022, 119, though without discussion), and the law was passed in (or even soon after) Feb. 299 BCE, a few months after Demetrios met with Seleukos at Rhosos. The operation of Prepelaos took place in 302/1 BCE (Diod. 20.107.1–4, with 20.106.1 for the Athenian *archon* date of Nikokles, 302/1 BCE).

⁴⁷ On Ptolemais, see n. 29 above; on Phila's embassy, see Plut. Demetr. 32.3. For a full treatment, see Coşkun in preparation.

⁴⁸ On the remarriage of Stratonike, see especially Almagor 2016; also Widmer 2019; Coşkun forthcoming 3. More problematic are Engels and Erickson 2016; Hämmerling 2019, 121–139; Wheatley and Dunn 2020, 295f., since they put this second wedding in a context of hostility between Demetrios and Seleukos, although Plutarch (Demetr. 38.1) reports this under good news for Demetrios.

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Apollon'un *Stephanephorosluğu* ve Kraliçe Apama'ya İlişkin Miletos Kararnamesi: I.Didyma 480'in Tarihi Çerçevesi

ÖZ: Ipsos Savaşı'ndan (MÖ 301) kısa bir süre sonra Miletoslular, Didyma'daki Apollon tapınağını onarma ve orada bir stoa inşa etme sözü verdikleri için kral I. Seleukos, oğlu Antiokhos ve eşi kraliçe Apama'yı bir şükran nişanesi olarak onurlandırmışlardır. Antiokhos ve Apama'nın onuruna alınan kararnameler (I.Didyma 479–480) büyük oranda korunmuştur. Kraliçeyi onurlandıran yazıt her üç onurlandırmayı tarihi çerçeveye oturtmak için kilit rolü konumundadır. Burada kraliçenin heykeli için gerekli para miktarının kent mali yetkilileri (*anataktai*) tarafından Apollon'un *stephanephorosluğu* zamanında temin edilmesi gerektiği belirtilmektedir. Yazıtın kabul gören edisyonunda Albert Rehm bu *stephanephorosluğu* MÖ 299/8 yılına tarihlemiş, ancak bunun kararname için bir *terminus ante quem* oluşturduğunu görememiştir. Miletoslular'un yaşadıkları istisnai mali dar boğaz, Antiokhos'un atlı heykeli-

nin yapımının muhtemelen MÖ 300 sonbaharından MÖ 299 baharına ertelenmesine yol açmış olmalıdır. Zaman çizelgesinde yapılan bu küçük düzeltme bizi Diadokhlar dönemindeki hanedanlık tarihinin diğer yönlerini yeniden gözden geçirmeye davet etmektedir. Seleukos'un I. Demetrios'un kızı Stratonike ile MÖ 300 yılında gerçekleşen evliliği, çok eşli bir sarayda ilk eş (haseki) olan Apama'nın Miletoslular tarafından onurlandırılması hususunda yaygın görüşün aksine bir *terminus ante quem* değil, daha çok bir *terminus a quo* oluşturmaktadır. Çünkü bu evlilik Ipsos Savaşı'nın ardından Demetrios ile Seleukos arasındaki mutabakatı mühürlemiştir. Seleukos'un Miletos'a vaat ettiği hayırseverlik kralın Demetrios ile Rhosos'ta başlattığı ortak barış girişimi bağlamında görülmelidir. Bu durum Rodoslu Nikagoras'ın iki kral adına Ephesos'a yaptığı elçilikte de yankı bulmaktadır (I.Ephesos V 1453). Bu bağlamda Miletoslu elçiler Seleukos sarayına davet edilmiş, orada hayır vaatlerinde bulunmuş ve hemşehrilerinin girişte bahsi geçen onurlandırmalarla karşılık vermelerini sağlamıştır.

ANAHTAR SÖZCÜKLER: Miletos, Apollon'un *stephanephoros*luğu, I. Seleukos, Apama, I. Antiokhos