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A Re-examination of the Imperial Oath from Vezirköprü

Abstract: The present article is a re-examination of the Greek text of the imperial oath from Neapolis, found in Vezirköprü by Franz Cumont in 1900. Until now the inscription, which is kept in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, has not been subjected to a revision. Although the stone itself has suffered additional damage since its discovery, the inscribed text is still easily legible. Most of the readings proposed by Cumont are shown to be correct, and in several instances the present author is able to confirm and improve readings where Cumont had been in doubt (ll. 5, 11, 13, 25, 41). Nonetheless, several of the previous restorations are impossible, either because there is not sufficient room for them, or because remains of letters contradict these readings (ll. 4, 22, 39). In addition, it is shown that the dimensions and the shape of the stone given by Cumont are incorrect. The re-examined text forms the basis of four comments on the literary, geographical and historical context of the inscription. It is argued that the oath was taken at a critical point in time when the city changed political status.

Keywords: Imperial oath; Augustus; Neapolis; Vezirköprü; Neoklaudiopolis; Andrapa; Pythodoris; autopsy; re-examination.

The imperial oath from Neapolis (modern Vezirköprü, Samsun province) ranks among our most important documents for the cult of the emperor in Roman Asia Minor. Since its discovery in 1900, the oath has been discussed and analyzed by generations of scholars, basing themselves on the reading of the text published by Franz Cumont in 1900 and republished, with a few emendations, in the third volume of *Studia Pontica* (1910).¹ Cumont never revisited Vezirköprü and his edition was based on the notes taken during his brief visit in April 1900. These misled him to believe that the inscribed field was trapezoidal in shape, widening towards the base and to assume that the concluding lines of the inscription were longer than the opening lines, reconstructing the text accordingly. The drawing accompanying Cumont's final publication of the text (1910) shows a rectangular stone and is at variance with several of the readings in Cumont's edition. (fig. 1) A re-examination of the evidence and a comparison of Cumont's reading with the inscription itself is called for.

The present author applied for and obtained permission to study the stone together with Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen (University of Southern Denmark) on April 24, 2013.² The examination of the stone revealed that for most of the text, Cumont's readings are correct. The drawing, however, often indicates letters visible on the stone but neglected by Cumont in his edition.

Nonetheless, the examination proved that the draughtsman was far from infallible: he did not include all the preserved letters on the stone and reproduced an erroneous reading for some lines. The drawing stat-

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¹ Cumont 1900; Cumont 1901; Anderson et al., SP III 66 = OGI 532 = IGR 3 137 = Dessau, ILS 8781.

² Many thanks are due to Dr. Şehrazat Karagöz (Archaeological Museum, Istanbul) for the permission to study and publish the inscription.

ed to be a facsimile of a squeeze taken by Cumont,³ but the draughtsman has more than once overlooked a letter, and on one occasion he has made a hypercorrection by indicating a letter that was not carved onto the stone.

Furthermore, the many restorations made to the text by Cumont were examined by the present author, and three of these were found to be unfeasible, either because they exceed the space available on the stone, or because they overlook remains of letters that are in conflict with Cumont's restorations.

The revised text is printed below with a translation and a textual commentary comparing the inscribed text with the edition of Cumont. These are followed by four short comments on the historical context of the oath.

Description

After its discovery in April 1900, the stone was taken to the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul and entered the collection in October of the same year where it was given the inventory number E 1137. For some years the stone was on display but is now in storage.

The Greek text is inscribed on a stele of reddish sandstone measuring 92x51/50x13/15 cm. The dimensions given by Cumont are incorrect.⁴ The shape of the stone is rectangular (fig. 1–2). Cumont erroneously seems to have thought that the stone was trapezoidal with a rounded top.⁵ According to Cumont, this shape is uncommon in Greece, and Cumont drew a parallel between the stone from Vezirköprü and the Mesha Stele.⁶ The Mesha Stele, carrying a text in the Moabite language, was found in 1868 in Jordan and has a rounded top.⁷

The stone from Vezirköprü has suffered substantial damage to the right edge. Furthermore, the stone is fractured across the top (fig. 3–4). The surface of the stone is very fragile and large bits have flaked off at the top as well as in the area around the fracture. The back of the stone is smooth, and there is nothing to indicate that it formed part of a building at any time. The base of the stone is equally smooth, with no traces of e.g., a plinth. The original length of the stone appears to be identical to the present length.

The text is inscribed in a frame that is vertical on the right and left and bordered by an arch at the top. The frame, though damaged on the right, is clearly symmetrical. In the arch itself, an empty field carries no text. There are no signs of further decoration: if any existed it has disappeared due to the damage that the stone has suffered. The text itself has a left margin of 3 cm from the inner edge of the frame. The original width of the inscribed area will therefore have been c. 39 cm. The inscription carries 42 lines of Greek text, which have been divided into five paragraphs of unequal length by initial letters inscribed in

³ Anderson et al., SP III, s. 75: 'Nous donnons un cliché d'un agrandissement de la photographie et un facsimilé exécuté d'après l'estampage. Le dessinateur n'a pas reproduit tout à fait fidèlement la forme des lettres, mais leur disposition et leur lecture est exacte.'

⁴ In Cumont 1901, 26; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 76 the height of the stone is indicated variously as 190 cm and as 109 cm. 190 is probably a typographical error for 109, but even 109 cm conflicts with the actual dimensions of the stone.

⁵ Cumont 1901, 26–27 'La pierre ... est une stèle de grès rougeâtre, bordée par une moulure plate, et qui va en se rétrécissant de la base au sommet, lequel est cintré.' So too Anderson et al., SP III, s. 75: 'La stèle est une plaque épaisse, bordée par une moulure plate et qui va se rétrécissant de la base au sommet, lequel est cintré.' How this misunderstanding arose is unclear. Perhaps Cumont had forgotten the shape of the stone by the time he wrote the article for REG. Possibly the error stems from the photograph accompanying Anderson et al., SP III, s. 77, where the stone appears to be trapezoidal. The accompanying drawing in Anderson et al., SP III, s. 79, however, indicates the correct shape.

⁶ Cumont 1901, 26; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 75.

⁷ The remains of the Mesha Stele are kept in the Musée du Louvre, and a photograph of the stele can be found on the museum's homepage: http://cartelfr.louvre.fr/cartelfr/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=21796.

the otherwise empty margin between the text and the edge of the frame. All lines have been damaged at the right hand edge with ll. 28–29, the longest remaining lines, running to 37 cm. In these two lines, the number of missing letters can be determined as three. Thus we can safely assume that there was a margin of 3 cm on the right hand as on the left. The stone was already broken at the time of its discovery, and the surface of the stone had suffered damage in ll. 5–7 and 9–12.⁸ Since Cumont's discovery, the stone has suffered additional damage in ll. 1–2, 7–9 and 28.⁹ The letter height is uniform (1.2 cm), the five initial letters in the margin being somewhat higher (1.7 cm). In l. 1 the letters are higher than in the other lines (1.5 cm). The letters have been elegantly cut, and most letters carry moderate but pronounced serifs. Occasionally, the letterforms vary. The vertical hastae of the mu are mostly upright, but sometimes they splay out towards the bottom. Epsilon and sigma are lunate. The central bar of epsilon is not always attached. Alpha has a broken crossbar, its crossbar touching the baseline, and carries apex. Omega is always large, the rounded part varying in shape from very open at the bottom to (practically) circular. Theta always carries a stroke in the circle. There are no ligatures.

Text:¹⁰ Ἀπὸ ἀὐτοκράτορος Καίσ[αρος]
 θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ ὑπατεύ[σαντος τὸ]
 δωδέκατον ἔτους τρίτου, π[ροτέραι]
 4 νωνῶν Μαρτίων ἐν Γάνγροις ἐν [.]λ[--- ὄρ-]
 κος ὁ τελεσθ[εῖς] ὑπὸ τῶ[ν] κατωικ[ούντων Πα-]
 φλαγονία[ν καὶ τῶν πραγ]ματευο[μένων πα-]
 ρ' αὐτοῖς Ῥ[ωμαίων].
 8 Ὅμνύω {ι} Δία Γῆν Ἥλιον θεοὺς πάντα[ς καὶ πά-]
 σας καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν Σεβασ[τ]ὸν εὐνοή[σειν Καί-]
 σαρι Σεβαστῶι καὶ τοῖς ἑτέροις ἐγγό[νοις τε]
 αὐτοῦ πάντα τὸν τοῦ [---] χρόνον κ[αὶ λό-]
 12 γωι [κ]αὶ ἔργωι καὶ γνώμη[ι, φί]λους ἡγού[μενος]
 οὓς ἂν ἐκεῖνοι ἡγῶνται ἐκχθρούς τε νο[μίζων]
 οὓς ἂν αὐτοῖς κρίνωσιν· ὑπέρ τε τῶν το[ύτοις]
 διαφερόντων μήτε σώματος φείσεσ[θαι μή-]
 16 τε ψυχῆς μήτε βίου μήτε τέκνων, ἀλλὰ παν-]
 τὶ τρόπῳ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκείνοις ἀνηκόν[των]
 πάντα κίνδυνον ὑπομνεῖν· ὅ τί τε ἄ[ν] αἴσ-]
 θωμαὶ ἢ ἀκούσω ὑπεναντίον τούτ[οις λε-]
 20 γόμενον ἢ βουλευόμενον ἢ πρᾶσσό[μενον],
 τοῦτο ἐγμηνύσειν τε καὶ ἐχθρὸν ἔσ[εσθαι τῶι]
 λέγοντι ἢ βουλευομένοι ἢ πρᾶσσο[ντι τού-]

⁸ Cumont 1901, 27; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 75.

⁹ It is hard to say when this happened. The additional damage is clearly visible on a photograph of the stone taken by Eckart Olshausen (University of Stuttgart) in the 1980s when the stone was on display in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul. When examining the stone, this author was allowed to see the inventory card on the stone. This includes a photograph, the date of which is uncertain, which shows this additional damage. Assuming that this photograph was taken at the time of the stone's entry into the museum's collection, we may conclude that the stone suffered the additional damage during transport from Vezirköprü to Istanbul.

¹⁰ Letters and words visible at the time of Cumont's discovery but no longer visible have been underlined, cf. McLean, Introduction 35.

- των· οὐς τε ἂν ἐκχθροὺς αὐτοὶ κρίν[ωσιν, τού-]
 24 τους κατὰ γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν ὄπλο[ις τε]
 καὶ σιδήρωι διώξειν καὶ ἀμυνεῖσθ[αι].
 Ἐὰν δέ τι ὑπεναντίον τούτῳι τ[ῶι ὄρκωι]
 ποιήσω ἢ μὴ στοιχούντως καθώ[ς ὄμο-]
 28 σα, ἐπαρῶμαι αὐτός τε κατ' ἐμοῦ καὶ σ[ώμα-]
 τος τοῦ ἔμα<υ>τοῦ καὶ ψυχῆς καὶ βίου κα[ὶ τέ-]
 κνων καὶ παντὸς τοῦ ἔμαυτοῦ γέν[ους]
 καὶ συμφέροντος ἐξώλειαν καὶ παν[ώλει-]
 32 αν μέχρι πάσης διαδοχῆς τῆς ἐ[μῆς καὶ]
 τῶν ἐξ ἐμοῦ πάντων, καὶ μήτε σ[ώματα τὰ]
 τῶν ἐμῶν ἢ ἐξ ἐμοῦ μήτε γῆ μ[ήτε θάλασ-]
 σα δέξαιτο μηδὲ καρποὺς ἐνέγ[κοι αὐτοῖς].
 36 Κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὄμοσαν καὶ οἱ ἐγ[γῆσι χώραι]
 πάντες ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὰ CYI [--- Σε-]
 βαστήοις παρὰ τοῖς βωμοῖ[ς τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ].
 Ὅμοίως τε Φαζιμωνεῖται οἱ [τὴν καὶ Νεάπο-]
 40 λιν λεγομένην κατοικοῦντ[ες ὄμοσαν σύμ-]
 παντες ἐν Σεβαστήωι παρὰ τῶ[ι βωμῶι τοῦ]
 Σεβαστοῦ.

«When the emperor Caesar Augustus, son of the god [Julius Caesar] had been consul for the twelfth time, in the third year, March 6, in Gangra in ..., the oath was taken by those who dwell in Paphlagonia and by the Romans who pursue their business among them.

“I swear by Zeus, the Earth, the Sun, all the gods and goddesses and by Augustus himself that I will be favourable towards Caesar Augustus and his children and descendants all the time of ... in word, deed and intention. I will reckon as friends those whom they might reckon as friends and regard as enemies those that they might judge to be enemies. And in defence of their interests I will spare neither body, nor soul, nor life, nor children but take any risk, whatever kind it may be, for their interests. Whatever I might perceive or hear being said, planned or done against them, I will disclose, and I will be an enemy of one who says, plans or does any of this. Those that they judge to be enemies, I will pursue them with weapons and iron at land and sea, guarding myself against them.

If I should do anything against this oath or not precisely as I have sworn, I will raise for myself, my own body, soul and life, children, all of my family and my possession, destruction and utter ruin extending to all those that succeed me and all my descendants. The land and the sea shall neither receive the bodies of my children or descendants, nor shall they bear them fruit.”

All those living in the countryside swore according to the same terms at the altars of Augustus in the sanctuaries of Augustus that are in the ...

Likewise did the Phazimonitai, who dwell in what is also called Neapolis, all swear in the sanctuary of Augustus at the altar of Augustus.»

Commentary

ll. 1–2. Cumont: Ἀπὸ αὐτοκράτορος Καίσα[ρος] | θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ ὑπατεύ[σαντος τὸ]. Because of the subsequent damage to the stone, it is no longer possible to read these two lines exactly as Cumont and his draughtsman did. Alpha in αὐτοκράτορος can partially be read.

Cumont restored ὑπατεύ[οντος in 1901 and ὑπατεύ[σαντος in 1910, possibly under the influence of Dittenberger's comments.¹¹ Cumont's reading of 1910 seems preferable to that of 1901, among other things because it fits the available space better. The drawing indicates the bottom part of a circular letter after the second upsilon of ὑπατεύ.

l. 3. Cumont: π[ροτέραι]. A vertical hasta and an upper horizontal bar can clearly be seen on the stone and on the drawing. The vertical hastae of the Π are thinner than those of the Γ. Therefore this letter must be taken to be a Π. Cumont proposed either π[ροτέραι] or πρὸ μιᾶς.¹²

l. 4. The word following ἐν was left blank by Cumont in 1901. The drawing shows what appears to be a kappa followed by a triangular top of a letter. Haussoulier proposed π[α]νηγύρει, but Cumont thought this word was too long to fit within the lacuna.¹³ Dittenberger conjectured [τ]ᾶ[γορᾶ] but gave no explanation for his choice. Cumont rejected Dittenberger's restoration on the grounds that the proposed crasis was uncommon at the time of composition. Bücheler suggested [κ]ᾶ[στροις] to Cumont, and this reading was included in the text of 1910.¹⁴ Furthermore, Grégoire suggested Κ[α]ισαρήωι,¹⁵ and Munro proposed the restoration ἐν [Γ]αλατίαι.¹⁶ All these restorations, however, must be rejected. All that can be read is ^, which can be interpreted as the upper part of either a lambda or an alpha (but not a delta). The alpha carries an apex throughout almost the entire inscription. This is not the case with the lambda or the top of the letter preserved in l. 4. The lambda is cut with a flat top, and this letter is very likely to be a lambda.¹⁷

l. 5. Cumont: ὕ[π]ό. An upsilon can be read on the stone and on the drawing. The text of this line has suffered additional damage since its discovery.

l. 6. Cumont: παραγματενομι[ένων]. Only the first half of the the second mu is presently visible.

l. 7. Cumont's restoration Ῥωμαίων first and foremost rests on a phrase found in the imperial oath from Assos (AD 37): καὶ τοῖς παραγματενομένοις παρ' ἡμῖν Ῥωμαίοις.¹⁸ Though there is additional room for further words, Cumont's restoration can be accepted.

l. 8. Cumont and the draughtsman overlooked a visible but superfluous iota after ὀμνύω. Perhaps the stonecutter inserted an iota adscriptum by mistake.

Cumont: πάντα[ς]. The second alpha is not clearly visible on the stone nor on the drawing.

ll. 7–10. A large piece of the stone has flaked off, creating new lacunas.

l. 10. Cumont: τ[έκ]νοις. The tau is not clearly visible on the stone nor on the drawing.

Cumont: ἐγγό[νοις]. There is sufficient room for the plural ἐγγόνοις. The singular ἕγγονος would produce an empty space at the end of the line.

l. 11. Cumont: πάν[τ]α. The tau in πάντα is visible on the stone as well as on the drawing.

¹¹ OGI, s. 197–198.

¹² Cumont 1901, 27; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 80. Cf. also OGI 532.

¹³ Anderson et al., SP III, s. 80.

¹⁴ Anderson et al., SP III, s. 80–81.

¹⁵ Anderson et al., SP III *ibid.*

¹⁶ Letter from Munro to Cumont dated April 15, 1901. The letter is kept in the Cumont archives in the Academia Belgica in Rome, catalogue number 2590.

¹⁷ Compare the lambda and alpha of l. 6: φλαγονία[v].

¹⁸ Sterrett, *Inscriptions* 50 no. 26 = IGR 4 251 = OGI 797 = Smallwood, *Documents* 33 = IAssos 26; Cumont 1901, 27; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 82.

Cumont: [τ]όν. The tau is visible on the drawing. The omicron is, however, no longer clearly visible on the stone.

Cumont: βίου. Since a vertical hasta with an upper serif can be seen immediately in front of the chi of χρόνον, Cumont's restoration cannot be retained.

Cumont: κ[αί. The kappa is no longer clearly visible.

l. 13. Cumont: ἡῶντα[ι]. The iota is clearly visible on the drawing but only partially visible on the stone.

Cumont: ν[ομίζων. The omicron is clearly visible on the stone and partially visible on the drawing.

l. 14. Cumont: ὑπέρ. A piece of the stone has flaked off producing ὑπέρ.

Cumont: τ[ούτοις] but the first omikron is clearly visible on the stone and on the drawing.

l. 15. Cumont: μήτε σώματος. The epsilon is not clearly visible on the drawing.

l. 17. Cumont: τῶ[ν]. The two vertical hastae of the nu can be discerned. These are not visible on the drawing.

Cumont: ἀνηκό[ντων]. The first vertical hasta and the beginning of the diagonal hasta can be discerned (fig. 5). Only the vertical hasta is shown on the drawing.

l. 21. Cumont: ἔσ[εσθαι. On the drawing the beginning of a lunate letter can be discerned after the first sigma.

l. 22. Cumont: πράσσο[ντι τι τού-]. There is insufficient space for τι. Though Cumont's reconstruction is grammatically preferable, πράσσοντι needs to be constructed with τούτων and without τι.

l. 24. There is sufficient space for the reading ὄπλο[ις πάσιν] proposed by Cumont in 1901. In Dittenberger's and Dessau's editions we find the reading ὄπλο[ις τε, later printed in *Studia Pontica*. Dittenberger's reason for doubting Cumont's original proposal was: 'Sed "armis omnibus" insolite dicitur.'¹⁹ Though not stated, the preference for the much shorter τε seems due to a linguistic parallel with the oath from Arithium, cited by Dittenberger and Cumont.²⁰ This τε does, however, not seem to fill up the space after ὄπλο[ις.

l. 25. The final iota of σιδήρωι is standing unprecedentedly close to the omega.

Cumont: ἀμυνεῖσ[θαι]. A damaged circular letter is visible after sigma on the stone and on the drawing.

l. 29. Cumont: ἔμαυτοῦ. The stone clearly reads ἔμαυτοῦ. Both Cumont and the draughtsman failed to notice the missing upsilon (fig. 6).

l. 31. Cumont: παν[όλει-]. The drawing indicates that alpha and nu were already difficult to discern at the time of the discovery of the stone.

l. 34. Cumont: μ[ήτε θάλασ-]. Only a vertical hasta and the beginning of a diagonal hasta can be discerned on the stone and on the drawing.

l. 35. Cumont: ἐνέγ[κοι. The drawing shows part of nu after the second epsilon, but the stone clearly shows a vertical hasta with a horizontal bar on top.

l. 36. Cumont: οἱ ἐ[ν]. A vertical hasta can be seen on the stone but not on the drawing.

Cumont: [τῆι χώραι]. In a letter to Cumont, Munro proposes the restoration οἱ ἐ[ν Πόντωι].²¹ Neither restoration exploits the available space.

¹⁹ OGI, s. 199–200.

²⁰ CIL 2 172,8–9 (AD 37) = Dessau, ILS 190,8–9; OGI, s. 199–200; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 84.

²¹ The letter, dated April 15, 1901, is kept in the Cumont archives in the Academia Belgica in Rome, catalogue number 2590.

l. 37. A piece of the stone has flaked off resulting in additional damage to the text in this line.

Cumont: πάντες ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὰς ὕ[παρχίας? Σε-]. In the notes accompanying the publications, Cumont stated that what could be read at this point was CYI and conjectured συνέδρια. The drawing, however, indicates a vertical hasta with the initial parts of a horizontal bar on top. In the stone's present condition only the vertical hasta after upsilon can be seen. ὕ[παρχίας is a restoration proposed to Cumont by Theodore Reinach.²² There is sufficient space for either restoration, but neither seems to exploit the full length of the line (fig. 7).

l. 38. Cumont: βουοῖ[ς. The iota can neither be seen on the stone nor on the drawing.

l. 39. Cumont: οἶ. Only a vertical hasta with no visible serifs can presently be seen on the stone.

Cumont: [τὴν νῦν Νεάπο-]. Because of the size of the upsilon throughout the inscription there does not appear to be sufficient space for Cumont's restoration (fig. 8). Furthermore, νῦν is redundant. According to Strabo, the city of Neapolis was founded close to the village of Phazimon by Pompey the Great in 64 BC. There was no need to refer to it as "now named" Neapolis sixty years later.²³

There is, however, sufficient room for the word καί. Not only is this grammatically correct, it is also reminiscent of the phrase used by Ptolemy: Ἄνδραπα ἢ καὶ Νεοκλαυδιόπολις.²⁴

l. 40. Cumont: κατοικοῦν[τες. The edge of a vertical hasta with a serif turning downwards can be seen on the stone but not on the drawing.

l. 41. Cumont: τ[ῶι. The left part of an omega is visible. The omega is also shown on the drawing.

Summary

This revision of the oath from Vezirköprü is based on autopsy, photographs and squeezes of the stone taken in Istanbul. It will, however, be evident that the present author generally follows the edition of Franz Cumont. One obvious reason is that the stone was in a better condition in 1900 than today. Several pieces have flaked off, and letters clearly visible on the drawing in *Studia Pontica* can no longer be discerned. Cumont's restorations have all been checked to see whether they fit the available space on the stone, and in most cases they do.

In several cases, however, the present author has been able to improve Cumont's edition and confirm readings where Cumont had been in doubt by comparing the stone with the drawing accompanying Cumont's edition (ll. 5, 11, 13, 25, 41). In eight instances a re-examination of the inscription revealed letters that had either been placed within square brackets or were missing from the drawing (ll. 13, 14, 17; 25, 35, 36, 40). Additionally, there are a few instances where Cumont read letters that can neither be seen on the stone in its present condition, nor on the drawing (ll. 8, 10, 31, 34, 38).

The drawing, which was obviously made from a good squeeze, was found to be imperfect in some instances: In l. 8 the eye of Cumont (and the draughtsman) slipped and a letter went unnoticed (l. 8). In l. 29 Cumont and the draughtsman failed to notice a missing letter.

Not all of Cumont's restorations are valid or indeed feasible. The upper part of a letter in l. 4 (^) cannot be retained as an alpha, and the proposed restorations by Haussoulie, Grégoire, Dittenberger, Bücheler and Munro must likewise be rejected. In l. 11 Cumont's proposed [βίου] has to be rejected as well, and in l. 22 there is not sufficient space for the word τι. Finally, in l. 39 the restoration νῦν cannot be retain-

²² Cumont 1901, 29–39; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 85. ὕ[παρχίας was suggested to Cumont in a letter dated February 9, 1901. This letter is kept in the Cumont archives in the Academia Belgica in Rome, catalogue number 2539, cf. also Vitale, Eparchie 208.

²³ Strab. 12,3,38.

²⁴ Ptol. 5,4,6.

ed. Rejecting the *vōv* changes the meaning of this sentence, and the consequences of the new restoration *καί* will be further addressed in the following essays.²⁵

The identification of Neapolis with Vezirköprü

The discovery of the imperial oath allowed Cumont to identify Vezirköprü with Neapolis.²⁶ Shortly before Cumont's discovery J.G.C. Anderson had found an inscription in Vezirköprü mentioning the people of Neoklaudiopolis.²⁷ Almost 90 years later Eckart Olshausen and Gerhard Kahl found another inscription in Vezirköprü mentioning Neoklaudiopolis.²⁸ There can be no doubt that Vezirköprü is identical to Neapolis and Neoklaudiopolis. Pompey had originally founded Neapolis by the village of Phazemon in 64 BC. In 3 BC the Phazimonitai could claim that they dwell in "what is also called Neapolis." Cumont had proposed another reading: "[W]hat is now called Neapolis."²⁹ As has been shown above, there is not sufficient space for Cumont's conjecture. Furthermore, there would have been no one left in 3 BC who could remember the foundation of Neapolis by Pompey, and therefore the word 'now' is redundant.

Neapolis will most likely have changed its name to Neoklaudiopolis during the reign of Claudius, but a date in the reign of Nero cannot be completely excluded. The earliest reference to Neoklaudiopolis comes from coins dating to the reign of Trajan. The two inscriptions using the name Neoklaudiopolis are dated to 223/224³⁰ and 282/283 respectively.³¹ The only literary reference to Neoklaudiopolis comes from the geographer Ptolemy, writing in the second century, who in listing the cities of Paphlagonia makes the following remark: 'Andrapa, which is also Neoklaudiopolis.'³² Ptolemy knew Neoklaudiopolis by another name, Andrapa. Andrapa is not Greek and should perhaps be thought of as the original name of the settlement. After Ptolemy the city is only referred to as Andrapa in the literary sources.³³ The city thus changed names four times before settling for Vezirköprü.³⁴

The imperial oaths

At the time of its discovery only three other so-called imperial oaths were known, one in Greek and two in Latin.³⁵ All of these are younger than the oath from Neapolis and are dated to the reign of Caligula.³⁶

²⁵ Many thanks are due to Signe Isager and Timothy Mitford for providing valuable comments. Likewise, I am grateful to Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen for permission to use the photos of the stone taken by him in Istanbul on April 24, 2013.

²⁶ Bekker-Nielsen 2012–2013, 11–14.

²⁷ Anderson 1900, 152 no. 1 = Anderson et al., SP III 67 = IGR 3 139. Cf. Anderson, SP I 91–93.

²⁸ Kahl 1995; Kahl – Olshausen 1991 = SEG 41 1108bis = AE 1996 1413.

²⁹ [τὴν νῦν Νεάπολιν λεγομένην.

³⁰ Christol – Lorient 2001, 99.

³¹ Anderson 1900, 152; Anderson et al., SP III 87.

³² Ptol. 5,4,5: Ἄνδραπα ἢ καὶ Νεοκλαυδιόπολις. Compare the interesting comment on the imperial oath by Wilson, *Historical Geography* 187: 'In this document the citizens of Neapolis are described as Φαζιμωνεῖται οἱ [τὴν νῦν Νεάπολιν λεγομένην κατοικοῦν[τες], a slightly peculiar expression where we should expect something more on the lines of οἱ Φαζιμωνεῖται οἱ καὶ Νεαπολεῖται.'

³³ ACO 1.1.2.p.56; 1.1.2.p.6; 1.1.7.p.87; 1.1.2.p.23; 2.1.1.p.60; 2.1.2.p.7; 2.1.2.p.34; 2.1.2.p.73; 2.1.2.p.88; 2.1.2.p.134; 2.1.2.p.146; 2.2.16.p.690; 2.2.18.p.792; 2.2.18.p.826; 2.2.18.p.760; Nov. 28; Hierokl. 701.7 (Parthey); Germanus Epist. 4 (Migne 98, p.209); Konst. Porph. Them. 2.21; Notitiae CP 1.213; 2.271; 3.317; 4.227; 7.266; 9.165; 10.col.1.183; 10.col.2.183; 13.183; Bas. 6.12.1.. An exception is Stephanus of Byzantium who in his *Ethnica*, s.v. Φαμιζόν, mentions Neapolis. Stephanus clearly relies on Strabon here and does not connect Neapolis with Neoklaudiopolis or Andrapa.

³⁴ Bekker-Nielsen 2013, 203. Actually five times, since it was also known simply as Köprü for a period.

³⁵ The oath from Sestinum, CIL 11 5998a; the oath from Aritium, CIL 2 72 = Dessau, ILS 190 = Smallwood, Documents 32; the oath from Assos, Sterret, Inscriptions 50 no. 26 = IGR 4 251 = OGI 797 = Smallwood, Documents

Since then, three inscriptions have surfaced including remains of additional imperial oaths.³⁷ Of these, two are older or contemporary with the oath from Neapolis, and one dates to the beginning of the reign of Tiberius.³⁸ We have before us, then, a reasonable number of imperial oaths that can be compared with each other. Such a comparison was made by Mommsen, Cumont, Premerstein and Herrmann with a view to establishing, whether the imperial oaths were based on a Latin tradition, either that of the *sacramentum militare* or a private client oath, or on a Greek, Hellenistic tradition, that of the oaths of allegiance to Hellenistic kings. Mommsen and Premerstein opted for the Latin tradition, while Cumont maintained that the roots of the imperial oaths should be found in the Greek-speaking east.³⁹

In *Der Römische Kaisereid* Herrmann lists previous scholarship and discusses the views of Mommsen, Cumont and Premerstein in depth. Herrmann identifies four common elements in the preserved oaths: invocation of gods; promise of loyalty; sharing friends and allies; and a curse for swearing falsely.⁴⁰ The Neapolis oath includes elements from both the Latin and the Greek tradition. Rather than opting for only one origin of the imperial oaths (like Mommsen, Cumont and Premerstein), Herrmann proposes two strands in the development of the imperial oaths: a Greek/Hellenistic and a Latin. Herrmann considers the imperial oaths to be much more dynamic and varied than has usually been thought. According to Herrmann, the oath from Palaipaphos refutes any concept of a common formula when compared with the oaths from Neapolis and the decree and oath from Samos. Summing up his study, Herrmann concludes that the imperial oaths are very different, include elements from both the *sacramentum militare* and the Hellenistic oaths and represent these traditions in two very different languages.⁴¹ In the commentary accompanying the editio princeps of the oath from Conobaria, González stresses the importance of the *sacramentum militare* for the development of the oaths and distinguishes, as had been done earlier, between a Latin and a Greek tradition, each used for their respective parts of the Roman empire.⁴² Nonetheless, it has to be said that the Latin tradition is very much influenced by the Greek, especially in the oath from Aritium. Furthermore, our sources are very meagre for the Latin tradition, and it seems that one has to look to the Greek-speaking east to find predecessors.⁴³ This is definitely the

33 = IAssos 26.

³⁶ The oaths from Aritium and Assos are both dated to the year 37. The oath from Sestinum is lacking both beginning and ending, for which reason it cannot be securely dated. An attempt to date the inscription was made by Bormann in his note to CIL 11 5998a: 'Esse ex iureiurando in C. Caesarem Augustum apparet collato exemplo eius quod a. 37 iuraverunt Aritienses.' Cf. also Cumont 1901, 40; Gelzer 1918, 385; Premerstein, Vom Werden 46; Herrmann, Kaisereid 52–54; Wardle 1997, 610 n. 5; Castillo 1994, 685.

³⁷ The oath from Palaipaphos, Mitford 1960 = BCH 84, 1960, 274–5 = SEG 15 578 = AE 1962 248 = Fujii, Imperial Cult 189–190 no. 8; the oath from Samos, Herrmann 1960, 70–84 nos. 1–3; Herrmann, Kaisereid 125–26 no. 6; The oath from Conobaria, González 1988 = AE 1988 723. A very fragmentary oath from Miletus is discussed in Herrmann 1985.

³⁸ While the oath from Conobaria is dated to 6/5, the oath from Samos, which is very poorly preserved, should probably also be dated to this year. On the dating of the oath from Palaipaphos, cf. Seibert 1970, 230–31.

³⁹ Mommsen 1913, 157 = 465; Mommsen, Staatsrecht 768–69; Cumont 1900, 688; Cumont 1901, 40–45; Anderson et al., SP III, s.75–86; Premerstein, Vom Werden 27–53. Weinstock 1962, 306–27, 315–316 takes the position of Mommsen. Cf. also Le Gall 1985, 770.

⁴⁰ Herrmann, Kaisereid 17.

⁴¹ Herrmann, Kaisereid 119–121.

⁴² González 1986, 125–127.

⁴³ The Latin tradition rests almost entirely on Liv. 22,53,10 and Diod. 37,11, the last of which is written in Greek! In general, the view of Herrmann has been followed, cf. Cancik 2003; Conolly 2007, 212–213.

case with the oath from Neapolis, as has been shown by Cumont and Herrmann.⁴⁴

Although the imperial oath from Neapolis is no longer the oldest, it is by far still the longest. Furthermore, of all the oaths preserved the imperial oath from Neapolis is the only one in which the takers of the oath are required to swear by the living Augustus alongside the other gods.⁴⁵ In the oaths from the reign of Tiberius and Caligula the living emperor is not invoked among the gods.

In the oath from Neapolis we are told that the oaths were taken at the altars of Augustus in the sanctuaries of Augustus.⁴⁶ This connects the taking of the oath with the imperial cult on an unprecedented level. Though it has occasionally been proposed, there is absolutely no evidence linking the *koïna*, the assemblies responsible for the cult on the provincial level, with the taking of the oath.⁴⁷ Furthermore, no *koïna* are attested at such an early stage in the territories that had originally formed part of the Pompeian double province *Bithynia et Pontus*. It is, therefore, much more straightforward to view the taking of the oath as having been supervised by official authorities at the altars of Augustus.⁴⁸

The political status of Neapolis at the time of the taking of the oath

Herrmann convincingly shows how oaths were taken on the occasion of a change of status, eg when a city shifted its allegiance to a new ruler in the Hellenistic period.⁴⁹ The same can be said for the imperial oaths. The oaths taken to Tiberius and Caligula are taken almost immediately after the ascension of the new emperor, and in Conobarria and Samos the oaths reflect the new status of the Augustan princes.⁵⁰ It would seem, then, that imperial oaths had the purpose of securing loyalty from the subjects at critical points in time. That the inscription mentioning the oath taken in Neapolis was set up to commemorate a change of status is also very likely. The oath was taken on March 6, the anniversary of Augustus' assuming the office of pontifex maximus. The oaths go to prove how events in Rome would resound in the provinces.⁵¹ The oaths did, however, also have another, local and tangible meaning. For Neapolis the event commemorated by the oath will most likely have been a change of political status.

⁴⁴ In line 27 of the oath we find the word *στοιχούντως*, which, as has been noted by Cumont 1901, 29; Anderson et al., SP III 84, is a hapax legomenon. Perhaps this unique word is reminiscent of the Greek oath of the ephebes, who had to swear: *Οὐκ αἰσχυνῶ τὰ ἱερὰ ὄπλα, οὐδὲ λείψω τὸν παραστάτην ὅπου ἂν στοιχήσω* (Tod no. 204).

⁴⁵ In the Hellenistic period we find the *tyche* of king Seleukos II being invoked, OGI 229,60–61: *ὀμνύω Δία, Γῆν, Ἥλιον...καὶ τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως Σελεύκου τύχην*, and in Egypt one could swear by the king, Mitteis, Chr. 1,2,139: *ὄμνουμι βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον*. Similarly, Strabon says (12,3,31) that under the Mithridatic kings oaths had been sworn by the *tyche* of the king. Cf. Herrmann, *Der Kaisereid* 46–48; Herrmann 1985, 303–305.

⁴⁶ It is not possible (nor was it possible at the time of the discovery of the stone) to make any conclusions as to the end of line 37 reading: *κατὰ τὰ CYI*. Neither *συνέδρια* nor *ὑπαρχία* fit the historical or political context. Pace Jones, *Cities* 167: 'The oath was administered at Gangra, the royal capital, and at the shrines of Augustus in the several hyparchies – the last word is a restoration only, but a plausible one, from the initial letter.' Cf. Vitale, *Eparchie* 208–212, especially 212: 'In Erwartung klärender Inschriftenfunde muss die Restitution der Z.37 im Kaisereid von Gangra offen bleiben.'

⁴⁷ Concerning the *koïnon* of Bithynia Ameling writes in *IPrusias*, s. 27–28: 'Bei dieser Gelegenheit trat auch der Landtag der Provinz zusammen; der Eid auf den Kaiser wird stellvertretend vom Landtag in Nikomedeia geleistet worden sein.' Herrmann 1985, 309–310 does not imply a connection between the *koïnon* and the taking of the oath. Cf. also Fujii, *Imperial Cult* 88–90.

⁴⁸ A parallel is afforded us by Plin. *epist.* 10,52–53.

⁴⁹ Herrmann, *Kaisereid* 35–39.

⁵⁰ Herrmann 1960, 79–81; González 1986, 122.

⁵¹ Similarly Rowe, *Princes* 136: '[O]aths were local responses to events in the center, namely, dynastic changes; and that though offered by local elites, they were imposed on local masses and in that sense involved the remaking of local politics on the basis of empire.'

According to Strabon, the city had been founded by the village of Phazimon in 64 BC by Pompey the Great as part of the new giant province Bithynia et Pontus.⁵² When Marcus Antonius reorganised the east, inland Pontos was detached from the Pompeian double province and assigned to dynasts,⁵³ and Neapolis was given to the Paphlagonian kings, who had their residence in Gangra.⁵⁴ When the last of these, Deiotaros Philadelphos, died in 6 BC, a portion of his kingdom was reintegrated into the Roman empire, only now to form part of the newly created province Galatia.⁵⁵ The oath has a tripartite division between the Paphlagonians (and the resident Roman merchants) in Gangra, the Paphlagonians in the countryside and all those living in Neapolis. According to Cumont, the oath securely identifies Neapolis as part of Paphlagonia and thereby also of the province of Galatia.⁵⁶ Cumont's interpretation has been widely accepted,⁵⁷ but it runs counter to Strabon's own description. Strabon, it should be remembered, describes landscapes rather than provinces but often adds a remark about the provincial status of an area. On more than one occasion Strabon describes the river Halys as the border between Paphlagonia and Pontos.⁵⁸ More than a century later, the Alexandrian geographer Ptolemy clearly assigns Neoklaudiopolis, the successor to Neapolis, to the landscape of Paphlagonia, thereby seemingly corroborating the theory of Cumont.⁵⁹ When examining the political status of Neapolis at the time of the taking of the oath, Strabon must take precedence over Ptolemy. Not only is Strabon contemporary with the events, he is also a native of Pontos and knew the area personally. The inscription from Neapolis seems to corroborate Strabon, for according to it the oath was not only taken by the Paphlagonians of Gangra but also by all those who dwell in the countryside. If Neapolis were really part of Paphlagonia, there would be no reason to single it out in the inscription, as is the case.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Cumont's interpretation is not the only one available. The Paphlagonians in the countryside are said to have taken the oath *κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ*, and the inhabitants of Neapolis swore *ὁμοίως*. This phrase need not imply a geographical equation between the areas on the eastern and the western side of the Halys, which would seem, anyway, to be at variance with Strabon.⁶¹ We need to look for another solution.

If Neapolis did not form part of the eparchy of Paphlagonia in the province of Galatia in 3 BC, which political unit did it, then, form part of?⁶² For a possible answer to this question we have to look east of the river Halys. Inland Pontos as far as Armenia Minor consisted of several cities, some of them going back to Pompey the Great: Amaseia, Megalopolis-Sebasteia, Eupatoria-Magnopolis, Komana Pontike, Kabeira-Diospolis-Sebaste (Neokaisareia), Zela and Karana-Sebastopolis. According to Strabon, Karana-Sebastopolis and Amaseia had earlier been assigned to dynasts but now formed part of a Roman province, necessarily Galatia.⁶³ Komana Pontike became part of Galatia in 34/35,⁶⁴ but Megalopolis-

⁵² Strab. 12,3,38.

⁵³ Strab. 12,3,1.

⁵⁴ Cass. Dio 38,5; Strab. 12,3,9.

⁵⁵ Strab. 12,3,41.

⁵⁶ Cumont 1901, 33; Anderson et al., SP III, s. 84–85.

⁵⁷ Anderson, SP I 96; Rémy, *Évolution* 27; Marek, *Stadt* 11; Mitchell, *Anatolia* 93; Vitale, *Eparchie* 205–221.

⁵⁸ Strab. 12,3,2; 12,3,9.

⁵⁹ Ptol. 5,4,5.

⁶⁰ Vitale, *Eparchie* 207: 'Aber wenn sich die Paphlagonen bereits in Gangra vereidigt hatten, weshalb sollte derselbe Kultakt auch in weiteren Teilen der Eparchie vollzogen werden?'

⁶¹ A very fine discussion of this is found in Bekker-Nielsen 2014, 69–70.

⁶² A similar attempt at excluding Neapolis from Paphlagonia, but with a different conclusion can be found in Bekker-Nielsen 2014.

⁶³ Strab. 12,3,37; 12,3,39.

⁶⁴ Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 128–129.

Sebasteia, Kabeira-Diospolis-Sebaste (Neokaisareia), Zela and perhaps Eupatoria-Magnopolis formed part of a Pontic kingdom of queen Pythodoris.⁶⁵ Pythodoris had been married to king Polemon, a client king favourable to Rome, who had fought alongside Roman generals on several occasions.⁶⁶ His client kingdom had been substantial and comprised the coastal cities of Trapezus, Kerasous and Polemonion. One part of Pythodoris' realm comprised the large and fertile valley of Phanaroia.⁶⁷ On the east and the north-east, Phanaroia is bounded by the Paryadres and on the west by the mountains Lithros and Ophlimos. North of Phanaroia lies Themiskyra and the plain of Sidene, both belonging to the territory of Amisos, and therefore part of the double province Bithynia et Pontus.⁶⁸ Adjacent to Lithros and Ophlimos are Lake Stiphane, Laodikeia and the fortress Ikizari, all part of Neapolitis, ie the territory of Neapolis.⁶⁹ When describing Neapolitis Strabon concludes by saying: 'Thus did he [Pompey the Great] organise Phazemonitis, but later rulers also distributed this area to kings.'⁷⁰ Neapolis had, so Strabon, undergone the same process as Zela and Megalopolis, that is being assigned to dynasts after a period of attachment to Bithynia et Pontus. For Neapolis, the kings referred to are the Paphlagonian kings, and their dynasty had recently died out. When speaking of Paphlagonia Strabon says that the former kingdom was incorporated into the Roman empire.⁷¹ Strabon does, however, not say the same about Neapolitis, and we are left in the dark as to its status after the demise of Deiotaros Philadelphos. Two arguments are usually adduced in favour of Neapolitis' continued association with Paphlagonia: the same civic era commencing in 6 BC, the year when Deiotaros Philadelphos is assumed to have died and a passage in Strabon seemingly implying the unity of Paphlagonia and Neapolitis.

The civic era will be dealt with in the following section, but Strabon's passage should be quoted. When describing the borders of Paphlagonia, Strabon says: 'Mithridates Eupator held the coastline as far as Herakleia as well as the nearest part [or parts] of the interior, a part of which he made extend across the Halys. And to this point has the Pontic province been drawn by the Romans.'⁷² Strabon implies that a part of Mithridates' kingdom extended east of the Halys, but he does not imply that this includes Neapolitis.⁷³ Furthermore, Strabon is describing events in the past by using the past tense. With regards to the so-called Pontic province, it is hard to know if Strabon is thinking of the original Pompeian double province, since this province included all of the Pompeian cities east of the Halys as well as the interior parts of Paphlagonia. If Strabon were describing the eparchy of Paphlagonia, which was part of Galatia, it is strange that he calls it the 'Pontic province.' Furthermore, Strabon also speaks of Herakleia as a boundary. Herakleia was only the western boundary of the landscape of Paphlagonia, and it never formed part of the province of Galatia.⁷⁴ One final argument may be adduced against the consensus of assigning Neapolis to Paphlagonia after 6 BC. In a study of the Pontic and Bithynian areas Christian Marek has provided a table indicating in which years the various cities minted coins. Although Marek assigns Neapolis/Neoklaudiopolis to Paphlagonia, it is evident from the table that the city began minting

⁶⁵ Strab. 12,3,29–31; 12,3,37.

⁶⁶ Cass. Dio 49,25; 53,25; 54,24.

⁶⁷ Strab. 12,3,30; 12,3,37; 2,1,15. Herrmann 1938, 1759; Wilson, Historical Geography 234–235; Olshausen 2014, 44.

⁶⁸ Strab. 12,3,30; 12,3,37; 12,3,16.

⁶⁹ Strab. 12,3,38.

⁷⁰ Strab. 12,3,38: ἐκεῖνος μὲν οὖν οὕτω διέταξε τὴν Φαζημωνίτιν, οἱ δ' ὕστερον βασιλεῦσι καὶ ταύτην ἔνειμαν.

⁷¹ Strab. 12,3,41.

⁷² Strab. 12,3,9: τὴν μὲν παραλίαν ἕως τῆς Ἡρακλείας εἶχεν ὁ Εὐπάτωρ, τῆς δὲ μεσογαίας τὴν μὲν ἐγγυτάτω ἔσχεν, ἧς τινα καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἄλλος διέτεινε (καὶ μέχρι δέδρου τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ἢ Ποντικῇ ἐπαρχίᾳ ἀφόρισται).

⁷³ Bekker-Nielsen 2014, 65.

⁷⁴ Strab. 12,3,2.

coins at an earlier date than the Paphlagonian cities, and this date perfectly matches that of the cities Zela, Neokaisareia, Sebasteia and Trapezus, all cities that had formed part of Polemon's kingdom.⁷⁵

Having surveyed the various options it seems most likely that Neapolitis formed part of the kingdom of Pythodoris. As mentioned, Neapolitis borders on Phanaroia, a part of Pythodoris' kingdom, and is now here by Strabon said to form part of a Roman province.⁷⁶ Whereas the taking of the oath for the Paphlagonian cities marked the incorporation into the province of Galatia, it marked the entry of Neapolis into the realm of Pythodoris, trusted ally of the Romans. The Paphlagonian kings who reigned until 6 BC do not play any major role in the sources, we have preserved. Two references in Dion Cassius,⁷⁷ one in Strabon,⁷⁸ one in Plutarch⁷⁹ and a few coins are all that we have to go by.⁸⁰ Dion Cassius and Plutarch tell us that Deiotaros Philadelphos, like all other dynasts in the east, was an ally of Marcus Antonius, but he changed sides shortly before the battle of Actium. Being transferred to the realm of Pythodoris meant being part of a much more politically active client kingdom than had been the case under the Paphlagonian kings. Such a change of status would require an oath to secure continued loyalty to the Roman emperor. That oaths of allegiance to the emperor were indeed taken by the populations of client kingdoms is attested by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus who tells us that Herod the Great, ruler of a client kingdom, required his subjects to swear allegiance to Augustus and himself.⁸¹ Similarly, Strabon tells us that oaths were taken in the kingdom of Pythodoris.⁸²

Even though the territories belonging to Deiotaros Philadelphos changed status in 6 BC, the oath was not taken until 3 BC. Without knowing, we can only guess that there will have been a transition period of three years, at the end of which the oath was taken.⁸³

The civic era of Neapolis-Neoklaudiopolis

Asia Minor is remarkable for the many different eras in use there in antiquity. The Pontic cities that were dismantled from the Pompeian double province Bithynia et Pontus are no exception. From coins and inscriptions we have knowledge of no less than four different eras. The Paphlagonian cities as well as Neapolis shared a common era beginning in 6/5 BC.⁸⁴ The oath from Neapolis is dated 'in the third year.' By the local era this gives us March 6, 3 BC. The Pontic cities did not explicitly state when they were using a local era,⁸⁵ and the oath from Neapolis could also be dated by the year of Augustus' assuming the twelfth consulship. Either date gives us the same result. It is, therefore, impossible for us to know whether the oath refers to an imperial or a local era. Apart from the oath from Neapolis, the

⁷⁵ Marek, *Pontus et Bithynia* 161.

⁷⁶ Similarly, Anderson 1923, 6–7.

⁷⁷ Cass. Dio 38,33,5; 50,13,5–8.

⁷⁸ Strab. 12,3,1; 12,3,41.

⁷⁹ Plut. Ant. 61.

⁸⁰ Waddington et al., *Recueil* 164* nos. 5–6; Burnett et al., *RPC* 537 nos. 3508–3509; Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 175–177.

⁸¹ Ios. Ant. Iud. 17,42.

⁸² Strab. 12,3,37.

⁸³ A similar transition period is found for the confirmation of Tiridates in his rule, cf. Tac. ann. 15,29; 16,23; Cass. Dio 62,23; 63,1.

⁸⁴ Ramsay 1893, 251–252; Anderson 1900, 152; Cumont 1901, 38–39; Anderson, *SP* I 94–95; Dessau 1906, 336–339; Ruge 1949, 2526–2529; Marek, *Stadt* 71–72; Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 170–175.

⁸⁵ The only exception to this is an inscription set up by Neokaisareia in the temple of Apollon in Klaros in Ionia, cf. Macridy 1905, 163 no. 2. Here the inscription explicitly says 'in the year 68 of the eparchy' (τοῦ ξθ' ἔ[τ]ο[υ]ς τῆς ἐπαρχείας). The reason for singling out the local era is of course to avoid confusion when using the era abroad. Cf. Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 138–139.

earliest reference to this era comes from a coin from the year 101/102.⁸⁶ Almost a century separates these two dates. Furthermore, we have no other inscriptions from either Neapolis or Paphlagonia that can be dated to the same period as the oath. The earliest inscription is an ephebic list from Pompeiopolis dated to 97–102.⁸⁷ The so-called epigraphic habit did not, it would seem, commence here before the turn of the second century. We know from an inscription from Gangra that the Macedonian months were used.⁸⁸ That the oath from Neapolis is dated according to the Julio-Claudian calendar seems to indicate that the reference to the year three is to the twelfth consulship of Augustus.⁸⁹

The local eras of Paphlagonia and Neapolis did not, however, take the twelfth consulship of Augustus (5 BC) as their starting point. We know from Neokaisareia, Sebasteia, Zela, Trapezus and Kerasous that these cities inaugurated their common era in AD 64, when they were incorporated in the Roman empire on the death of the last ruler of the kingdom of Polemon.⁹⁰ By analogy with these cities, it seems the eras of Paphlagonia and Neapolis commemorated the political change of 6 BC. Although this is already *opinio communis*, Marek and Leschhorn disagree whether the eras should be seen as a liberation eras⁹¹ or eras commemorating the integration into the Roman empire.⁹² Why would Neapolis establish an era celebrating that the yoke of the Paphlagonian kings had been lifted of its shoulders, when it was immediately transferred to another kingdom and not incorporated into the province of Galatia? This question, of course, only makes sense if we accept the notion of these eras as commemorating a liberation. Still, there might be a difference between one despotic ruler and another. Going back to Strabon, the historian from Amaseia does not, as has already been mentioned, have much to say about the Paphlagonian kings, but he delivers an encomium of Pythodoris, the contemporary ruler of Polemon's Pontic kingdom, praising her as a wise and good monarch.⁹³ Admittedly, Strabon might have something at stake which prompted him to describe Pythodoris in such a positive manner, but then again we do not know if Strabon ever returned to Pontos after he left for Rome.

Nonetheless, the fact that Neapolis shared its era with the cities of Paphlagonia does not preclude its inclusion in Pythodoris' kingdom. The civic eras were not provincial eras,⁹⁴ and several eras could be found within one province.⁹⁵ When cities were transferred from one province to another, they did not commence a new era. Thus, Amaseia and Sebastopolis kept their era of 3/2 BC and Komana Pontike its era of AD 34/35 even after they had been transferred from Galatia to Cappadocia sometime in the second century, and as late as the year 546/7, after centuries of political changes, Trapezus was still using its era of AD 64.⁹⁶

⁸⁶ Dalaison – Delrieux 2015, no. 1.

⁸⁷ Marek, *Stadt* 135 no. 1.

⁸⁸ Kaygusuz 1982, 177–180 = SEG 32 1260.

⁸⁹ Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 172. Cf. also Cancik 2003, 33; Munk Højte 2006, 22; Connolly 2007, 209.

⁹⁰ Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 130–143.

⁹¹ Marek, *Stadt* 26–27; 71–73; 127.

⁹² Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 129; 174; Munk Højte 2006, 21–22.

⁹³ Strab. 12,3,29.

⁹⁴ Differently, Leschhorn, *Antike Ären* 138–139.

⁹⁵ The eastern part of the province of Bithynia et Pontus included at least two different eras: 71/70 BC (Amastris, Abonouteichos and Sinope) and 32/31 BC (Amisos). The province of Galatia included three: 3/2 BC (Amaseia and Sebastopolis), AD 34/35 (Komana Pontike) and 6/5 BC (Gangra, Hadrianopolis and Pompeiopolis). The province of Cappadocia included at least two: AD 64 (Neokaisareia, Sebasteia, Zela, Trapezus and Kerasous) and 71/72 (Nikopolis).

⁹⁶ CIG 8636.

Conclusion

It now seems necessary to view the oath from Neapolis as a document illustrating the politically critical situation of Neapolis and the Paphlagonian cities in the aftermath of the demise of Deiotaros Philadelphos. The solution was to incorporate the cities west of the Halys into the newly created province of Galatia, and to let Neapolis east of the river form part of the reliable and loyal kingdom ruled by Pythodoris. For both purposes an immediate assurance of complete loyalty to the emperor Augustus and the royal house was needed, and this was brought about by taking an imperial oath, the wording of which was similar on both sides of the river Halys.

Abbreviated Literature

- Anderson 1900 J. G. C. Anderson, *Pontica*, JHS 20, 1900, 151–158.
- Anderson, SP I J. G. C. Anderson, *Studia Pontica I. A journey of exploration in Pontus*, Bruxelles 1903.
- Anderson et al., SP III J. G. C. Anderson – F. Cumont – H. Grégoire, *Studia Pontica III: Recueil des inscriptions Grecques et Latines du Pont et de l'Arménie*, Bruxelles 1910.
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Özet

Vezirköprü İmparator Yemini'nin Tekrar Gözden Geçirilmesi

İmparator Yemini içeren az sayıda epigrafik belge arasında Augustus Dönemi'nde kaleme alınan Vezirköprü yazıtı en bilinenidir. Burası Pompeius tarafından kurulan ve yazıtta adı geçen Neapolis ile özdeşdir. Bu Paphlagonia kenti sonra Neoklaudiopolis adını almıştır.

İ.Ö. 3 yılına ait imparator yemini 1900 yılında Franz Cumont tarafından bulunmuş olup deşifreyonu için şimdiye kadar onun okuması temel alınmaktaydı. Yazar İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzesi'nde korunan yazıtı tekrar gözden geçirerek bazı düzeltmeler ve yeni yorumlar sunmaktadır. Ayrıca yazıtın günümüzdeki durumu hakkında geniş bilgi verilmektedir.

İnceleme sonucunda Cumont'un okumalarının büyük oranda doğru olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca Cumont'un bazı okumaları düzeltilmiş ve özellikle satır 5, 11, 13, 25, 41'de yeni okumalar sunulmuştur. Cumont'un bazı önerileri ise ya taşta yeterince yer olmadığı veya harflerin yanlış okunmuş olmaları nedeniyle reddedilmiştir (satır 4, 22, 39). Yazıt taşıyıcı üzerinde yapılan inceleme sonucu ayrıca Cumont tarafından verilen taş ölçülerinin de yanlış olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Makalede ayrıca yazıtın içerdiği edebi, coğrafik ve tarihi bilgiler hakkında yeni yorumlar yapılmaktadır. Buna göre söz konusu imparator yemininin kentin siyasi statüsünde değişiklikler yapıldığında yürürlüğe girdiği düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: İmparator Yemini; Augustus; Neapolis; Vezirköprü; Neoklaudiopolis; Andrapa; Pythodorus; Otopsi; Düzeltmeler.

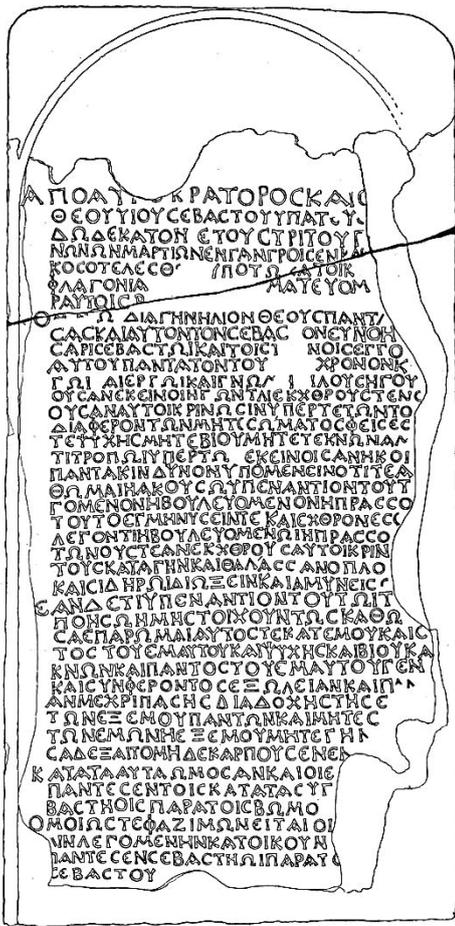


Fig. 1: The drawing accompanying Cumont's edition (1910)



Fig. 2: A view of the entire stone

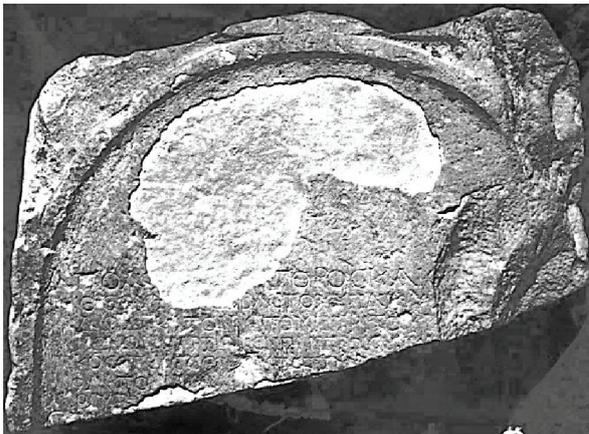


Fig. 3: The upper part of the stone



Fig. 4: The lower part of the stone



Fig. 5: Line 17 of the inscription



Fig. 7: Line 37

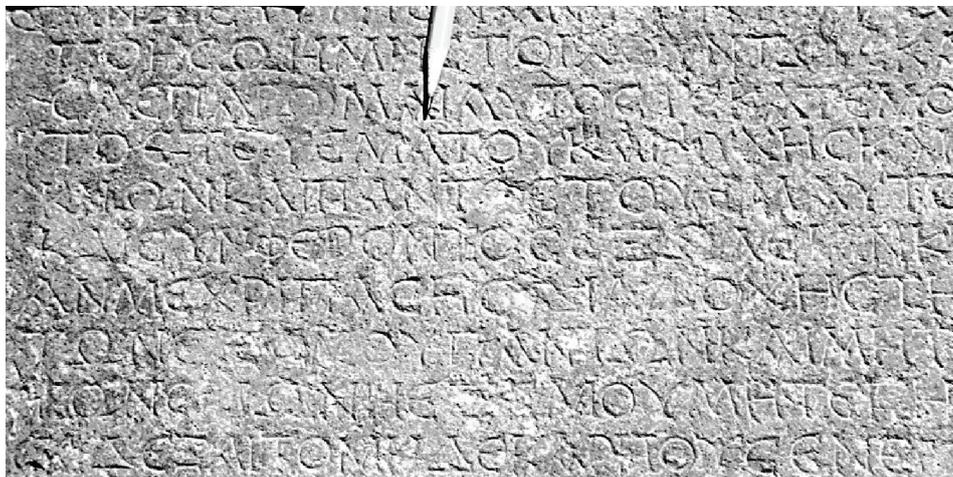


Fig. 6: Line 29

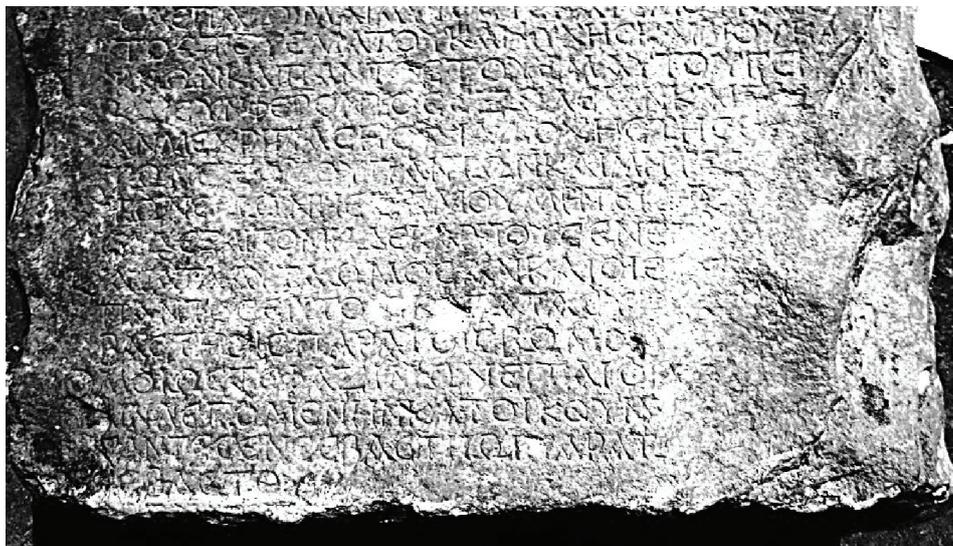


Fig. 8: Bottom part of the stone