

Decadrachms at Kos

Number 441 of the *IG* for Kos comprises a white marble slab listing the names of contributors and their monetary donations in acrophonic numerals.¹ Although heavily abraded and damaged by a hole that was bored through its bottom half at some point in its later history, up to 40 individuals can be made out. Of these, one is attested elsewhere – a Neon son of Naukles (l. 3), known as a judge in the mid- to late 3rd century.² This may also be true for Aristokrates son of Mnaseas (ll. 19-20), if identical with a contributor to another subscription from the period of the Cretan war of 202-201.³ There was at least one foreigner, a certain Theodotos son of Dio[---] from Salamis (l. 6: Σαλαμίνιος).⁴ For the rest, however, no further indications of personality, beyond mere names and patronyms, can be traced.⁵ The text nonetheless contains a number of noteworthy features. One contributor was a woman acting of her own accord (l. 17, Kleno daughter of Archippos), while several contributions were made alongside wives or other individuals (ll. 4-5, 18-19, 23-24). The palaeography also reveals the existence of four letter-cutter hands (ll. 1-10, 11-17, 17-27, 28-30). This makes it difficult to tell if the contributions recorded were for a single event, or several, although the space at the end of the stone does indicate that the recording was in any case completed at some point. The monetary amounts, moreover, vary considerably, with amounts of 5, 10, 11, 20, 30, 50, 51, 62 and 100 drachmas listed, and in no particular order of magnitude. The nature and scope of these donations remain unknown. Bosnakis and Hallof, following Segre, ascribed the document to the 2nd century, although the one prosopographical connection with Neon son of Naukles would hint at the possibility of an earlier date.

Inscrutable as this list may be, further interest is offered in lines 19-22:

Ἀριστοκράτης | Μνασέου Ε ---c. 5--- ΣΕΛΕΙΑΝ ΠΤ, Φιλοκράτης | Καλλισθένο[υς---c. 4---],
Ζωπυρίων καὶ Ἡράκλειτος | Ὀνάτορος [---c. 10-11---] δεκαδραχμῶν Η.

Aristokrates son of Mnaseas, [---] 51 drachmas. Philokrates son of Kallisthenes, [---]. Zopyrion and Herakleitos, sons of Onator, [---] of 100 decadrachms (?).

* All dates are BCE unless otherwise indicated. I would like to thank Klaus Hallof for sharing photographs of the inscription, and Andrew Meadows, Charles Crowther, Selene Psoma, Julien Olivier, Simona Stoyanova, Finn Conway and Oliver Clarke for the valuable discussions and suggestions that led to this article; Georg Petzl provided very useful and helpful feedback for bringing it to completion. The work carried out here was funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme (Grant agreement No. 865680). All errors are mine alone.

¹ *IG* XII.4 441 = *I.Cos Segre* ED 199. Migeotte (1998a) 104 had promised a study of this inscription, but this was later abandoned: (1998b) 576 n. 48.

² *IG* XII.4 136 (dated to the first half of the 3rd century) l. 22. Hamon's edition of the inscription in *I.Thasos* 18, following Crowther (2004) 27, suggests instead a date in the second half of the 3rd century.

³ *IG* XII.4 75 ll. 65-66, for an [---κ]ράτης Μνασέα, which uses the Doric form of the patronym instead of Μνασέου in our list.

⁴ This is certainly not enough to suggest, as Segre had done in *I.Cos Segre* ED 199 p. 134, that this was a list of foreign contributors.

⁵ Two other possible cases of prosopographical links are more tenuous: 1) Zopyrion and Herakleitos, the sons of Onator (ll. 21-22), may be ancestors of the Zopyrion son of Herakleitos attested in a dedication to Hestia Phamia and the deme of the Isthmiotai of the 2nd to 1st centuries (*IG* XII.4 604); 2) Antigenes son of Philion (l. 14), may be the same as the Milesian victor Antigenes son of Philion in *IG* XII.4 454 ll. 120, 128-129 (perhaps early 2nd century), although it would be strange that his ethnic was not given in the list, unlike Theodotos of Salamis; there is also a funerary inscription for a Halikarnassian named Antigenes son of Philon (*IG* XII.4 1614).

I seek to discuss two issues. The first is the reading of line 20, whose revised reading by Bosnakis and Hallof is an improvement on that of Segre, but may still be refined and further clarified. The second and more involved, which occupies the following four sections, is the interpretation of the penultimate word, δεκαδραχμῶν. This would appear to refer to decadrachm coins, a point that Bosnakis and Hallof merely alluded to without further elaboration ('nota tamen δεκαδραχμῶν mentio (v. 22)'). It will be suggested, through a detailed consideration of its grammatical form and meaning, that this indeed is the correct understanding of the term, and should be brought into connection with a real decadrachm coinage. These considerations stand to add something to our knowledge of Koan monetary history, and Kos' interactions with the Ptolemaic empire.

1. Immunity for Aristokrates son of Mnaseas

Line 20 is the first seriously affected by the circular hole in the stele's bottom half. Segre had rather adventurously restored Εὐμένους Η <H>λειῶν Δ Φαλοκράτης after Μνασέου, thereby implying that Aristokrates son of Mnaseas had donated a hundred drachmas in the currency of the Attalid king Eumenes II, and ten drachmas in the currency of Elis. This would have raised considerable interest from the standpoint of monetary history, and seems to furnish the main basis for the dating of the document to the 2nd century, as neither Segre nor Bosnakis and Hallof made explicit their reasons for doing so. Unfortunately, this restoration of line 20 simply cannot do. Unless further damage had intervened between Segre's examination of the stone and the reading made by Bosnakis and Hallof, it is clear from a photo that the only certain letter after the patronym Μνασέου is an epsilon, followed by space for up to five letters in the lacuna, and then the sequence ΣΕΛΕΙΑΝ. Bosnakis and Hallof suggest that this may have comprised a prepositional phrase indicating an ethnic, ἐκ...σελειῶν. The letter after the epsilon is very worn, however, and cannot be read with any confidence. The first epsilon after the lacuna is fairly secure, but the letter preceding it, read by Bosnakis and Hallof as a sigma, is not certain.⁶ There are traces of an upper horizontal bar, but nothing beneath it, and one wonders if one should instead see here a tau.⁷ The word may thus be read as [ᾶ]τέλειαν, and the lacuna perhaps ε[ίς τὴν ᾶ]τέλειαν.

That is, Aristokrates would have made his contribution towards acquiring immunity from further contribution, which may have resulted in negotiation with the community that was receiving the subscription, and may explain why he donated the unusually precise sum of 51 drachmas. The small amount may imply that this community was a sub-civic association of some kind, rather than an institution of the Koan *polis* as a whole. At Rhodes, for instance, associations could grant immunity from contributions to their members.⁸ We might also consider a decree of the deme of the Plotheis in Attika, of perhaps the late 5th century, which lists the various funds it managed, among which was one '[ἐ]ς τὴν ἀτέλειαν'.⁹ After outlining instructions for the loaning out of these funds at interest, the decree enacts that the officials in charge of the fund ἐς τὴν ἀτέλειαν were to use it to cover the personal contributions that dememembers were usually expected to make towards specifically named rites, those which the

⁶ Traces of the upper, middle and lower bars of the epsilon can be seen in the photo.

⁷ There may be remnants of the lower horizontal bar of a sigma, although this may also simply be damage on the stone; this would form in any case a narrower sigma than one might expect from the other sigmas on the same line, which show a wider space between upper and lower bars.

⁸ E.g. Maiuri, *Rodi e Cos* 46B l. 10 (Haliastai, 2nd century); *IG* XII.1 155 ll. 45, 80, 114 (Haliastai and Haliadai, c. 159); *SEG* 41.662II l. 5 (Dionysiastai, 1st century).

⁹ *IG* II² 1172 (= Osborne - Rhodes, *GHI* 159) l. 7.

Plotheis conducted on behalf of themselves, the Epakreis, or the Athenians.¹⁰ This would then have been an ‘immunity-fund’ that replaced personal contributions, although why this had to be specified, rather than simply being incorporated into the communal funds mentioned earlier in the decree, which were already meant to defray the costs of other sorts of rites,¹¹ is unclear. This may have been an exceptional measure. If so, it would imply that the Plotheis’ fund ἐξ τὴν ἀτέλειαν ordinarily had different purposes, perhaps representing the accumulated contributions of one-off payments by individuals who would then be immune from making ongoing contributions, or at least for a period of time.¹² This may be the sort of payment Aristokrates son of Mnaseas was making at Kos, and which he chose to designate as such when he offered it to the association he was contributing to.

2. The donation of Zopyrion and Herakleitos: Δεκαδραχμῶν, not δέκα δραχμῶν

Bosnakis and Hallof read the letters after the lacuna in line 22 as a single word (δεκαδραχμῶν) followed by the numeral Η for ἑκατόν, which seems straightforward enough. This was an emendation, however, of Segre’s text, which had separated the first word into two, even if Segre himself was not totally averse to reading a single word on the basis of his restoration of line 20.¹³ Bosnakis and Hallof’s reading is, in my view, the correct one, but to arrive at this judgement we need to briefly explain why Segre’s division into two words is problematic and unlikely.

At a basic syntactical level, the transcription δέκα δραχμῶν Η would most logically indicate 100 units of something qualified by the phrase δέκα δραχμῶν, δραχμῶν being a Doric genitive plural.¹⁴ Doric spellings occur across the inscription, as with much Koan epigraphy, so this would be a reasonable interpretation of δραχμῶν.¹⁵ This would then suggest that δραχμῶν was a genitive of quality, maybe governed ultimately by a preposition like ἀπό.¹⁶ The phrase ἀπὸ δραχμῶν is of course common in official decrees that qualify the monetary value of honorific crowns and other precious metal objects. In most cases the numerical figure follows δραχμῶν, although there are also cases where it precedes it.¹⁷ Moreover, objects other

¹⁰ *IG* II² 1172 ll. 28-33, Osborne - Rhodes, *GHI*, p. 355.

¹¹ *IG* II² 1172 ll. 22-28, for the Plotheis’ common rites, for the Athenians on behalf of the Plotheis, and for quadrennial festivals.

¹² *IG* II² 1172 ll. 28-33.

¹³ Segre in *I.Cos Segre* ED 199 p. 135: ‘...così credo che a v.23 [l. 22] si debba intendere che il pagamento sia stato fatto in decadracme’.

¹⁴ Accepting Segre’s transcription, it is theoretically possible that δραχμῶν Η went together, and that δέκα formed the end of another phrase (e.g. a propositional αἰ δέ κά) or word (numerals from 11 to 19), but it is hard to see how these options would make sense.

¹⁵ Note the Doric in lines 3 (Ναυκλεῦς, Ἀσκληπιάδας), 5 (Περίλα), 8 (Ἀρισταγόρα), 11 (Σωκλεῦς) and 22 (Ὀνάτορος); *koine* spellings are however also found where Doric ones might have been possible, at lines 4 (Πολυκλεῦς for Πολυκλέους), 15 (Ἡρίλου for Ἡρίλα), 17 (Ὀνησαγόρου for Ὀνασαγόρα), and 20 (Μνασέου for Μνασέα).

¹⁶ The photos shared with me by Klaus Hallof show that this part of the stone is heavily abraded, and while something like the fragment of the diagonal upper bar of a letter (an alpha?) may be visible immediately before the delta of ΔΕΚΑ, this may also simply be a scratch.

¹⁷ See, among randomly chosen examples, for numerical figures following δραχμῶν, for honorific crowns: *IG* II² 338 ll. 19-20 (Athens, 333/332, 1,000 drachmas); *I.Oropos* 370 l. 5 (304-295, 1,000 drachmas); *IG* XI.4 1052 ll. 19-20 (Delos, mid-3rd century, 500 drachmas); *IG* XII.7 226 ll. 8-9 (Minoa, late 3rd-early 2nd centuries, 100 drachmas); see note 46 for honorific crowns made of *chrysoi*; for dedicatory objects: *IG* II² 1263 ll. 24-25 (Athens, 300/299, ἀνάθημα, 50 drachmas); *IG* XII.4 311 ll. 36-37 (craters, each 10,000 Alexandrian drachmas); *OGIS* 268 ll. 11-13 (Nakrasa/Stratonikeia-on-the-Kaikos, mid-2nd century, two φιάλαι, each 100 Alexandrian drachmas); *I.Iasos* 612 ll. 11-12 (Bargylia, late 2nd century, φιάλη, 100 Alexandrian drachmas). Numerical figures less often

than coinage were donated at subscriptions, even if this was probably much less common than outright monetary gifts. At Smyrna and Kameiros, for instance, contributions were made of ceramic tiles (κεραμίδας, καλυπτῆρας) towards building projects,¹⁸ while at Teos gold and silver objects were offered to cover a ransom payment for citizens captured by pirates.¹⁹ Such material contributions to subscriptions were sometimes explicitly qualified in monetary terms: at Olymos in the mid-2nd century, contributors towards the embellishment of Leto's temple donated bowls valued in Alexandreian drachmas (ἀπὸ δραχμῶν Ἀλεξανδρείων), although the amounts are unfortunately not preserved.²⁰ Similarly, one might imagine that a phrase like [ἀπὸ] δέκα δραχμῶν H in our Koan subscription qualified a non-coin object of some kind, mentioned in the lost preceding section of the line. As will be suggested later (section 3, p. 7), the -ῶν ending in δραχμῶν should indeed be read to indicate a qualitative genitive plural governing some kind of non-coin object. A more fundamental problem with Segre's detaching of δέκα from δραχμῶν, however, is that this brings two numerical systems into close proximity, with one figure spelt out in full (δέκα), and another in acrophonic form (H). The hypothetical [ἀπὸ] δέκα δραχμῶν H would imply, in fact, that Zopyrion and Herakleitos donated 100 objects valued at ten drachmas each. Is this a likely scenario?

For one, the pattern for the phrase ἀπὸ δραχμῶν at Kos seems to have been for numerals (both acrophonic and spelt out) qualifying δραχμῶν to follow, rather than precede, it;²¹ this is also true for similar phrases indicating value in drachmas (e.g. μὴ ἐλάσσονος ἄξιον δραχμῶν κτλ.).²² We might thus rather have expected ἀπὸ δραχμῶν δέκα, for instance. If the point in this case, however, had been to highlight the monetary value of the dedicated object by spelling out δέκα before δραχμῶν, and clearly distinguishing it from the acrophonic H that followed straight after, it would surely have been easier to express δέκα acrophonically as well (e.g. ἀπὸ Δ δραχμῶν H), with the position of δραχμῶν limiting confusion. Furthermore, if we did understand [ἀπὸ] δέκα δραχμῶν to qualify a preceding object, there would then be the problem that the amount of ten drachmas was not a large one.²³ Where objects are specified as to their value in monetary terms in epigraphic contexts, this is usually to stress their high value, and one would be hard pressed to find any other monetarily specified crown or bowl (for example) worth so little.²⁴

Moreover, if a non-coin object was indeed mentioned in the lost section of the line, and qualified by H at the end of it, we would expect this to have been in the accusative plural, and

precede δραχμῶν, e.g. for honorific crowns: *IG II²* 1255 l. 9 (Athens, 337/336, 30 drachmas); *SEG* 51.1108 ll. 5-6 (Eretria, 330-320, 50/500 drachmas).

¹⁸ *I.Smyrna* 689II ll. 1-9 (2nd-1st centuries); *Tit. Camirenses Suppl.* 157B ll. 24-25 (c. 170); note also *I.Erythrai Klazomenai* 22A ll. 3, 5, 32-37, 41, 44 (stone-cutters, ἄνδρας λατόπους), 46 (draught animals, ὑποζύγια); see Migeotte, *Souscriptions*, p. 401 ('Dons "en nature"') for further references.

¹⁹ *SEG* 67.792 ll. 75-76, 78-81 (drinking-cups, ποτήρια), 82-83, 85-86, 89-90 (gold objects or bullion, χρύσια), 83-84 (silver objects, ἀργυρώματα).

²⁰ *SEG* 39.1137.

²¹ *IG XII.4* 293 ll. 17-22, 24-25, 27-34; 294 l. 47; 298 ll. 37, 50, 69 (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐκκειμένου ἀργυρίου δραχμῶν ΔΔΔ); 303 ll. 9, 12; 311 ll. 36-37; 315 ll. 9, 14-15, 16-17; 319 ll. 7-8, 36-37; 320 l. 11; 344 l. 4; 347 l. 2; restored: *IG XII.4* 132 ll. 14-15; 303 ll. 2-3; 307 l. 6; 318 l. 3.

²² *IG XII.4* 94 l. 20; 100 ll. 39-40; 287 ll. 3-4; 298 ll. 18, 23-24, 29-30, 33, 42-43, 45, 46-47, 66-67, 73-74, 75-76, 81-82, 104-106; 308 l. 4; 312 ll. 7, 9; 315 l. 3; 328 ll. 26-33, 35, 42, restored: *IG XII.4* 286 ll. 8-10, 14-16; 287 l. 5; 308 l. 6; 312 ll. 2, 3, 5, 8; 328 ll. 43-44; 335 l. 14; δραχμῶν standing on its own to indicate value (e.g. οἶν Ἀλεξανδρείαν δραχμῶν δεκαπέντε): *IG XII.4* 350 ll. 24-26, 31-34, 36-39, 53-73. Only in one case does the numeral precede δραχμῶν: *IG XII.4* 274 ll. 6-7, 26-27.

²³ Even assuming that δέκα formed the end of a number, this would not have been larger than 19 drachmas ([ἀπὸ ἐννέα καὶ] δέκα).

²⁴ See note 17.

followed by a clarificatory ἐκάστους/ἐκάστας/ἕκαστα, if the point had been to stress the objects' individual ten-drachma value, e.g. [φιάλας ἐκάστας ἀπὸ] δέκα δραχμῶν Η, '100 bowls each worth ten drachmas'. This would stretch the possibilities of the line-length, which permits at most ten to 11 letters before δέκα.²⁵ More simply and generally, it would have been odd to highlight the low individual value of the donated objects in the context of a list which, one imagines, had implications for the prestige and group standing of the contributors: instead of '100 bowls (e.g.) each worth ten drachmas', it would likely have been more economical and certainly more impressive to say 'bowls (e.g.) worth 1,000 drachmas', e.g. [ἀπὸ] χιλιάων δραχμῶν. The essential point, then, is that the juxtaposition of a genitival phrase featuring the numeral δέκα, spelt out, with the acrophonic Η, suggests an intention to distinguish the meanings conveyed by these two numerical figures. Segre's separation of δέκα from δραχμῶν would imply that the quality of being worth ten drachmas was worth specifying, but raises the question of why it was necessary to stress this relatively low amount.²⁶

For all these reasons, the most reasonable resolution would be to read δέκα and δραχμῶν together, as a single word, following Bosnakis and Hallof. ΔΕΚΑΔΡΑΧΜΑΝ would then be the accusative singular or genitive plural of a notional nominative singular δεκαδραχμά (δεκαδραχμῶν/δεκαδραχμῶν), a compound built on δραχμά, so far unattested in literary, epigraphic or papyrological sources. Its semantic meaning would seem fairly clear – a ten-drachma amount, much as the two-termination adjective δεκάδραχμος denoted the quality of being worth ten drachmas.²⁷ What might it have meant pragmatically? Taken as an accusative singular, one might think of a phrase like [εἰς τὰν] δεκαδραχμῶν Η: Zopyrion and Herakleitos would have donated 100 drachmas towards a δεκαδραχμά, perhaps an institutionalised ten-drachma levy or tax. In this case, however, the more likely spelling of such a term would have rather been δεκαδραχμία, much as taxes or regularised amounts of two or five drachmas are attested as a διδραχμία or πεντεδραχμία.²⁸

Alternatively, a δεκαδραχμά might have served as an accounting unit for a ten-drachma amount. Here there are also problems. One would have to take δεκαδραχμῶν as a genitive plural, either qualifying or as part of the same phrase as the acrophonic Η, and governed by something like ἀπό (e.g. [ἀπὸ] δεκαδραχμῶν Η). If the former, Zopyrion and Herakleitos would have given the amount of 100 drachmas in ten-drachma amounts; if the latter, Zopyrion and Herakleitos would have given something (preceding the hypothetical ἀπό) worth 100 ten-drachma amounts, i.e. 1,000 drachmas. In the first case, it is hard to see why it was necessary to specify donation in ten-drachma amounts, while in the second the whole phrase would be superfluous, when it would have been much simpler to express the number 1,000 with Χ (e.g. [ἀπὸ] δραχμῶν Χ, or simply Χ alone).

²⁵ As determined by counting the letters in the last completely preserved line three lines above, line 19, between the kappa of γυναικός and the delta numeral after Ταχίνου, which would have covered the same length of space on the stone as is missing in the lacuna in line 22.

²⁶ One other way of saving Segre's reading would be to suppose that phrase [ἀπὸ] δέκα δραχμῶν Η was meant to describe the payment of 100 drachmas in ten-drachma portions, but this seems an unlikely and unnecessary specification.

²⁷ Cf. *LSJ* s.v. δεκάδραχμος, Tod (1960) 17. Indicating a ten-drachma tax liability: Phot. *Lex.* s.v. δεκάδραχμος, *BGUI* 118ii l. 9 (189 CE, albeit in abbreviation).

²⁸ The photos of the stone clearly read ΔΕΚΑΔΡΑΧΜΑΝ, with no possibility of an iota after the mu. Διδραχμία: *SEG* 45.1070 l. 7 (two-drachma tax); πεντεδραχμία: Din. *In Demosthenem* 56 (five-drachma allowance); Xen. *Hell.* 1.6.12 with Melville-Jones (1993-2007) 2.183 (a five-drachma amount for soldiers); *Agora* XIX P26 (342/341-339/338) ll. 475, 479 (five-drachma taxes).

In all, any interpretation of δεκαδραχμῶν as an abstract noun, indicating a ten-drachma amount, whether as an institutionalised payment, or a unit of account, comes up against the problem of explaining the specificity of the term and the use of the genitive. This would suggest that δεκαδραχμῶν refers instead to something material, and the only thing this might be is a type of coin, notable for its denominational size, iconography, or weight standard. The implication would be that coins of this type were physically used and handled as part of the transaction. Is this plausible?

3. Δεκάδραγμα as coins

Terms designating coins valued at multiples of the drachma are certainly known: the most significant are the δίδραχμον, τρίδραχμον, and τετράδραχμον/τετράχμον.²⁹ Although fundamentally adjectives in construction (δίδραχμος, τρίδραχμος, τετράδραχμος), they could be used substantively (notionally qualifying something like ἀργύριον or νόμισμα) as neuter nouns to signify actual coins, particularly in sacred inventories where coins of this value were often deposited.³⁰ In the case of a ten-drachma coin, this would theoretically be δεκάδραχμον, and its genitive plural δεκαδράχμων. Our subscription list, however, recorded δεκαδραχμῶν, where one might have expected δεκαδράχμων. The possibility that this was derived from an alternative form of the nominative singular, δεκαδραχμά, should be excluded: not only would this sort of nominalisation be unprecedented,³¹ but wider trends in Koan orthography would allow for the notion that α was here substituting for ω. Across Kos' Hellenistic epigraphy, the Doric spelling of the genitive plural δραχμῶν is near ubiquitous, with the *koine* δραχμῶν occurring in only one of 18 texts: even in this one case, the Doric δραχμῶν also occurs, and more frequently as well.³² *Koine* spelling for δραχμή (δραχμά) was therefore enough of a minority at Kos that the drafter of our subscription list might conceivably have reached for Doric case-endings when faced with using a rare compound. That is to say, the spelling δεκαδραχμῶν, instead of δεκαδράχμων, should be understood to represent a hyper-Doric vocalic slip from ω to α.

The consequence is that the most plausible way to read δεκαδραχμῶν is as the genitive plural of δεκάδραχμον, and hence as a noun referring to a coin equivalent to ten drachms. This would make it the first known attestation.³³ Such a conclusion obviously has implications for understanding the sort of transaction Zopyrion and Herakleitos were carrying out. Read as referring to physical coins, δεκαδραχμῶν would only make sense as a genitive plural, and, as

²⁹ Poll. *Onom.* 9.60. In general, see Tod (1960) 10-19: multiples of the drachma beyond four-drachma amounts (πεντάδραχμος, up to πεντακοσιόδραχμος) seem mainly to have indicated values or weights, rather than actual coins. Only the πεντάδραχμον and πεντηκοντάδραχμον are attested as coins: see note 41 below. Poll. *Onom.* 9.60 also names both as known denominations among the Kyrenians: Melville-Jones (1993-2007) 2.287. Hsch. *Lex.* s.v. ἔκδραχμον gives an alternate spelling for the six-drachma amount (ἑξάδραχμον).

³⁰ E.g. for δίδραχμον, *I.Délos* 444 l. 47 (177, μῆλιον δίδραχμον); *IG* XI.2 203B l. 22 (269, δίδραχμον σελεύκειον); τρίδραχμον, *I.Délos* 104 ll. 61-62 (364/363, τρίδραχμα Μαρωνιτικά); the τετράδραχμον/τετράχμον is by far the most common; see the references in Knoepfler (1987) 244-253.

³¹ One possible analogy would be Polyaeus, *Strat.* 3.10.14, with Melville-Jones (1993-2007) 2.250, which describes the emergency mixed coins (silver and copper) of Timotheos as πεντεδραχμίαι, instead of the expected πεντάδραγμα. Again, however, one would expect δεκαδραχμία: see note 28 above.

³² *IG* XII.4 328 (1st century) ll. 32-33, 35, 42, but see lines 27, 28, 30, 31. See notes 21-22 for Koan decrees certainly featuring the genitive plural δραχμῶν (dating from the mid-4th to 1st centuries): *IG* XII.4 94, 100, 274, 287, 293, 294, 298, 303, 308, 311, 312, 315, 319, 320, 328, 344, 347, 350.

³³ Tod (1960) 17 did not know of any examples. This reading would also mean that it is possible, in theory, to read δεκαδραχμῶν as the genitive plural of the adjective δεκάδραχμος, perhaps in agreement with a preceding noun, like φιάλαν (e.g. φιάλαν δεκαδραχμῶν H, 'of 100 [bowls] worth/weighing ten drachmas'). In this case, however, one would have expected the accusative and not genitive (e.g. φιάλας δεκάδραχμους H).

already with Segre’s original reading, as some sort of qualitative genitive, perhaps governed by a preposition like ἀπό.³⁴ This may have been the sheer act of donating 100 drachmas, so that Zopyrion and Herakleitos gave 100 drachmas ‘in the form of ten-drachma coins (δεκάδραγμα)’. However, subscription lists rarely record the monetary currency in which a contribution was made, and when they do so it is typically in the accusative and not the genitive, so this would be highly unusual.³⁵ A more likely reason for specifying the monetary unit would be if δεκαδραχμῶν qualified the value of a precious-metal object. Where Segre’s division between δέκα and δραχμῶν would have implied that Zopyrion and Herakleitos donated 100 objects valued at ten drachmas each, the reading of δεκαδραχμῶν as a single word would also theoretically allow for a plurality of objects: H would qualify the number of objects, each worth a certain number of δεκάδραγμα, mentioned in the lacuna. The problem is that this would raise the sorts of issues noted earlier with assuming a plurality of objects (section 2 pp. 4-5). Moreover, at Kos acrophonic numerals following δραχμῶν (where preceded by ἀπό or μὴ ἐλάσσονος ἄξιον) tend to indicate the number of drachmas, such as with prices of sacrificial animals.³⁶ This also seems to be the more natural way to interpret δεκαδραχμῶν H: a single object was donated, valued at 100 ten-drachma coins. As to its identity, one can only guess, although something like a bowl (φιάλη), as at mid-2nd-century Olymos, would not be unlikely.

Where denoting coins, δεκαδραχμῶν might be understood in two ways. One would be as an indication of the weight of the object, as measured in specific ten-drachma coins, much as dedications inventoried at Didyma, for instance, were described as bearing the weight (σταθμὸν ἄγειν, ὀλκή).³⁷ This would have brought attention to the unique weight standard of this coin, just as items weighed according to Alexandreian drachmas in Didyma’s inventories referred to their weight on the Attic standard, which was increasingly synonymous with Alexander coinage.³⁸ Alternatively, δεκαδραχμῶν H would refer to the 100 ten-drachma coins that, when melted down, provided the raw metal used for making the object.³⁹ Some of these coins, or the bullion derived therefrom, may also have covered labour costs. It is unlikely, on the other hand, that the phrase denoted its ‘price’ in a more abstract sense (including, for instance, the cost of both the metal and labour), as the more economical way of expressing a monetary amount alone would have been to account for it with the plain drachma.⁴⁰ In short, specifying the monetary currency in terms of δεκάδραγμα would have served either to designate the particular standard by which the object was weighed, or the metal quality of the coin it denoted, sufficiently prestigious and capable of conferring a sense of impressiveness that it was worth mentioning.

³⁴ Even if the nominative singular were indeed δεκαδραχμά, rather than a δεκάδραχμιον, it is very hard to see how δεκαδραχμῶν could have been an accusative singular when followed by H.

³⁵ E.g. Maier, *Mauerbauinschriften* 69 (Kolophon, 311-306) ll. 138, 152, 157 (χρυσοῦς), 149-150 (Ἀλεξανδρείο[υς] δραχμάς); *I.Smyrna* 687 (mid-3rd century, στατήρας); *I.Milet* 954 (late 3rd century, στατήρας, χρυσοῦν); 955 (late 3rd century, χρυσοῦν); Migeotte, *Souscriptions*, p. 403 (‘Monnaie’) for references to further discussion of currency in subscriptions.

³⁶ See in particular *IG XII.4* 298 ll. 17-18, 22-24, 29-30, 33, 36-37, 42-47, 50, 65-67, 73-74, 75-76, 81-82, 104-106.

³⁷ In general, see Melville-Jones (1997), Tod (1960) 2-3.

³⁸ Melville-Jones (1997) 57-58.

³⁹ This would presumably be the meaning in the majority of the epigraphic instances where an honorific crown is qualified as being ἀπὸ δραχμῶν (see note 17, and also note 46 for *chrysoi*), although not necessarily invariably the case, especially if only plain drachmas are mentioned. A comprehensive study of the phrase across the epigraphic corpus as a whole, distinguishing between drachmas as references to physical coins and metal, and as mere accounting units, which might relate to cost of labour or weight, is for the moment still wanting.

⁴⁰ See note 36; among other examples outside Kos, see e.g. *IG XII.5* 647 ll. 20-21 (Koressos, early 3rd century) for the cost of a feast and games; *SEG* 39.1135 ll. 25-26 (Olymos, 2nd century) for the cost of sacrifices; *I.Délou* 1416BII ll. 45-46 (Delos, 156/155) for the cost of construction work.

At this point, we might briefly summarise the arguments of the foregoing two sections. Segre's reading of δέκα δραχμῶν Η in line 22 created complications by making it necessary to reconcile, and there only somewhat circuitously, the juxtaposition of two numeral systems; the reading of δεκαδραχμῶν as a single word is to be preferred, as the genitive plural of a noun whose nominative form may theoretically have been δεκάδραχμον, referring to a ten-drachma coin. The specificity of the term means it cannot be understood as a unit of account alone, unless tied to a specific type of ten-drachma coin. The whole phrase δεκαδραχμῶν Η, then, most probably qualified a non-coin object that was recorded in the preceding lost section of the line, defining it in terms of the unusual qualities of this coin-type: that is, it was made from the metal 'of 100 decadrachms'. We now turn in the last two sections to consider the possible identity of this coin, a question whose answer can only ever be speculative, but which nonetheless stands to potentially elucidate aspects of Koan political and religious history.

4. Ptolemaic decadrachms?

There are three options. The first is the least probable. This would be to take δεκάδραχμον as a gold drachm or hemistater, on the assumption that the gold to silver ratio in the late 3rd century still remained at 1 to 10. By this reckoning, a gold hemistater would have been equivalent to ten silver drachms, much as it has been suggested that the few epigraphic references to the pentadrachm (πεντάδραχμον) at Delphi refer to a gold Alexander triobol or hemidrachm.⁴¹ However, the only contenders for gold hemistater would be the late 4th-century Philip hemistaters struck in Alexander's own lifetime (at Pella and Amphipolis), the Alexander hemistaters of Alexander's own lifetime and after (struck at various mints), or the few gold hemistaters struck by Ptolemy I at Kyrene: these were all issued before 300.⁴² None of these seem to have been struck in significant quantities, and even a downdating of the subscription to the mid-3rd century at the earliest (see note 2) would imply that they would have had to have been in circulation for at least half a century at the time of Zopyrion and Herakleitos' donation. If so, it is difficult to see how at least a hundred of these coins, in sufficiently fresh condition, might have been available at Kos at this date, and singled out as a special currency in an inscription. More importantly, it is unlikely that gold drachms on the Attic standard were called δεκάδραχμα. The main term for gold coinage from the late 4th century was the χρυσοῦς or ἡμιχρῦσος, and sometimes Alexandrian χρυσοῖ, if specification of the Attic standard was necessary.⁴³ Less common, but still occasionally used, was the stater.⁴⁴ At Erythrai, gold Philip staters were called precisely that (στατήρων Φιλιππείων).⁴⁵ At Kos, gilt honorific crowns

⁴¹ *CID* II 108 l. 15 ([π]εντέδραχμα χρυσέα); 109C l. 10 (πεντέδραχμον ἔν), with Melville-Jones (1993-2007) 2.128-129. The πενητηκοντάδραχμα of *P.Cair.Zen.* 59022 l. 4 probably also referred to gold tetradrachms: Melville-Jones (1993-2007) 2.236.

⁴² Alexander's Philip hemistaters (head of Herakles/lion protome): Le Rider (1977) 237-238 nos. 36-46, 248 nos. 120-121 (Pella), 251 nos. 1-3, with 433-434 for dating; Alexander's lifetime hemistaters (head of Athena/standing Nike): Price (1991) 212 no. 1360 (Lampsakos), 278 no. 2080 (Miletos), 322 no. 2534 (Sardeis), 391 no. 3130 (Salamis); posthumous Alexander hemistaters (head of Athena/standing Nike): Price (1991) 282 no. 2116 (Miletos), 500 no. 3983 (Kyrene); Ptolemy I's hemistaters at Kyrene (head of Athena/standing Nike): Lorber (2018) 307 nos. 259, 261, 308 nos. 266, 267.

⁴³ For χρυσοῖ, see, among many examples, *I.Sardis* I 11 ll. 4-10 (late 4th century), *I.Mylasa* 201 l. 5 (3rd century), *I.Magnesia* 16 l. 29 (208/207); ἡμιχρῦσοι: *I.Didyma* 427 l. 10 (276/275), 432 l. 18 (271/270); χρυσοῖ Ἀλεξανδρείου: *I.Rhodische Peraia* 701 ll. 12-13 (Pladasa, 319/318).

⁴⁴ E.g. *I.Delphinion* 147 ll. 12-13, 26-27 (205/204), *I.Lampsakos* 9 ll. 31, 59 (2nd century), where in both cases drachmas are also used as accounting units for silver coinage, strongly suggesting staters refer to gold coinage; for terminology for gold in general, see Babelon (1907-1910) 1.436-447.

⁴⁵ *I.Erythrai Klazomenai* 21 l. 12.

whose size was stressed were defined in terms of the χρυσοῖ they were wrought of.⁴⁶ The specificity of the term δεκάδραχμον, again, makes the gold Philip or Alexander hemistater an unlikely match.⁴⁷

Might the decadrachms have been gold coins of decadrachm weight? The only eligible coinage would be the gold decadrachms issued by Ptolemy III in honour of Berenike II, in the 240s after the Third Syrian War, with decadrachms being only one of a large range of denominations.⁴⁸ They were probably also the least prolific of the whole series, however, and never seem to have travelled beyond Egypt, despite their being minted on the Attic standard.⁴⁹ Even if some somehow made their way to Kos, a hundred such coins would have amounted to the colossal sum of roughly 10,000 silver drachmas, an unlikely amount given the low range of monetary figures across the list. There is then also the basic problem, as with gold hemistaters, that a gold coinage is unlikely to have been accounted for in drachma-based terminology.

The third possibility, then, is silver decadrachm coinage. Silver coins of this denomination were rare across the history of Greek coinage, with Athens, Syracuse and Akragas alone in having done so before the Hellenistic period, most likely for exceptional military payments.⁵⁰ Alexander himself struck two series of decadrachms in his lifetime, commemorating his victory over the Indian king Poros (actually a five-shekel weight coinage), and a small issue from the mint at Babylon, both weighing ten Attic drachmas.⁵¹ It is unlikely that any of these earlier coinages would have existed in sufficient quantities at Kos by the late 3rd century. After Alexander, only two silver decadrachm series were struck, both by Ptolemaic kings. One was issued by Ptolemy IV, posthumously honouring Berenike II, around 211/210, on the Ptolemaic standard, alongside gold *mnaieia* and silver tetradrachms. Few of these decadrachms are known, and they may only have been struck in small quantities.⁵² While the *mnaieia* in the series certainly circulated as far as Antalya, where a hoard containing them was found, it is unclear if the decadrachms would have done so as well.⁵³

The only other Hellenistic decadrachm series is earlier, and probably offers the best candidate for our Koan δεκάδραχμα. These are the silver decadrachms issued by Ptolemy II in honour of his sister-wife Arsinoe II Philadelphos, from soon after her death in 270 or 268 right through to the end of his reign.⁵⁴ These bore the veiled head of Arsinoe wearing a crown on the obverse, and on the reverse a double cornucopiae bound by a royal diadem – these were the types that were later adapted for the Berenike II gold and silver decadrachms. They were probably first struck soon after the inauguration of a kingdom-wide cult to Arsinoe soon after

⁴⁶ *IG XII.4* 93 ll. 16-17 (20 *chrysoi*); 95 ll. 14-16 (30 *chrysoi*); 98 l. 41 (50 Alexandrian *chrysoi*); 99 ll. 44-45 (50 Alexandrian *chrysoi*); 108 ll. 12-13 (50 *chrysoi*); 110 ll. 13-14 (10 *chrysoi*); 121 ll. 24-25 (10 *chrysoi*); 1178 ll. 5-6 (50 *chrysoi*).

⁴⁷ One might perhaps also expect in the case of gold currency that δεκάδραχμα was qualified by something like χρύσεια, although this was clearly not the case; see note 41 above for gold pentadrachms at Delphi.

⁴⁸ Lorber (2018) 165-166, 396 no. 735, 397 no. 744 (bust of Berenike/cornucopiae); these coinages constituted the Βερενίκειον νόμισμα (Poll. *Onom.* 9.85).

⁴⁹ Lorber (2018) 162-164.

⁵⁰ Athenian owl decadrachms: Fischer-Bossert (2008); decadrachms at Syracuse and Akragas: Fischer-Bossert (2012) 148, 149, 151.

⁵¹ Price (1991) 452 (Poros decadrachms), and 459, nos. 3598, 3600, 462 no. 3618A (Alexander decadrachms).

⁵² Lorber (2018) 434 no. 896 (bust of Berenike/cornucopiae), listing only five specimens.

⁵³ Price (1975) 22 no. 69, with Cavagna (2015) 222-223, Lorber (2018) 207.

⁵⁴ Lorber (2018) 321-326 nos. 320-368; see Troxell (1983) 54-56 for the chronology, adapted slightly by Olivier and Lorber (2013) 83, 88, who suggest an end-date for the series in 246, not 241. See Lorber (2018) 63 n. 26 for the date of Arsinoe's death in 270.

her death,⁵⁵ although they were later joined (from 261) by gold *mnaieia* and silver tetradrachms, which furnished honorific medallions and pay for soldiers during the Second Syrian War and in the land settlement programs that followed.⁵⁶ The pattern of decadrachm minting does not correspond precisely to that of the *mnaieia* and tetradrachms, however, so they may have served different payments, perhaps related more specifically to Arsinoe's cult.⁵⁷ In any case, Arsinoe II decadrachms were probably produced in the largest quantities of any of the coinages considered here, with four groups struck over more than two decades. They also made their way out of Egypt, with 12 specimens recorded in the large Meydancikkale hoard in Kilikia (243/242), and two in a hoard in Megalopolis (225).⁵⁸

In all, the δεκάδραγμα at Kos are unlikely to have referred to gold coinages, and among the silver decadrachm coinages those issued by Ptolemy II for Arsinoe II were the most prolific, travelled the furthest, and for these reasons are the most likely to have made their way to Kos. An additional factor in their favour is that silver minting in Egypt decreased in scale after Ptolemy II, as reflected in the stark reduction in hoarded silver of issues from Ptolemy III onwards, both within and outside the Ptolemaic core of Egypt and the eastern Levant.⁵⁹ Barring any counsel of despair that would suggest the existence of a totally unknown decadrachm series, then, the Arsinoe II decadrachms would offer the best candidate on paper for the δεκάδραγμα of our inscription. Beyond the sheer fact of their numerousness and spread, however, can we point to any Kos-specific factors that might argue for this identification?

5. Kos, Egypt, and Arsinoe

Kos entered the Ptolemaic ambit in the early 3rd century, and remained firmly within it for much of the Hellenistic period; strong relations were maintained even after the decline of Ptolemaic power in the Aegean after 197.⁶⁰ It received favourable treatment as the birthplace of Ptolemy II, and, unlike other Ptolemaic possessions, retained a high degree of local autonomy, never receiving a garrison or governor, and was probably exempt from taxation as well.⁶¹ Cultural and economic links between Kos and Egypt were vigorous across the Hellenistic centuries, as seen in the voluminous numbers of Koan amphorae fragments unearthed at Alexandria,⁶² or the presence of Egyptian cults.⁶³ The numismatic evidence offers some insight into these relations. The 27 specimens of Ptolemaic royal bronze coins (struck at Alexandria, Paphos and Kyrene) so far found, ranging from the time of Ptolemy I to the last rulers of the dynasty, is more than for royal bronzes of Macedonia or the Seleukids, and reflect

⁵⁵ Lorber (2018) 107-108, and 98-101 for the cult in general, alongside Robert (1966) 192-210, Fraser (1972) 1.217, 2.366-367 ns. 225-228, Sherwin-White (1978) 100-101, Carney (2013) 106-110.

⁵⁶ Lorber (2018) 107-110 and 327-331 nos. 369-395, Olivier and Lorber (2013) 78-98.

⁵⁷ Lorber (2018) 109 for the different rates of production.

⁵⁸ Meydancikkale: Price (1985) 21 no. 80 = Davesne and Le Rider (1989) = Wartenberg, Price and McGregor (1994) 36 no. 308 = Hoover, Meadows and Wartenberg (2010) 35 no. 269 = Faucher, Meadows and Lorber (2017) 4 no. 55, with Cavagna (2015) 225-229; Megalopolis: Kraay, Mørholm and Thompson (1973) 29 no. 180, with Cavagna (2015) 171-172, Lorber (2018) 163 n. 254. See also Lorber (2018) 496-497, 506-507.

⁵⁹ Chryssanthaki (2005) 160-162, Cavagna (2015) 275-277, Lorber (2013) 136-138.

⁶⁰ In general, see Sherwin-White (1978) 90-131, Höghammar (1993) 20-22, and below for relations with Kleopatra III in the later 2nd century.

⁶¹ Sherwin-White (1978) 92-97, Höghammar (1993) 20, Stefanaki and Giannikouri (2011) 352 n. 74. There is a decree for Diokles the Akarnanian (*IG XII.4 126*, early 3rd century), but he is merely described as an 'official of king Ptolemy' (τεταγμένος παρὰ βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίῳ), and not specifically as one in charge of Kos.

⁶² Sherwin-White (1978) 238, Johnsson (2004) 141-145, with Koan finds at Alexandria outstripping everywhere else, although chronological differentiation is still problematic.

⁶³ Bosnakis (1994-1995) 55-63, noting that private contacts were more important in spreading cults than official Ptolemaic direction.

movement between the Levant and north-eastern Africa and Kos.⁶⁴ Finds of silver coinage are thin, however, with only two Ptolemaic silver coins having been found at Kos: these are two tetradrachms of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX, which nonetheless show the continuing closeness between Kos and Alexandria in the later 2nd century.⁶⁵ No Arsinoe decadrachms, however. While this may seem like slim pickings, finds of silver coinage struck by foreign states are generally rare at Kos, with most moreover dating to the late 2nd century and later.⁶⁶ In addition, Ptolemaic silver coin-finds are notably scarce across the Aegean islands, with only two hoards known from Chios and Ios.⁶⁷ Delos' inventories do record the presence of Ptolemaic coins as sacred depositions, but outside the special circumstances of its sanctuary to Apollo there is only one other possible epigraphic mention of Ptolemaic currency, from Thera, and this may also reflect an accounting unit rather than a reference to actual coins.⁶⁸

This limited evidence for the circulation of Ptolemaic silver coinage in the Aegean and at Kos seems to be a difficulty, and would seem to belie the broader contextual setting of political closeness between Kos and the Ptolemies. The relative absence of silver from ground finds need not be taken as indicative, however, since silver coinage is in general less likely to survive in archaeological contexts. Nor does it necessarily suggest Ptolemaic non-engagement. Indeed, the most significant Aegean hoard of Ptolemaic silver comes from a relatively unexpected quarter: 14 tetradrachms of Ptolemy IV and V found at Chios, which, like Kos, and perhaps to an even greater extent, was only under loose Ptolemaic influence.⁶⁹ These coins may be remnants of a donation in support of Chios against the growing threat of Philip V,⁷⁰ and if so would comprise a rare example of a Ptolemaic subsidy to an Aegean community in the 3rd century. Grants of financial support towards military endeavours are better attested for the Greek mainland over the 3rd and 2nd centuries, with donations of Ptolemaic coinage having

⁶⁴ Cavagna (2015) 200-201, Stefanaki (2012) 338-342, nos. K542-K546 (Ptolemy I), K547-K553 (Ptolemy II), K554 (Ptolemy IV), K555-K557 (Ptolemy V), K558-K564, K566 (Ptolemy VIII), K568-570 (variously attributed to rulers from Ptolemy XI to Kleopatra III). 21 specimens of Macedonian issue: Stefanaki (2012) 308-311 nos. K311-331. Although most of these are posthumous Alexander and Philip III bronzes (K311-322) struck at Byblos and Miletos, several are anonymous issues with Macedonian types (gorgon on shield, head of Herakles) (K323-328a), and only three are bronzes of Kassandros and Ptolemy Keraunos (K329-331); nine are Seleukid bronzes: Stefanaki (2012) 336-338 nos. K530-538; Stefanaki (2012) 146 stresses bronze as evidence for inter-regional mobility.

⁶⁵ Stefanaki (2012) 140, with 341 no. K565, 341 no. 567 for the specimens; Giannikouri and Stefanaki (2006) 116, Stefanaki and Giannikouri (2011) 351-353. Kleopatra III had deposited her treasury and grandchildren at Kos: App. *Mith.* 93.

⁶⁶ Stefanaki and Giannikouri (2011) 346 for the absence of foreign silver in deposits classified as hoards, and 351-352 for the few finds of silver coins otherwise, with only five hemidrachms and drachms of Kolophon, Iasos, Knidos and Rhodes between the 4th and late 3rd centuries.

⁶⁷ Lorber (2018) 498-499, with the observations of Bagnall (1976) 204-210 and Chryssanthaki (2005) 160-165.

⁶⁸ Ptolemaic currency at Delos is reasonably common, with gold coins (defined as quarters, τέταρτα or τεττίγια, if misspelt, see Melville-Jones (1993-2007) 2.140-141): *IG* XI.2 161A l. 4, *I.Délos* 396B l. 78, 442B l. 189, 443B l. 114, 444B l. 32; tetradrachms: *IG* XI.2 158A l. 6, 159A l. 72, 161B l. 80, 199B l. 18, 203B l. 47, 219B l. 55, 287B l. 54, *I.Délos* 298A l. 35; staters: *I.Délos* 396B l. 78, 442B l. 190, 443B ll. 114, 444B l. 33; *IG* XI.2 163Bdg l. 8 mentions currency without specifying denomination (πολεμαϊκού); *IG* XI.4 1041 ll. 14-15 records the giving of *xenia* in the form of Ptolemaic drachmas (ἀ[πὸ δρ]αχμῶν πολεμαϊκῶν); only Thera, outside Delos: *IG* XII.3 327 13-14 (Πτολεμαϊκάς ρια', 111 Ptolemaic drachmas), which occurs in a royal letter describing the revenue earned from royal land on Thera; see Tod (1960) 8.

⁶⁹ Price (1981) 14 no. 32 = Price (1985) 21 no. 82 = Wartenberg, Price and McGregor (1994) 41 no. 340 = Faucher, Meadows, and Lorber (2017) 3 no. 34, with Grigorakakis (2010) 263-274, Cavagna (2015) 275, Lorber (2018) 499. Bagnall (1976) 168-169 discusses possible Ptolemaic control of Chios in the early 3rd century.

⁷⁰ Grigorakakis (2010) 276-279.

visible numismatic impacts in Attica, the Peloponnese, and Boiotia in particular.⁷¹ Especially interesting also is the monetary aid sent by Ptolemy II to Byzantion, where the coins he sent were subsequently countermarked for local circulation by the city.⁷²

As well as contexts of military assistance, however, subventions towards local infrastructure could be paid for in Ptolemaic currency. The sterling case is Ptolemy III's contributions to Rhodes after the earthquake of 227, which included 300 talents in silver and 1,000 talents in bronze.⁷³ Earlier in the 3rd century, the Naukratians sent Ptolemaic drachmas (δραχμὰ[ς] | [---Πτολε]μαϊκάς) to Miletos to assist in the construction of the Didymeion, for which they were duly honoured.⁷⁴ The specificity of the term, as in our inscription, would seem to suggest actual Ptolemaic currency, and not simply an amount accounted for according to the Ptolemaic weight standard. Miletos may have been under Ptolemaic control at this time, and the gift ultimately issued at the command of the royal court.⁷⁵ More notable still is the case of Argos in the years c. 170-164, which received monetary gifts from Ptolemies VI and VIII and Kleopatra II, alongside Cypriote cities, as recorded in an inscription.⁷⁶ These seem to have comprised amounts in Ptolemaic gold *mnaieia* and silver tetradrachms.⁷⁷ The contributions of the Cypriote cities, in particular, may even have comprised one-sixth portions of assessed values of taxable commodities (*apomoirai*).⁷⁸ Such contributions were a mainstay of the Ptolemaic fiscal system from the time of Ptolemy II onwards, and may indicate that the donations at Argos helped to pay for an Egyptian cult or temple.⁷⁹ The *apomoira*, moreover, had a strong connection to Arsinoe II, as its initial institution among non-temple lands in Egypt had served precisely to finance her posthumous cult.⁸⁰ Here, then, we would have an Arsinoe-associated exaction in the context of a royal subsidy to a community on the fringes of the Ptolemaic sphere. The memory and honour of Arsinoe were certainly vigorous across much of this sphere from the mid-3rd century onwards, when a number of communities under Ptolemaic influence followed Ptolemy II in setting up local cults to her.⁸¹

Kos, significantly, was one of these, as we learn from a fragmentary decree surviving in four fragments.⁸² The first two mention Arsinoe (l. 1: [Ἀρσι]νόαν), a shrine (l. 10: [τ]ῶι τεμένει) and a cult-statue (l. 12: [τ]ῶι ἀγάλματ[ι]), while the third explicitly names Arsinoe Philadelphos, an oracle, and the setting up of a shrine at an appointed location (ll. 14-21). The fourth further refers to the oracle (l. 23: [τοῦ μα]ντείου διεπύθετ[ο]), other financial measures, and mentions the 'goddess Arsinoe Philadelphos' ([τὰν θ]εῶν Ἀρσινόαν Φιλά[δελφον]), and a priestess (ll. 24-33). Although irreparably lacunose, these elements clearly comprise remnants of a wide-ranging resolution involving Arsinoe's cult, and perhaps even its institution, if the

⁷¹ Noeske (2000) 224-231, 235-240, 243-246; see also Chryssanthaki (2005) 165-170 on the bronze of Ptolemy III, and Hackens (1969) 709 for the movement of silver to Boiotia as reflecting official subsidies, and not just incidental movement.

⁷² Noeske (2000) 232-235, Davesne (2005) 182, Cavagna (2015) 277-278.

⁷³ Polyb. 5.89, Noeske (2000) 240-243.

⁷⁴ SEG 52.1118 = *I.Didyma Suppl.* 737 ll. 7-8.

⁷⁵ Günther (2001) 195-196.

⁷⁶ SEG 32.371, with Noeske (2000) 246-247, Meadows (2005).

⁷⁷ Aupert (1982) 267-268, 273-274, Meadows (2005) 92-93.

⁷⁸ Meadows (2005) 95-96, based on the roundedness of the figures when multiplied by six. For the *apomoira* generally, see Clarysse and Vandorpe (1998) and Lorber (2018) 84.

⁷⁹ Aupert (1982) 277, Meadows (2005) 96-97.

⁸⁰ Clarysse and Vandorpe (1998) 8-14, Troxell (1983) 55, Olivier and Lorber (2013) 86.

⁸¹ Sherwin-White (1978) 100, Lorber (2018) 99-100, and Robert (1966) 202 for dedicatory plaques to Arsinoe.

⁸² *JG* XII.4 290.

mention of an oracle relates to a request for oracular approval or instruction.⁸³ This would suggest a date soon after Arsinoe's death in 268.⁸⁴ The enactments would have been significant, and suggest major expenditure by the civic authorities, including a separate shrine for Arsinoe; the monetary sums mentioned, 500 and 800 drachmas (ll. 20, 32), correspond to amounts attested in other sacred regulations.⁸⁵

Might the Ptolemaic court have taken an interest in Kos' Arsinoe cult, and might the δεκάδραγμα at Kos have derived from a resulting royal subsidy, like the later donation to Argos? We can of course only speculate. We should nevertheless note that the cult to Arsinoe was unusual at Kos, as perhaps only one of two royal cults before the early 2nd century.⁸⁶ The special relationship between Ptolemy II and Kos may also have had a role. Although there is no incontrovertible evidence for a benefaction by Ptolemy II, it has been suspected that he donated funds towards the construction of temple B at the Asklepieion.⁸⁷ One might also point to the later presence of leading Koans at the Ptolemaic court in the second half of the 3rd century: figures like the doctor Kaphisophon, who conveyed the sacrificial offerings that Ptolemy III sent to Asklepios,⁸⁸ or Philinos, whose fragmentary honorific decree preserves echoes of major services, including embassies which seem to have resulted in royal gifts of grain and political concessions.⁸⁹ Within this framework of close connections between the Ptolemaic court and Kos, it is not impossible that royal attention, and funds, were directed at the Koans' cult to Arsinoe, whether at its institution or in the decades following. Finally, we should recall that Meydancikkale in Kilikia, where the hoard containing Arsinoe II decadrachms was found, and which was probably the site of a Ptolemaic garrison, was in the vicinity (just over 40 kilometres east) of the community of Arsinoe, where a cult to Arsinoe II certainly existed in the late 3rd century.⁹⁰

This possibility of a relationship between cult to Arsinoe and a hypothetical grant of Ptolemaic currency in the form of Arsinoe II decadrachms would further suggest that one other reason for the special naming of δεκάδραγμα in our inscription was their sacral quality, as coins associated with a queen who was also identified with Aphrodite Euploia, the protector of sailors.⁹¹ This sacral quality would likely have been bound up with any other notion of these high-denomination coins (operating almost as medallions for their value) as high-quality bullion on the unusual Ptolemaic standard, and would lend further credence to the idea that Zopyrion and Herakleitos fashioned a dedicatory object from these decadrachms. More concretely still, this numismatic connection would further clarify the date of our subscription list. As the minting of Arsinoe II decadrachms ceased after the reign of Ptolemy II in 246, it

⁸³ Fraser (1972) 2.383 n. 351. The oracle was probably the one either of Zeus Ammon in Libya or Apollo at Delphi: Sherwin-White (1978) 100-101 n. 89.

⁸⁴ The letter-forms allow this: Crowther (2004) 23.

⁸⁵ E.g. *IG XII.4* 298 ll. 99-100 (regulations for priesthood of Hermes Enagonios, 700 drachmas set aside for priestly duties); 326 ll. 30-32 (regulations for priesthood of Dionysos Thylophoros, penalty of 500 drachmas for priestly misconduct).

⁸⁶ Sherwin-White (1978) 101-102; the other would be a posthumous cult for Ptolemy IV, established around 200 for assisting in the incorporation of Kalymna: Höghammar (1993) 88-93, with Stampolidis (1997) for sculptural remains from a Ptolemaic cult.

⁸⁷ Hoepfner (1984) 358-364, Giannikouri and Stefanaki (2006) 114; for Ptolemy II and Kos in general, see Sherwin-White (1978) 98-100; the fragmentary royal letter *IG XII.4* 249 concerning the Asklepieia, which Sherwin-White thought was dictated by Ptolemy II, should be dated to the late 3rd century on palaeographical grounds, and is thus probably a letter of Ptolemy IV: Crowther (2004) 27-28.

⁸⁸ *IG XII.4* 31, Paschidis (2008) 371-372.

⁸⁹ *IG XII.4* 48, Paschidis (2008) 376-380.

⁹⁰ *SEG* 39.1426 (with Petzl (2002)) ll. 32-33.

⁹¹ For Arsinoe-Aphrodite Euploia, see Robert (1966) 198-208, Fraser (1972) 1.239-240, Lorber (2018) 99-101.

would be more attractive to place Zopyrion and Herakleitos' donation at a period not much later than this, assuming that the decadrachms they handled were still in fairly mint condition, and revered for that reason. In addition, the identification of Neon son of Naukles in the upper portion of the stele with the judge of the same name of the mid- to latter half of the 3rd century (unless he was a namesake grandson) would suggest a lower limit close to that time,⁹² if these first-named contributions, inscribed by the first two stone-cutters, were made not much earlier than those inscribed by the third cutter. Aristokrates son of Mnaseas of lines 19-20, if identical with a contributor to a Cretan War subscription, would then have been carrying out his donation, if made towards some form of immunity, at an earlier point in his life. In all, these factors and the arguments put forward here would suggest that the 2nd-century date initially proposed by Segre, based on the now untenable restoration of line 20, should be brought down to a time in the third quarter of the 3rd century, and perhaps not much later than c. 220.⁹³

To recapitulate, I reproduce lines 19-22 in light of the supplements suggested here:

Ἀριστοκράτης | Μνασέου ε[ἰς τὴν ἀ]τέλειαν 𐀀𐀃, Φιλοκράτης | Καλλισθένο[υ---c. 4---],
Ζωπυρίων καὶ Ἡράκλειτος | Ὀνάτορος [---c. 7-8--- ἀπό?] δεκαδραχμῶν Η.

Aristokrates son of Mnaseas, towards [immunity], 51 drachmas. Philokrates son of Kallisthenes, [---]. Zopyrion and Herakleitos, sons of Onator, [---] (made of?) 100 decadrachms.

The contribution of Aristokrates son of Mnaseas should be seen as a contribution towards some form of immunity from future obligations: the coinages of Eumenes and Elis in line 19 were phantoms of Segre's imagination. On the other hand, the use of the term δεκάδραχμων in line 22 very likely had a basis in numismatic reality. This would be a decadrachm coinage which, in the context of the late 3rd to early 2nd centuries, was most likely the silver coins of Ptolemy II honouring Arsinoe II, maybe even arriving at Kos in the context of its cult to Arsinoe II. Assuming these propositions hold water, one would face further questions. Would δεκαδραχμῶν have stood alone, or also been qualified as something like 'Arsinoeian' or 'Ptolemaic' (e.g. ἀρσινοεῖων, πτολεμαϊκῶν)? Line-length would perhaps argue for the former, and imply that these coins were simply known locally as 'decadrachms'.⁹⁴ Would they have been exchanged for local Koan currency, or would their high value suggest they were mainly regarded as bullion? Might they have served as a sort of potential trade currency, re-purchased by individuals hoping to re-enter the Ptolemaic monetary zone?

Most of all, one would wonder how they came to languish in large enough quantities that the brothers Zopyrion and Herakleitos found a hundred pieces for their donation. Were these remnants of an original Ptolemaic subsidy, re-dedicated and de-monetised at the treasury

⁹² See note 2.

⁹³ One might also note that the palaeography of lines 17-27, which were attributed to the third letter-cutter, bear features that may be compared to other late 3rd-century letter-cutters, with straight-bar alphas, epsilons with serified upper and lower bars, sigmas with slightly splayed outer bars, kappas with shortened diagonal strokes, and slightly smaller thetas, omicrons, and omegas, e.g. Crowther (2004) 27-28 nos. 8 and 9. Charles Crowther has also suggested to me personally that an earlier dating would not be incompatible with the lettering.

⁹⁴ The restoration of a preceding adjective would probably mean the hypothetical phrase ἀρσινοεῖων/πτολεμαϊκῶν δεκαδραχμῶν stood alone, which as suggested above (section 2, p. 5) would imply it functioned mainly as an accounting unit that simply expressed a gift-amount of 1,000 drachmas; in this case, it would have been superfluous to specify the type of coins that were used in the transaction.

to the temple of Arsinoe II? Or were the brothers Zopyrion and Herakleitos simply accessing ancestral wealth, perhaps as descendants of a mercenary who had settled at Kos with a hefty retirement chest of Arsinoe II decadrachms? The use of the term δεκάδραχμον in an inscribed text would rather seem to suggest that it had a small level of currency on Kos, and that these decadrachms were not unknown beyond the chance holdings of a wealthy military family. All these questions are weighty imponderables. That they may be raised at all, however, hopefully illustrates the potential of our subscription list to contribute to our knowledge of high-denominational monetary terminology in the Hellenistic period, and, if one takes a more expansive view, even to ongoing debates about the nature and extent of the circulation and use of Ptolemaic and Ptolemaic-style currency outside the main ‘heartland’ regions of north Africa, Cyprus, and the Levant.⁹⁵

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⁹⁵ In general, see the study of Cavagna (2015), as well as Bagnall (1976) 194-210, Iossif and Lorber (2021) 218-219, 220-221.

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