

New readings in a Hellenistic Athenian honorific decree from Priene (*I.Priene* 45 = *I.Priene B-M* 99 = *IG II/III*³ 1, 1239)

The subject of this article is an Athenian honorific decree, inscribed and erected at Priene, dated by previous editors to c. 200 BC on the basis of letter forms. The stone is very abraded and the preserved text is fragmentary; Friedrich Hiller von Gaertringen, the editor of its first edition (*I.Priene* 45), noted how difficult it was to read. Nonetheless, it is of considerable historical interest, not least because it attests to maintained diplomacy and kinship between Athens and Priene, including Prienean participation at the Athenian Great Panathenaia some two hundred years after the end of compulsory attendance at the festival during the time of the Athenian Empire.

The text has been re-edited in two recent corpus editions.¹ Blümel and Merkelbach include the decree in their second edition of *Die Inschriften von Priene* (describing it as an honorary decree for Prienean ambassadors), while Tracy and Bardani provide a version in their revised *Inscriptiones Graecae* II/III³ 1, 5, having consulted a squeeze in Berlin. Neither set of editors examined the stone, believing it to be lost.² More recently, Stephen Lambert has suggested some sensible amendments,³ and translations have been made available in English at *Attic Inscriptions Online* (by Stephen Lambert) and in German and English in the digital edition of *Inscriptiones Graecae* (by Klaus Hallof).⁴

Using a squeeze (see Figure 1) and photograph (see Figure 2) in the collection of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents in Oxford, I have been able to read additional letters

¹ Earlier editions: *I.Priene* 45 with supplement on p. 310; D.F. McCabe, *Priene inscriptions: texts and list*. Princeton 1987, no. 1. See also A. Wilhelm, 1907. *Zu den Inschriften von Priene*, *Wiener Studien* 29 (1907) 10; L. Robert, *Notes Épigraphiques*, *Revue Archéologique* 24 (1926) 177–8, *SEG* 4.475.

² *IG II/III*³ 1, 1239: nunc deperditus esse videtur.

³ S. Lambert, *Inscribed Athenian Decrees of 229/8-198/7 BC (IG II³ 1, 1135-1255)*, *AIO Papers* 4 (2014) 17–20 (accessible at *Attic Inscriptions Online*).

⁴ <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII31/1239>; http://telota.bbaw.de/ig/digitale-edition/inschrift/IG%20II_III%C2%B3%201,%201239 (both accessed 24/10/23).

- [. . .]ν τὸ γενόμενον τεῖ Ἀθην[ᾶ]ι τεῖ ἀρχη[γέτιδι καὶ πο]-
 [λιούχ]ωι τῆς πόλεως· κ[α]ί? οἱ παραγεγονότε[ς — — — — —]
 [.]ι ἐπεμελ[ήθησαν] κ[α]ὶ τοῦ[του] ἐνδ[όξως — — — — —]
- 15 [. . καὶ τῶ]ν [μ]εγ[ά]λ[ων Παναθηναίων] Λ[.]Χ[— — — — —]
 [.]ΛΠΛ[.]ΥΟ[— — — — —]
 [.]ΕΝΛ[.]ΑΘ[.]Ο[— — — — —]
 [.]Υ[— — — — —]
 [.] εἴ[ν]ο[ιαν] τοῦ [δ]ήμου τ[οῦ Πριηνέων — —]
- 20 [ἐπαινέσαι τὸν δῆμον τῶν Πριηνέ]ων καὶ σ[τεφανῶ]σαι
 [χρυσῶι στεφάνωι] κατ[ὰ] τὸν νόμον εὐ[ν]ο[ίας ἔνεκα καὶ φιλο]-
 [τιμίας τῆς εἰ]ς [τὴν βο]υλ[ήν καὶ τὸν δῆμον τὸν Ἀθηναίων καὶ]
 [ἀνειπεῖν] τὸν [στέφα]νον Δ[ι]ον[υσίων] [τῶν ἐν ἄστει τραγωιδῶν]
 [τῶι καιν]ῶι [ἀγῶ]νι · τ[ῆς δὲ] ἀνα[γ]ο[ρ]εύ[σ]εως ἐ[πιμεληθῆ]ναι τοῦς]
- 25 [στρατηγ]οῦς· ἐπαινέσαι δὲ καὶ τοῦς π[ρεσβευτὰς — — — — —]
 [.] Ἀρκεθοντος, Λάκωνα [— — — — —]

Translation⁸

- . . .
- Assembly in the theatre. Of the presiding committee . . . was putting to
 the vote, and his fellow presiding committee members . . .
- proposed: since the Prieneans being friends [and kinsmen of the Athenian]
 5 [People] from ancient times, . . .
- [call to mind?] by all means both the other benefactions of the People
 towards them, and especially that

⁸ I have adapted Stephen Lambert's translation from Attic Inscriptions Online.

the Athenians -settled (?) them after . . .
 and now wishing to join in enlarging the honours done to the gods
 10 by the People, have sent [ambassadors]
 to the Panathenaia, who . . . the . . .
 . . . which there was for Athena Archegetis [and . . .]
 of the city; and those who were present . . .
 . . . took care of this also splendidly . . .
 15 and of the Great [Panathenaia] . . .
 . . .
 . . .
 . . .
 . . . good will of the People [of Priene]
 20 [...to praise the people of Priene] and [to crown them with a golden]
 [crown] according to the law [on account of their] goodwill [and]
 [love of honour towards the] council [and people of Athens and]
 [to announce] the crown at the [city] Dionysia
 in the contest for new tragedies. The generals shall take care of
 25 the announcement; and to praise also the ambassadors . . .
 . . . son of Arke^{<ph>}on (?), Lakon . . .

Initially, I was able to read the letters Δ[.]οῦ[.]σίων in line 23 (visible on the squeeze and in the photograph), leading to the restoration Δ[ι]οῦ[υ]σίων, referring to the Athenian Dionysia festival. The most likely context of this word is a formula of crowning with an announcement at the festival, given the phrase “according to the law” in line 21 and the announcement by the generals in lines 24–5 (a supplement originally suggested by Hiller, *I.Priene* 45 p. 310). In fact,

a fragmentary Athenian decree honouring the people of Priene found in Athens, dated to c. 230 BC through Tracy's identification of a cutter,⁹ is restored with just such a formula:

... [ἐπαινέσαι τὸν δῆμον τῶν] Πριη[ν]έων καὶ
 10 [στεφανῶσαι χρυσῶι στεφάνωι κατὰ τὸν] νό[μ]ον εὐνοί-
 [ας ἔνεκα καὶ φιλοτιμίας τῆς εἰς τὸν δῆμο]ν τὸν Ἀθηναί-
 [ων· καὶ ἀνειπεῖν τὸν στέφανον Διονυσίω]ν τῶν ἐν ἄσ-
 [τει τραγωιδῶν τῶι ἀγῶνι, τῆς δὲ ποιήσεως τοῦ] στεφά-
 [νου καὶ τῆς ἀναγορεύσεως ἐπιμεληθῆ]ναι το]ύς στρα-
 15 [τηγούς.]¹⁰

Two further Athenian decrees honouring communities, namely the people of Ephesos and of Antiocheia of the Chrysaoreans (Alabanda in Caria),¹¹ dated by editors more or less contemporaneously to *I.Priene B-M 99*, contain almost the identical formula, which is exclusively found in Athenian texts of this period.¹² The decree for Ephesos has a relatively higher level of preservation, providing a more viable parallel:

[... ἐπαινέσαι τὸν δῆμον τ]ῶν Ἐφεσίων καὶ στεφανῶσα[ι]
 [χρυσῶι στεφάνωι κατὰ τὸν νόμον εὐνοία]ς ἔνεκα καὶ φιλοτιμίας τῆς
 [εἰς τὸν δῆμον τὸν Ἀθηναίων, καὶ ἀνειπε]ῖν τὸν στέφανον τοῦτον Δι-
 [ονυσίων τῶν ἐν ἄστει τραγωιδοῖς τῶι καιν]ῶι ἀγῶνι· τῆς δὲ ποιήσεως
 10 [τοῦ στεφάνου καὶ τῆς] ἀν[α]γορεύσε[ως ἐπιμεληθῆ]ναι το]ύς στρατηγού[ς]¹³

⁹ S.V. Tracy, *Athens and Macedon: Attic letter-cutters of 300 to 229 B.C.*, Berkeley 2003, 129.

¹⁰ *IG II/III*³ 1, 1065 lines 9–15.

¹¹ Ephesos: *IG II/III*³ 1, 1215 lines 6–10, c. 210 BC. Alabanda: *IG II/III*³ 1, 1178 lines 14–20 (with the inclusion of other festivals), 202/1 BC?.

¹² A variation of the formula is more widely attested for individual honorands, for example *IG II/III*³ 1, 1137 lines 23–26, an honorific decree for Eumaridas of Kydonia and his son dated to c. 193/2 BC.

¹³ *IG II/III*³ 1, 1215 lines 6–10.

Some further line-by-line commentary is necessary to justify my readings and supplements. The two recent corpus editions provide the same minimal text in this section. I use a line length of approximately 47 letters based on line 24. It should be noted that the supplements in the upper part of the text suggested by previous editors give a line length of approximately 41 letters. However, it seems that the text was not inscribed *stoichedon*, and that there was some variation in line length. Further, none of the original edges of the stone apart from the bottom are preserved on this side of the block (although they are partially preserved on the other side). The exact line divisions in my suggested additions must therefore remain uncertain, due to the state of the stone.

20 The reading of $\omega\nu$ in my view allows for the likely restoration of ‘the people of the Prieneans’ ($\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \delta\eta\mu\omicron\nu\ \tau\acute{\omega}\nu\ \Pi\rho\iota\eta\nu\acute{\epsilon}]\omega\nu$) as the honorands. I was able to read only the top bar of the letter read by previous editors as T. This bar would also be consistent with Σ , the first letter of $\sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\alpha\nu\acute{\omega}\sigma\alpha\iota$, which would be the expected next word in the formula.

21 An attribute demonstrated by the honorand(s) in the genitive, followed by $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\kappa\alpha$ is expected: $\epsilon\upsilon\nu\omicron\iota\alpha\varsigma$ fits the visible letter traces (EY and a round letter, likely O), aligns with the comparanda mentioned above and is already mentioned in Line 18 of this inscription. The only attribute to follow on from $\epsilon\upsilon\nu\omicron\iota\alpha\varsigma$ in all parallel cases is $\phi\iota\lambda\omicron\tau\iota\mu\iota\alpha\varsigma$, which can thus likely be restored here.

22 In the restored texts of the decrees for Ephesos, Alabanda and Priene, *eunoia* and *philotimia* are shown just towards the *people* of Athens (but the formula is not fully preserved on the stone in any of these cases). However, the likely line length and the recorded letter traces here suggest that we should restore both the council and the people ($[\epsilon\iota]\varsigma\ [\tau\eta\nu\ \beta\omicron]υ\lambda[\eta\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \delta\eta\mu\omicron\nu\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\nu$

Ἀθηναίων) which is paralleled in contemporary decrees honouring individuals.¹⁴ The letters Υ and Λ read by previous editors may not have a space between them.

23 ἀνειπεῖν τὸν στέφανον is the expected phrase, as there is not space for the longer ἀνειπεῖν τὸν στέφανον τοῦτον. It is possible to read τόν in place of the ΤΟΗ recorded by previous editors. Visible letter traces (υον) accord with the final letters of στέφανον. As stated above, the letters Δ[.]ον[.]σίων are clearly visible.

24 The expected phrase τῶι καινῶι ἀγῶνι fits the letter traces well, as the two vertical letters recorded by previous editors can be read as the nu and iota of ἀγῶνι. This phrase refers to the competition for new tragic compositions as opposed to the non-competitive performance of tragic revivals.¹⁵

Historical discussion

The new readings and restorations can contribute to historical analysis of the text. As there has been discussion elsewhere, I will only provide some brief additional observations here, especially regarding the ongoing diplomatic, religious and kinship relationship between Athens and Priene.¹⁶

The proposed parallels between the decree regarding Priene and the decrees concerning Ephesos and Alabanda potentially strengthen the dating of c. 200 BC on the basis of letter forms and reduce the likelihood of the second-century date proposed by Hiller (*I.Priene* 45). If accepted, the parallels would attest to a visible and repeated strategy on the part of the

¹⁴ As at *IG II/III*³ 1, 1137 line 25.

¹⁵ See B. Le Guen, *Beyond Athens: The Expansion of Greek Tragedy*, in: V. Liapis, A. Petrides, (ed.), *Greek Tragedy After the Fifth Century. A Survey from ca. 400 BC to ca. AD 400*. Cambridge 2019, 172 n. 80.

¹⁶ See S.V. Tracy and C. Habicht, *New and Old Panathenaic Victor Lists*, *Hesperia* 60 (1991) 234; R. Parker, *Athenian religion: a history*, Oxford 1996, 221; J.L. Shear, *Serving Athena: the festival of the Panathenaia and the construction of Athenian identities*, Cambridge 2021, especially at 150–55. For further analysis of the relationship between Athens and Priene, see L. Lazar, *Athenian Power in the Fifth Century BC*, Oxford 2024, 114–21.

Athenians. It is noteworthy that the peoples of Priene, Ephesos and Alabanda, all cities in Western Asia Minor, were likely awarded crowns (and, in the cases of Ephesos and Alabanda, citizenship) by the Athenians around the end of the third century BC.¹⁷ It is possible that the Athenians wanted to strengthen ties with communities in Asia Minor given the significant instability in the region, with the overlapping claims of Antiochos III, Attalos I, the Rhodians and, from about 204 BC, Philip V of Macedon, whom the Athenians actively opposed.¹⁸ But in the case of the people of Priene, thanks to the fragmentary decree of c. 230 BC (*IG II/III*³ 1, 1065), we know that this was not the first time they had been honoured in this manner. Again, the parallel is not only epigraphically helpful but also historically significant.

In fact, we can reconstruct a sustained record of diplomacy between Athens and Priene, from the second half of the fourth century through to the second, maintained through the award of repeated honours, Prienean participation in Athenian festivals and the reinforcement of their kinship relationship, as recorded in both Athenian and Prienean documents. A well-known Prienean decree, dated to 326/5 BC on prosopographical grounds, records the Prienean commitment to send a delegation and panoply to the Athenian Great Panathenaia on the basis of their shared kinship.¹⁹ Aside from this promise, the decree awards the Athenians a package of honours, including citizenship and priority seating at Prienean festivals, and mentions the Athenian general on Samos, suggesting that the Athenian cleruchy there played a role in the interaction.²⁰ The Athenians also granted proxeny to a Prienean individual in the 320s BC.²¹ There are then several fragmentary Athenian decrees concerning Priene dating to the end of the fourth century, one of which seems to invite the people of Priene to spectate at the Athenian

¹⁷ See also *IG II/III*³ 1, 1170, a decree granting *asylia* to Magnesia on the Maeander dated to 208/7 BC; and *IG II/III*³ 1, 1242, a fragmentary text recording a (renewed) citizenship grant to the Milesians ca. 200 BC.

¹⁸ For western Asia Minor in the final decade of the third century and the actions of Antiochos and Philip, see J. Ma, *Antiochos III and the cities of Western Asia Minor*, Oxford 1999, 74–82; for Athenian opposition to Philip, see C. Habicht, *Athens from Alexander to Antony*, Cambridge, Mass. 1997, 196–97.

¹⁹ *I.Priene B-M* 5 lines 2–6, 8–13.

²⁰ *I.Priene B-M* 5 line 18. Shortly after the end of the cleruchy, the restored Samian people maintained this close relationship with Priene, honouring two Prienean individuals: see *IG XII* 6, 51 and 82.

²¹ *IG II/III*³ 1, 474.

Dionysia.²² The occasion for these diplomatic overtures, which align with others concerning communities in western Asia Minor, may have been Athens' entry into Antigonos' sphere of influence along with Priene;²³ as with the primary decree under consideration here, a shift in the geopolitical landscape may have precipitated the re-assertion of existing diplomatic ties. Next, a Prienean decree, perhaps of the 290s BC, honours the Athenian Philaios.²⁴ We then come to the two Athenian honorific decrees of the late third century already mentioned, as well as another (highly fragmentary) Athenian decree honouring the people of Priene, again inscribed and displayed at Priene.²⁵ Finally, a Prienean decree of the late second century honours the Athenian Herodes son of Herodes, and names Athens as the Prienean metropolis.²⁶ The mythical kinship between Athens and Priene was still alive and well at this point.

We thus have an unusually full record of diplomatic interactions between Athens and Priene: this was a sustained relationship, which both cities chose to reinforce through repeated actions and the commemoration of these actions, in some cases prompted by shifting geopolitical circumstances. But the repeated evidence for the kinship relationship between the two communities, supported by Prienean delegations to the Athenian Great Panathenaia, is particularly significant. Although there were competing myths of origin and foundation in ancient Ionia, the narrative of Athens as the Ionian metropolis was one which seems to have grown in popularity in the fifth century BC, encouraged by Athenian imperial ideology.²⁷ The most prominent realisation of this kinship relationship, as attested in the contemporary epigraphic record, was the Athenian demand that all allied communities (conceived as Ionian),

²² *IG II² 567* line 23: θέαν εἰς τὰ Διονύ[σια]. See also *IG II/III³ 1, 474*; *IG II² 565*; *IG II² 566*, which seems to refer to a grant of Prienean citizenship in line 8; *SEG 3.86*, which praises the same ambassador as in *IG II² 566*.

²³ Habicht, *Athens* (n. 18) 69; for renewed Athenian relations with other communities in Asia Minor from around this time, see also *IG II² 456*, an Athenian decree concerning Kolophon dating to 307/6, discussed further below; *IG II² 1129*, a fragmentary Athenian text concerning Miletos; and *IG II² 1485*, an inventory of the Treasurers of Athena recording wreaths given by the Ephesians (A line 9) and perhaps the Milesians (A lines 25–26).

²⁴ *I.Priene B-M 17* with C. Crowther, *I.Priene 8 and the History of Priene*, *Chiron* 26 (1996) 216 for the date.

²⁵ *I.Priene B-M 98*.

²⁶ *I.Priene B-M 65* line 48.

²⁷ N. Mac Sweeney, *Foundation myths and politics in ancient Ionia*, Cambridge 2013, 161–65; M. Hallmannsecker, *Roman Ionia: constructions of cultural identity in Western Asia Minor*, Cambridge 2022, 18–19.

of which Priene was one, send delegations and offerings to the Panathenaia.²⁸ It is also worth noting that allied representatives would have been present at the Athenian Dionysia to deliver their tribute.²⁹ These questions follow: when the Prieneans encouraged their kinship relationship and their participation in Athenian festivals in the late-classical and Hellenistic periods, what did it mean, and was it connected to their interaction with imperial Athens in the fifth century?

There is fourth-century evidence for two other former allied communities sending delegations or offerings to the Athenian Panathenaia, namely Paros (in 372 BC during the time of renewed Athenian power in the Aegean) and Kolophon (at the end of the century, likely in the same context of Antigonid power mentioned above).³⁰ But *I.Priene B-M 99* provides unique evidence for a former allied community sending ambassadors to the Panathenaia in the later Hellenistic period.³¹ The decree's presentation of kinship with Athens is also far from ubiquitous in other records of diplomatic activity between Athens and former allies.³² For example, the decree of 208/7 BC mentioned above (in note 17) granting *asylia* to Magnesia

²⁸ This empire-wide mandate was included in two decrees of the mid-420s: *IG I³ 71* = Osborne - Rhodes, *GHI* no. 153 lines 55–58 (425 BC); *IG I³ 34* = Osborne - Rhodes, *GHI* no. 154 lines 41–42 (c. 425/4 BC). See R. Meiggs, *The Athenian empire*, Oxford 1972, 292–95. Smarczyk, *Untersuchungen zur Religionspolitik und politischen Propaganda Athens im Delisch-Attischen Seebund*, Munich 1990, especially 549–91; Parker, *Athenian Religion* (n. 16) 142–3; E. Driscoll, *The making and meaning of the Athenian empire*, doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley 2018, 134–49; Lazar, *Athenian Power* (n. 16) 100. There is good evidence to suggest that Greek foundations often maintained religious links with their mother-cities: A. J. Graham, 1964, *Colony and mother city in ancient Greece*, Manchester 1964, 159–65.

²⁹ *Ar. Ach.* 505–6; Eupolis fr. 254.

³⁰ Paros: *SEG 31.67* = 56.112 = Rhodes - Osborne, *GHI* no. 29 lines 2–6. Kolophon: *IG II² 456 B* line 6. Note also *IG II² 466*, dating to the late fourth century, in which the people of Tenos perhaps promise to send a cow to the Panathenaia (βούν is preserved on the stone in line 23, but the text preceding is fragmentary); G. Reger, *Athens and Tenos in the Early Hellenistic Age*, *The Classical Quarterly* (1992) 42, 365–83, at 366–68 places this text in the context of Athenian-Antigonid relations.

³¹ To my knowledge, there are two other possible examples in which text could be restored to refer to the Panathenaia: a Pergamene *theoros* in an honorific decree of the early second century BC (*IG II/III³ 1*, 1261 line 8); and a Milesian *theoros* in another honorific decree dated to the same period (*SEG 42.1072* line 4 with W. Günther, *Milet und Athen im zweiten Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, *Chiron* 28 (1998) 21–34 for Athenian-Milesian relations in the second century). For foreigners at the Athena Panathenaia more generally, see Tracy and Habicht, *New and Old Panathenaic Victor Lists* (n. 16); Shear, *Serving Athena* (n. 16) 284–97.

³² Note that O. Curty, *Les parentés légendaires entre cites Grecques*, Geneva 1995, which provides a catalogue of texts with the term *suggeneia* (kinship), records no other examples concerning Athens apart from a second-century AD text from Kibyra in Lycia (no. 81).

refers to the Magnesians as “kinsmen and friends” (οἰκεῖοι καὶ φίλοι) of the Athenians;³³ but the other late third-century Athenian decrees concerning communities in Asia Minor, such as that for Ephesos, do not emphasise a kinship relationship. Moreover, presentation of the kinship between Athens and Priene in *I.Priene B-M 99* may have been even more emphatic than past interpretations have acknowledged: apart from the (restored) phrase φίλο[ι καὶ συγγενεῖς] in line 4,³⁴ and the reference to the antiquity of the relationship in line 5, it seems logical that the settlement of the Prieneans by the Athenians referred to in lines 7–8 (the meaning of which has been debated),³⁵ immediately preceding the reference to the Panathenaia, denotes the Ionian migration from Athens.³⁶ This chosen emphasis is especially notable given that alternative foundation stories for Priene may also have been in circulation.³⁷

It is true that these interactions in a general sense – the declaration of kinship, participation in festivals and the awarding of honours – were typical of the widespread Hellenistic diplomatic economy, and perhaps this is the sole context in which we should analyse them.³⁸ Nonetheless, Priene provides the best Hellenistic epigraphic evidence for the Athenian-Ionian kinship relationship, which had formed an ideological basis for earlier Athenian power. One wonders, then, whether the roots of this Hellenistic interaction did indeed lie in the fifth century. Although we have no direct fifth-century evidence for Priene’s position in the empire,

³³ *IG II/III*³ 1, 1170 line 7.

³⁴ Although included in both recent editions, the supplement has been questioned by Lambert, *Inscribed Athenian Decrees* (n. 3), 18–19.

³⁵ Wilamovitz, recorded in Hiller’s edition (*I.Priene* 45), interpreted the lines as a reference to an Athenian settlement after the Prieneans’ removal by the Persian King Cyrus (as recorded in Hdt. 1.161) and consequently restored μετὰ τὴν ἐπὶ [Κύρου ἀνάστασιν] at the end of line 8; this reading is retained in the recent *IG* edition. See Lambert, *Inscribed Athenian Decrees* (n. 3), 17–18. Note that Priene appears to have been re-founded at a new site in the fourth century, and Athens may have been involved: for one of the many discussions of this difficult issue, see S. Hornblower, *Mausolus*, Oxford 1982, 323–30.

³⁶ An alternative supplement for the end of line 8 (suggested to me by M. Hallmannsecker) could be τὴν ἐπὶ [Κόδρου ἀποικίαν], referring to the Athenian King Kodros. For Ionian kings claiming descent from Kodros, see Hdt. 1.147; for the Ionian migration from Athens being led by Kodros’ sons see Strabo 8.7.1.

³⁷ Hellanikos FGrH 4 F101 and Strabo 14.1.12 record a Boeotian origin myth for Priene; a Prienean decree of the second century makes reference to a poet performing a story about the Theban king Kadmos, possibly reflecting this myth (*I.Priene B-M* 103 line 7).

³⁸ For a succinct summary of this ubiquitous culture of Hellenistic diplomacy, see J. Ma, *Peer Polity Interaction in the Hellenistic Age*, Past and Present 180 (2003) 9–40.

it is clear that in later years the Prieneans were keen to advertise their relationship, despite its imbalance (note the lack of Athenian delegations or offerings at Prienean festivals), not only through the passing and inscribing of their own decrees, but also through the erection of Athenian decrees in their own public space.³⁹ Moreover, the Prieneans and Athenians themselves certainly viewed the relationship as one of antiquity and longevity.⁴⁰ At the risk of being circular, we might speculate that we see such an imperial legacy in later centuries precisely because the Prieneans perceived Athens as their mother-city and experienced their participation at the Athenian Panathenaia with a level of willing engagement and ideological buy-in in the fifth century.⁴¹ Their engagement with Athenian honours in the context of the Dionysia may also have had fifth-century origins.⁴²

It is clear, then, that this decree, while fragmentary, provides unique and important evidence for an inter-polis diplomatic relationship that was unusually sustained (or at least evidenced) and unusually reminiscent of the earlier relationship between imperial power and subject.⁴³

Figure 1: Squeeze of *I.Priene 45 = I.Priene B-M 99 = IG II/III³ 1, 5 1239*, made under permit and the auspices of the DAI Priene survey team in September 1990, now in the archive of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents in Oxford.

³⁹ Such inscription is worth noting, although there are other examples of non-Prienean decrees in Prienean public space: see, for example, two decrees of nearby Phokaia (*I.Priene B-M 100* and *101*).

⁴⁰ *I.Priene B-M 99 = IG II³ 1, 1239* line 5.

⁴¹ Explored further in Driscoll, *The making and meaning of the Athenian empire* (n. 28) 134–49; Lazar, *Athenian Power* (n. 16) 114–21.

⁴² The first recorded example of a crown being awarded to a foreign honorand and announced at the Athenian Dionysia dates to 410/9 BC (*IG I³ 102 = Osborne - Rhodes, GHI* no. 182), an honour which may have been witnessed by delegates from allied communities including Priene.

⁴³ I would like to thank the editor and readers for *Tyche*, as well as Charles Crowther (who has taught me all things I know epigraphic and Prienean), Martin Hallmannsecker, Marcus Chin and Peter Thonemann. Work on this article took place as part of the CHANGE project with funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No. 865680).

Figure 2: *I.Priene 45 = I.Priene B-M 99 = IG II/III³ 1, 5 1239*, photograph taken by Charles Crowther in 1990, now in the archive of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents in Oxford.