Senatus Consultum de Tabenis

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In his settlement of Asian affairs at the conclusion of the First Mithridatic War Sulla examined the status of the various cities and states and made whatever changes he considered desirable. Some of the cities were rewarded for their loyalty to Rome, others were punished. When the reorganization of the province had been completed, early in 84 B.C., he departed.

Among the cities which had been rewarded was the Carian city of Tabae. Deep in the confines of the mountains and surrounded by canyons it nevertheless had been involved in the war. In 1889 a fragment of a senatus consultum was published which indicated beyond doubt that Tabae steadfastly resisted Mithridates and accordingly had earned the gratitude of Rome. In the period 85–84 B.C. Sulla had made certain grants or concessions to the city, and, a few years later, the Roman Senate had confirmed them. Tabae itself then had a copy of the decree engraved and erected in its own city, probably on the anta of some temple.¹

Unfortunately the first publication of this Senatorial decree contained a faulty reading that caused scholars to make certain assumptions about the nature of the concessions made to Tabae. But in 1933 and 1934 the block containing the decree was located a second time and examined very carefully by Buckler and Calder. Eventually they published it anew, this time with an excellent photograph of their squeeze. Their publication reveals the mistake of the first editor and

establishes the true reading. In 1954 L. and J. Robert published the text again, profiting by the revision of Buckler-Calder and offering many new suggestions together with very full notes. The text which is printed below is basically that of the Roberts but differing in one respect. Their restorations of lines 7 and 10–11 are omitted. Those lines contain the cruces of the entire document and it is with their restoration that we are here concerned.

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allusion to a confederation. He felt that the text was wrong and suggested \( \delta [\pi \omega S] \) in place of \( [\pi] \delta [\epsilon i S] \). Thus he anticipated the true reading made thirty-five years later! He could not believe that cities could have been granted to Tabae and refused to consider a confederation. He was the first to suggest that Tabae had been granted special privileges. He restored the passage as follows:

\[
\delta [\alpha \ \tau e \ \epsilon \pi \alpha \theta \lambda a \ \tau \eta S] \\
[\tau o u] t o u n \ \dot{a} \rho e \tau \eta S \ \kappa o i \ \kappa a t a \lambda o g i \eta S \ \dot{e} [v e k e n \ \alpha \nu o i S] \\
[\dot{e} p o] \ \sigma u m b \sigma u l \sigma o u \ \gamma n \nu \mu \mu i S \ \lambda e \nu k i o S [K o r n \nu \lambda i o S] \\
[S \nu l l a] a s \ \alpha \nu t o k r \acute{a} t o w r \ \sigma v e n e k \varphi \rho \eta \varphi \eta \sigma e n, \ \delta [\pi \omega S \ \tau o i S \ \iota \iota S] - \\
[\omega i S] \ \dot{e} < \theta > \nu \sigma < \mu \ \tau o i S \ \nu \mu \mu i S \ \alpha i \rho \acute{e} \sigma e a \nu i \ \tau e \ \dot{e} \sigma i n.
\]

He explained the peculiar datives of the last line as the equivalent of Latin ablatives, for the Greek copies of \textit{senatus consults} are all translations of the Latin originals. His interpretation of the final phrase may be seen in his translation back to Latin: \textit{ut suo iure suis legibus essent}. Thus “cities” disappeared and “privileges” took its place.

Let us now examine the proposals for lines 7 and 10-11 which were made after the revision of the stone.

Buckler-Calder proposed \( \delta [\alpha \ \tau e \ \phi \eta \varphi i o s \theta \dot{e} \varphi a t \eta n a i] \) in line 7 and \( \delta [\pi \omega S \ \epsilon \pi ^ \prime \ \epsilon [\sigma y \ a \upsilon] \ \tau o i S \ \nu \mu \mu i S \ \alpha i \rho \acute{e} \sigma e a \nu i \ \tau e \ \dot{e} \sigma i n \ [k \gamma \varphi i a] \) in 10-11. This makes the grant broader than one of privileges alone, for it includes all the decrees which the Tabenians had voted with Sulla’s permission. This was rightly rejected by Robert, who saw that the phrase “all that Sulla permitted them to be voted” was impossible on historical grounds. Sulla had not been in Tabae and could hardly therefore have given them his permission to vote anything at the time when they had resisted Mithridates.

Robert proposed \( \delta [\alpha \ \tau e \ \phi l \lambda \nu \theta \rho \varphi \omega a \ ?] \) in line 7 and \( \delta [\pi \omega S \ \tau a \nu t a \ | \ \epsilon \pi ^ \prime \ a \upsilon] \ \tau o i S \ \nu \mu \mu i S \ \alpha i \rho \acute{e} \sigma e a \nu i \ \tau e \ \dot{e} \sigma i n \ [k \gamma \varphi i a] \) in 10-11. He understood the last line to mean that the privileges granted by Sulla were valid “aux mêmes lois et aux mêmes conditions.” He could, however, offer no parallels for such a combination of words and ideas. He was, nevertheless, convinced that the sense of the passage was established.

Klaffenbach, in his review of Robert, was not convinced. With a great deal of reserve and hesitation he suggested \( \delta [\alpha \ \tau e \ \epsilon \pi \alpha \theta \lambda a \ \tau \eta S] \) for line 7, following Wilamowitz, and \( \delta [\pi \omega S \ \upsilon \varphi ^ \prime] \ \dot{e} \alpha \nu] \ \tau o i S \ \tau o i S \ \nu \mu \mu i S \)
Bean also could not agree with Robert, for he maintained, rightly, that only επί τοῖς αὐτοῖς νόμοις could carry the meaning he had suggested. Bean felt that the Tabenians were to be allowed to make their own laws and decisions: δόσοις κύριοι | εφ' αὐτοῖς (?) τοῖς νόμοις αἴρέσειν τε δίων [χρήσθαι]. But he was not satisfied with his own restoration.

And there the matter stands: complete disagreement on the issue of exactly what sort of concessions had been made to the Tabenians. That the city is being treated as autonomous, however, seems clear.

Ever since “cities” had been removed from the decree almost all editors and commentators have assumed that ἐπαθλα or some similar word should be restored in line 7. Therein lies the source of the difficulty. Apparently only Bean has felt that such a word could not be the subject of the phrase in lines 10–11. The old theories of Viereck and Mommsen had been dismissed. The new reading of the stone had removed “cities” and therefore anything of a similar nature does not seem to have been considered possible. But ἐπαθλα in line 7 must carry over to lines 10–11, and that creates a strange combination of words. One does not ordinarily speak of “privileges” in connection with “laws” and “policies.”

The true nature of the concessions made to Tabae and, consequently, the correct restoration of the noun in line 7, may be discovered by an examination of the concessions made by Sulla about this same time to other cities. A list of these with a quotation of the pertinent clauses must be given.

A. Stratoniceia. S. C. de Stratonicensibus of 81 B.C. (OGIS 441), lines 53–56: χώρα [κώμας λιμένας προσόμους τε τών] πόλεων, δὲν Λεόκιος Κορνήλιος Ἑλλας αὐτοκράτωρ | τῆς τούτων ἀρετῆς καταλογῆς τε ἐ[νεκεν προσώρισεν συνεχώρη|σεν, δόσως τα ἀυτοῖς ἔχεων ἔξ[η κτλ. Similar expressions appear in lines 93–97 and 102–104 of the same document. The great similarity between this decree of the Senate and the one concerning Tabae was, of course, noticed by the first editor and its phrases used for the purposes of restoration and interpretation. Robert quotes large sections of the Stratonicean decree.

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From an examination of these passages and a comparison with the phraseology of our present decree it is possible to suppose that Sulla had also granted Tabae control of κώμαι or χωρία. These are in no sense cities and have nothing at all to do with a confederation of any sort. Clearly Sulla had no objections to the granting of villages, districts or even revenues to those cities which had displayed their loyalty to Rome. And since our decree grants Tabae the privilege of fortifying nearby Thyessus (lines 12–13), one may assume that the city had been concerned about its military security. And accordingly it could have asked Sulla for control of certain villages which were of importance from a strategic point of view. Sulla, convinced of Tabae’s loyalty and therefore of its usefulness to Rome in this part of Caria, may have agreed.

But Robert was struck by the absence of προσώρισεν in the Tabenian decree and therefore felt that συνεχώρησεν alone was insufficient to convey the meaning of attributing territories to the city. But does not the passage quoted from the S. C. de Oropiis (above, C) show that the verb alone was quite sufficient? The verb also appears alone in lines 25–27 of that same document: αὐταί αἱ χώραι ὑπεξειρημέναι εἰσίν, ὡς Λεύκιος Σύλλας θεῶν ἀθανάτων ἱερῶν τεμενῶν| φυλακῆς ἐνεκέν συνεχώρησεν {ὑπεξειρημέναι εἰσίν}, ταύτας τε τὰς προσόρισεν, περὶ δὲν ἄγεται τὸ πράγμα, Λεύκιος Σύλλας τῷ θεῷ Ἀμφιάραω πρὸς οὐσίας] σεν (!), ὡς κτλ.

Similar phrases are found in the same document in lines 15–16 of col. 1 and line 7 of col. 2. Thus ὑπήκουοι may be restored at the end of line 11.
Such a restoration accounts nicely for the datives that precede it. And then both the construction and the sense become clear immediately. The passage may be restored as follows:

\[
\text{δο[ας τε κύρας τῆς]} \\
[τού]των άρετῆς καὶ καταλογῆς ἐν[εκεν αὐτοῖς] \\
[μετ]ὰ συνβουλίου γνώμης Λεύκιος Κ[ορνήλιος] \\
[Σύλλας αὐτοκράτωρ συνεχώρησεν να[ς ὅπω[ς αὐτή]-} \\
[αὶ αὑ]τῶν το[ῖς νόμοις αἱρέσεων τε ὅσων[ὑπήκουι] \\
κτλ.
\]

“... , and whatever villages L. Cornelius Sulla imperator granted to them after consultation with his consilium for the sake of their courage and honor, that these villages should be subject to them, to their laws and to their policies.”

The lack of conjunctions and the use of \( \tau \varepsilon \) in the last line are due to the influence of the Latin original. Similar constructions abound in the leges and senatus consulta. See, for example, line 17 of the S. C. de Asclepiade (S. Riccobono, Fontes iuris romani antieustiniani², Pars Prima [Florence 1941] no. 35): τέκνα ἐκγονοὶ γυναικὲς τε αὐτῶν.

It is difficult to see what the Latin original of αἱρέσεων might have been. The use of the plural is odd, but it must reflect a Latin plural. Its usual meaning in the singular in the Hellenistic age is “policy” or “inclination.”² And one may assume that such is its meaning in our decree, that is, the inclinations, wishes, or general policies of the Tabenians. The plural serves to indicate not one policy at a particular point in time but any policy at any time.³ Thus the villages are made completely subject to the laws and future wishes of Tabae.

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² See C. B. Welles, Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period (New Haven 1934) 310. The word also occurs, in the singular, in the S. C. de Asclepiade, line 18 of the Greek portion. Unfortunately the Latin original at that point is missing, but F. De Visscher in L’antiquité classique 13 (1944) 26 n.2, suggested optio. With good reason, for the Greek has ἔξωολα καὶ αἱρέσεις.

³ If δο[ας τε χορία is restored at the end of line 7, then of course lines 10-11 would have to appear thus: δο[ας τα[ίτα α[υτ]οις το[ῖς νόμοις αἱρ[έσειν τε ὅσων[ὑπήκουι]. The use of a plural verb in this case poses no obstacle, for parallels exist. Examine the S. C. de Stratonicensibus (OGIS 441) 50-52: δο[ας τε [φυλα]μάτα ἐποίησαν το[ίς το[ῦ το[ῦ πο]λικέων, ἐν πρῶ[ς βασι[λέα Μιθραδάτην ἀνδρίζον. Ὅπως τ[α]κτα πάντα κύρια ὅσω. And Inschriften von Priene no. 40, A, line 5: καὶ δο[ας κρητ[ήρα κεκριμένα εἰσ[. . .}