

*Chapter 4*  
**Hellenistic Kingship**  
**Native subjects, Greek cities**  
The Main Features



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Alexander to Kleopatra: History of  
the Hellenistic period

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# The Origins of Hellenistic Kingship

- Monarchy is a backward institution according to ancient Greek standards.
- Survives in peripheral regions such as Macedonia and Epirus.
- A feature of the 'barbaric' world.
- In principle an illegitimate form of power over the *polis*.



# The Origins of Hellenistic Kingship

- A new reality with elements inherited from:
  - 1) Macedonian royal traditions
  - 2) Royal traditions in the East (Pharaonic Egypt, Achaemenid Persia, Babylonia)
  - 3) Alexander's campaign and the wars between the Successors (emphasis on military achievements and war)



# The Successors Become Kings

## (Plutarch, *Demetrios*, 17.5-18)

Accordingly, when he (Aristodemos of Miletos) had come near (to Antigonos), he stretched out his hand and cried with a loud voice: 'Hail, King Antigonos, we have conquered Ptolemy in a sea-fight, and now hold Cyprus, with twelve thousand eight hundred soldiers as prisoners of war.'...The multitude then for the first time proclaimed Antigonos and Demetrius kings. Antigonos' friends tied at once a diadem round his head, while Demetrius was sent a diadem by his father and addressed as king in a letter he wrote. When the news was reported, Ptolemy's followers in Egypt also proclaimed Ptolemy king, to dispel any impression that his defeat had humbled his pride. And so emulation spread the practice like a contagion among the Successors: Lysimachus began to wear the diadem, and so too Seleucus in his dealings with the Greeks (with the barbarians he had already been behaving as a king).

# The ideology of royal power (Suda s.v. 'Basileia')

Monarchy. It is neither nature nor law which gives monarchies to men, but the ability to command an army and to handle affairs competently. Such was the case with Philip and the Successors of Alexander. For Alexander's natural son was in no way helped by his kinship with him, because of his weakness of spirit, while those who had no connection with Alexander became kings of almost the whole inhabited world.

Βασιλεία. Οὔτε φύσις οὔτε τὸ δίκαιον ἀποδίδουσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰς βασιλείας, ἀλλὰ τοῖς δυναμένοις ἡγεῖσθαι στρατοπέδου καὶ χειρίζειν τὰ πράγματα νουνεχῶς. Οἷος ἦν Φίλιππος καὶ οἱ διάδοχοι Ἀλεξάνδρου. Τὸν γὰρ υἱὸν κατὰ φύσιν οὐδὲν ὠφέλησεν ἡ συγγένεια διὰ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀδυναμίαν. Τοὺς δὲ μηδὲν προσήκοντας βασιλεῖς γενέσθαι σχεδὸν ἀπάσης τῆς οἰκουμένης



# The foundations of royal power

- Military victory, successful political leadership, Individual excellence, personal charisma
- Personal monarchy: the state is identified with the person of the king
- The king rules over a spear-won (*doriktetos*) land
- A vast territorial state covering regions with diverse degrees of dependence/autonomy



## PTOLEMY CONTROLS EGYPT

- Diodorus 18. 14.1. He succeeded to Egypt without putting himself at risk; towards the natives he behaved generously (*φιλανθρώπως*), but he succeeded to 8.000 talents, and began to recruit mercenaries and collect military forces; and a multitude of friends came to him because of his clemency.
- Diodorus 18.39.5. He [Antipater] divided the satrapies right from the start and assigned to Ptolemy the land he already had: it was impossible to replace him as it seemed that he controlled Egypt because of his own virtue as **a conquered (*δορίκτητος*) land**.
- Diodorus 18.43.1. Ptolemy, having defeated against all odds Perdiccas and the royal forces governed Egypt as a **kingdom won by the spear** (*Πτολεμαῖος παραδόξως ἀποτετριμμένος τόν τε Περδίκκαν καὶ τὰς βασιλικὰς δυνάμεις τὴν μὲν Αἴγυπτον ὥσανεῖ τινα βασιλείαν δορίκτητον εἶχεν*).

# The foundations of royal power

- Success is elusive and by definition not permanent
- Need to create other foundations of legitimacy
- Dynastic principle: personal charisma is transmitted within the family
- Co-regency



## Seleukos returns to Babylonia (Diodorus 19.90-91)

In Asia, after the defeat of Demetrius at Gaza in Syria, Seleucus ... while he himself was full of eagerness, **the friends around him** could see that the troops with them were very few in number but that their opponents had large forces available.. when Seleucus saw their alarm he encouraged them, reminding them that ...they should also trust the forecast of the gods, that the end of the expedition would be worthy of his purpose: **for when he had consulted the oracle at Branchidae [oracle of Apollo at Miletus] the god had addressed him as King Seleucus**, and Alexander himself appearing to him in a dream had given him a clear sign of the future rule which he was due to achieve in time.

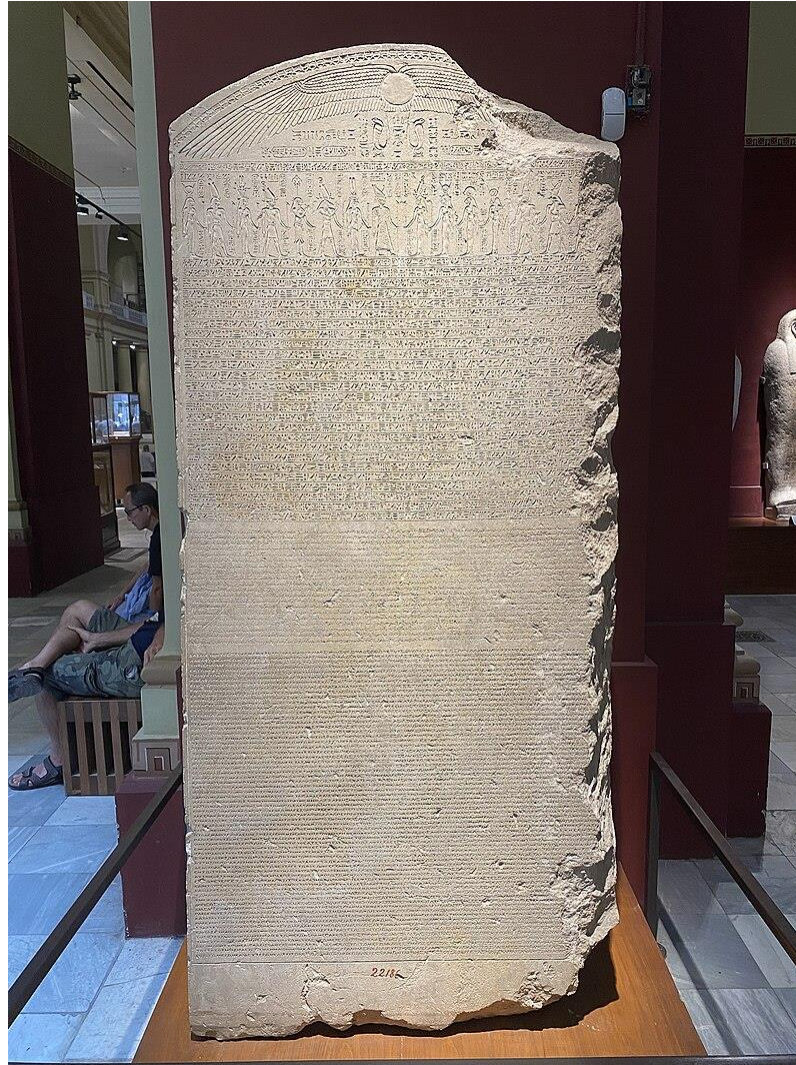


# The religious foundations of royal power

- Divine ancestry of royal dynasties
- The Ptolemies are attached to Hercules and to Dionysus
- The Antigonids are attached to Hercules
- The Seleucids are attached to Apollo
- Kings as favourites of local gods  
(Marduk in Babylonia, Ammon in Egypt)



# The Canopus decree, issued by an assembly of Egyptian priests in 238 BC



In the reign of Ptolemy (III) son of Ptolemy (II) and Arsinoe, the Brother–Sister Gods (*theoi adelphoi*), in the ninth year, when Apollonides son of Moschion was priest of Alexander and of the Brother–Sister Gods and of the Benefactor Gods (*theoi euergetai*), when Menecratea was basket-bearer (*canephoros*) of Arsinoe Philadelphus, on the 7th of the month Apellaeus and the 17th of the Egyptian month Tybi (= 4 March 238); decree; the high-priests, the prophets, those who enter the holy of holies for the robbing of the gods, the *pterophoroi*, the sacred scribes and the other priests who have assembled from the temples throughout the land for the 5th of Dios (= November), **when the birthday of the king is celebrated**, and for the 25th of the same month, when he received the monarchy from his father, and who held a session on that day in the temple of the Benefactor Gods at Canopus, declared...

# The Canopus decree

since King Ptolemy son of Ptolemy and Arsinoe, the Brother–Sister Gods, and Queen Berenice his sister and wife, the Benefactor Gods, **constantly confer many great benefactions on the temples** throughout the land and **increase more and more the honours of the gods**, and **show constant care for Apis and Mnevis** and all the other famous sacred animals in the country at great expense and outlay, and (since) the king on a campaign abroad **brought back to Egypt the sacred statues that had been taken out of the country by the Persians and restored them to the temples** from which they had initially been taken,

# The Canopus decree

be it resolved by the priests in the country to increase the honours which already exist in the temples for King Ptolemy and Queen Berenice, the Benefactor Gods, and to their parents the Brother–Sister Gods, and to their grandparents the Saviour Gods, and (be it resolved) **that the priests in all the temples throughout the land should also be called priests of the Benefactor Gods and should be inscribed in all public documents, and that the priesthood of the Benefactor Gods should also be engraved on the rings they wear;...**

**And since festivals of the Benefactor Gods are celebrated every month in the temples** in accordance with the previous decree, on the 5th, the 9th and the 25th, and since festivals and public religious assemblies are celebrated every year for the other greatest gods, **a public religious assembly shall be celebrated every year in the temples and throughout the whole country in honour of King Ptolemy and Queen Berenice, the Benefactor Gods, on the day when the star of Isis rises...**

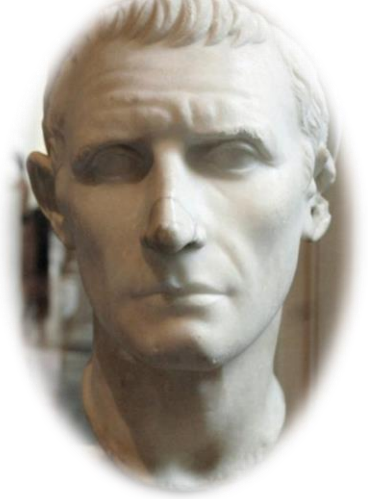
# The religious foundations of royal power: The Ptolemies



- Dynastic cult of the Ptolemaic House created by Ptolemy II
  - A. cult of Ptolemy I and Berenike as *Theoi Soteres* (Saviour Gods). Festival of *Ptolemaieia*
  - B. Combined cult of Alexander and *Theoi Adelphoi* (Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II)
- Under Ptolemy III and Berenike (Benefactor Gods) a combined cult of both deceased and current rulers



# Letter of King Antiochus III



King Antiochus (III) to Menedemus, greetings.

Wishing to increase further the honours of our sister and queen Laodice, and believing this to be most imperative for us, not only because of the affection and care she shows in her life with us, but also because of her piety towards the deity, we continue to perform affectionately everything that is fitting and just [for her] to receive from us, and **in particular it is our decision that just as chief priests (*archiereis*) of ourselves are appointed throughout the kingdom so too chief priestesses should be set up in the same [provinces] who shall wear gold crowns with her portrait on them, and who shall [also] be inscribed on (business) contracts after the chief priests of our [ancestors] and ourselves.** Therefore, since Laodice has been appointed in the provinces under [your] command, [let] everything [be done] in conformity with what is written above and let the copies of the letters be inscribed on stelae / and dedicated in the most distinguished [places], so that [our good disposition] towards our sister should be made manifest in these matters too now and for the future.

# The religious foundations of royal power: The Seleucids



- The Seleucid dynastic cult is organized in different terms
- Antiochos I proclaims his father Seleukos I as God Victorious (*Nikator*)
- Under Antiochos III high-priests and high-priestess of both deceased and current rulers in the different satrapies
- The dynastic cult gives a religious legitimacy to the inherited royal power and charisma



# Kings and their native subjects

- **Seleukos returns to Babylonia**

(Diodorus 19.90-91)

- In Asia, after the defeat of Demetrius at Gaza in Syria, Seleucus received from Ptolemy not more than 800 infantry and about 200 cavalry, and set out for Babylon. ... **He reckoned that the Babylonians would readily join his side because of the goodwill they already felt towards him...** When he entered Babylonia, the majority of the local people came out to meet him, **joined his side and declared themselves ready to do whatever he saw fit.**

He had been satrap of that country for four years, during which he had dealt with everyone in a generous way, eliciting the goodwill of the common people and **securing long in advance supporters should he one day be given a chance to strive for supreme power.**

- **Ptolemy controls Egypt**

(Diodorus 18. 14.1)

- He succeeded to Egypt without putting himself at risk; **towards the natives he behaved generously** (*φιλανθρωπῶς*)



# The kings and their native subjects

- Kings appear in diverse roles in relation to different audiences
- Interaction between rulers and native priests (Canopus decree)
- Rulers protect and sponsor native cults and temples (visits, donations, sacrifices)
- They are invested with traditional royal titles and characteristics (pharaonic, babylonian)



# Cuneiform text found in the main temple complex of Nabu/Nebo at Borsippa (near Babylon)

I am Antiochus, the great king, the legitimate king, the king of the world, king of Babylon, king of all countries, the caretaker of the temples Esagila and Ezida, the first (-born) son of King Seleucus, the Macedonian, king of Babylon.

When I conceived the idea of (re)constructing Esagila and Ezida, I formed with my august hands (when I was still) in the country Hatti the (first) brick for Esagila and Ezida with the finest oil and brought (it with me) for the laying of the foundation of Esagila and Ezida. And in the month of Addaru, the 20th day, the 43rd year [268 B.C], I did lay the foundation of Ezida, the (only) true temple of Nebo which is in Borsippa.

O Nebo, lofty son, (most) wise among the gods, splendid (and) worthy of all praise, first-born son of Marduk, child of Erua, the queen who fashioned all creation, do look friendly (upon me) and may – upon your lofty command which is never revoked – the overthrow of the country of my enemy, the fulfilment of (all) my wishes against my foes, constant predominance, a kingdom (ruled) in justice (to all), an orderly government, years of happiness, enough progeny be your permanent gift to the (joint) kingship of Antiochus and his son, King Seleucus!





When you, Prince Nebo, born in Esagila, first-born of Marduk, child of Erua the queen, enter – under jubilant rejoicings – Ezida, the (only) true temple, the temple (befitting) your position as Anu [i.e. highest of the gods], the seat which gladdens your heart, may – upon your trusty command which cannot be made void – my days (on earth) be long, my years many, my throne firm, my rule lasting, under your lofty sceptre which determines the borderline between the heaven and the nether world. May (only words of) favour be on your sacred lips with regard to me, and may I personally conquer (all) the countries from sunrise to sunset, gather their tribute and bring it (home) for the perfection of Esagila and Ezida.

O Nebo, foremost son, when you enter Ezida, the (only) true temple, may there be on your lips (words of) favour for Antiochus, the king of all countries, for Seleucus, the king his son (and) for Stratonice, his consort, the queen!



# The kings and their native subjects

- Kings address themselves to the local communities in local idioms
- They perform roles sanctioned by tradition
- This creates obligations, commitments and expectations to be fulfilled.



# Cities and Kings

- Basic distinction between old and new cities.
- Both share the same institutional framework: *ekklesia*, *boule*, *archontes*.
- Various forms of royal control (*epistates*, garrisons, tribute).
- Uniform need to obey the king.
- Communication via embassies and letters.





## Decree of Ilium in honour of Antiochos I



- When Nymphius son of Diotrephes was *epimenios*, and Dionysius son of Hippomedon was president (*epistates*), Demetrius son of Dies moved: since King Antiochus (I) son of King Seleucus (I), having in the beginning taken over the kingdom and pursued a glorious and honourable policy, has sought to bring back to peace and their former prosperity the cities of the Seleucis which were suffering from difficult times because of the rebels from his cause, and after attacking those hostile to his interests, as was just, (has sought) to recover his ancestral rule; and therefore has embarked upon an honourable and just enterprise, **and with not only the ready assistance of his 'friends' and his military forces** in his fight for his interests but also the goodwill and collaboration of the deity, has restored the cities to peace and the kingdom to its former state; and (since) now he has come to the provinces (*topoi*) at this side of Mount Taurus with all zeal and enthusiasm and has at once restored peace to the cities and has advanced his interests and the kingdom to a more powerful and more brilliant position, **most of all through his own excellence, but also through the goodwill of his 'friends' and his military forces;** and therefore, so that the people may be seen to be well disposed to the king and to hold the same attitude, since previously at the time when he took over the kingdom it offered continuously prayers and sacrifices on his behalf to all the gods, with good fortune, be it resolved by the council and the people, that the priestess, the temple-wardens and the *prytaneis* should pray to Athena of Ilium together with the ambassadors, that his presence (at this side of Taurus) should be to the advantage **of the king, his sister and queen, his friends and his military forces**, and that every other prosperity should attend the king and the queen, and that their interests and the kingdom should remain for them and prosper as they themselves intend; ...



... and (be it resolved) that the other priests and priestesses should pray together with the **priest of King Antiochus to Apollo, the ancestor of his family**, to Nike, to Zeus and to all the other gods and goddesses. [After] the prayers the temple-wardens and the *prytaneis*, together with the priestess and the (royal) ambassadors, shall perform the customary [ancestral] sacrifice, while the generals together with the other priests (shall perform the sacrifice) to Apollo and the other gods. When they are offering [the] sacrifice, the citizens and all the resident foreigners (*paroikoi*) shall wear crowns, and shall gather [in front of their homes] and offer sacrifices to the gods on behalf of the king and the people. [And so that] the people [may be] seen [by all] to be helping in promoting what relates to honour and glory, (be it resolved) to praise him for the excellence and manliness he [constantly] displays, [and to set up] a golden equestrian statue [of him] / in the sanctuary of Athena in the [most] distinguished [place] on the step of white stone with the following inscription: **'The people of [Ilium (honours) King Antiochus] son of King Seleucus for his piety towards the sanctuary (and) for being [the benefactor and] saviour of the people.'** . . and (be it resolved) that [three] envoys should be appointed from among [all the men of Ilium, to] convey to him the greetings of [the people, and congratulate him on the good] health enjoyed by him, his [sister and queen, his children], his friends and [military forces, and to convey (to him) the] honour [that has been voted to him], and to discourse on [the goodwill the people has constantly] shown [towards] his father [Seleucus and the whole royal household] and to invite [him to . . .] (the end of the inscription is lost)



## Royal letter to Erythrae



King Antiochus (I or II) to the council and people of Erythrae, greetings.

Tharsynon, Pythes and Bottas, your envoys, handed over the decree to us in which you voted the honours, and brought the crown with which you crowned us, and likewise the gold offered as a present, and they themselves spoke about the goodwill which you have constantly felt towards our house, and in general about the gratitude felt by the people towards all benefactors, and also about the eminent position enjoyed by the city under the former kings, and they requested with every earnestness and zeal that we should be well disposed to you and that at the same time we should help in increasing the city's privileges in all that relates to honour and glory. We have graciously accepted the honours and the crown, and likewise the present (of gold), and we praise you for your gratitude in all matters; for you seem in general to pursue this line of conduct. And therefore from the beginning we have constantly maintained our goodwill towards you, as we can see the sincerity and honesty of your conduct, and now we are even more attracted to you, as we recognise your nobility from many other proofs, and not least from the decree which was handed over to us and from the words spoken by your ambassadors. And since Tharsynon, Pythes and Bottas declared that under Alexander and Antigonus (the One-Eyed) your city was autonomous and free from tribute, and our ancestors were constantly zealous on its behalf, and since we see that their decision was just and we ourselves wish not to fall short in (our) benefactions, we shall help to preserve your autonomy and we grant you exemption from tribute, including all the other taxes and [the] contributions [to] the Gallic fund. ..



# Decree of Itanos at Crete

With good fortune. Since King Ptolemy (III), having received the city of Itanos and its citizens from his father King Ptolemy (II) and his ancestors, continues to benefit (the citizens) well and gloriously, and to preserve with goodwill their enjoyment of the same laws they had when he took them over, resolved by the council and the assembly: the park next to the gate shall be consecrated as a sacred enclosure of King Ptolemy and Queen Berenice the sister and wife of King Ptolemy; the city shall offer a sacrifice every year at their birthday festival in honour of King Ptolemy and Queen Berenice, and shall celebrate a race. The *kosmeteres* in office with Soterius shall inscribe this decree on a stone stele and dedicate it in the sanctuary of [Athena Polias]. The expense shall be paid [from the] revenues of the city.



# The Kings and the Cities: Reciprocal Relations

- Need to legitimize the rule of the king over the *polis*
- The king emerges as benefactor (*euergetes*)
- *Eunoia* (goodwill) displayed by the king to the cities and vice versa
- Honours awarded by the cities to kings



# The Ruler Cult Organised by Greek Cities

- A response to royal benefaction (*euergesia*) and goodwill (*eunoia*) shown by remittal of taxes, donations in cash or food, building programs, awards of freedom
- Cultic honours include altars, sacrifices, processions, priests
- Mutual bonds and obligations between king and city



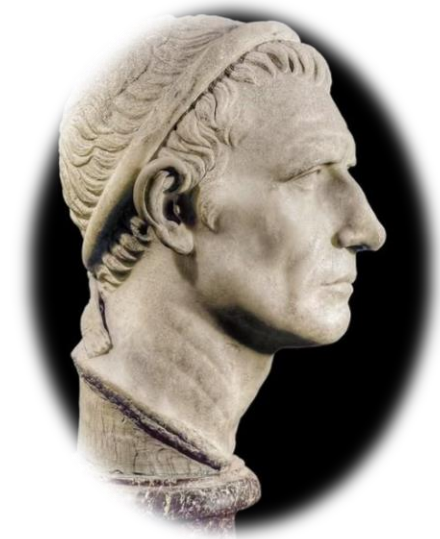
# Kings as founders of cities

- *Poleis* established by kings mainly in Asia
  - a. Foundations *ex nihilo*
  - b. Promotion of 'native' settlements to *polis*-status
  - c. Promotion of military settlements
- Cities function as garrison posts,
- receive Greek immigrants
- become centres of Hellenic culture



# The Monarchic State

- Composed of both central/bureaucratic and autonomous institutions
- Aims at controlling and extracting the surplus of production
- Aims at obtaining access to physical resources and manpower
- Exact forms of exploitation and control differ according to local particularities



# The Unity of the Hellenistic State



- Unity is focused on the person of the king
- The administrative staff is composed of **royal friends** (personal relation), acting as advisers and occupying top military and administrative posts
- **Military forces** are also attached personally to the king and the dynasty
- Acceptance of gifts means acceptance and legitimacy of royal power.



# The cities in the Hellenistic Period: political structure

- The political structure follows the standard Greek model:
- A plurality of annual officials elected by the assembly are charged with duties regarding the finances, the supervision of the city and the market, the public buildings, the food-supply, the education in the *gymnasium*, the various cults
- the council (*boule*) functions as a deliberative organ and the assembly (*ekklesia*) functions as the ultimate decision-maker
- Decrees mainly proposed by members of the council or officials
- See for example the decision-making process in the following decree from Eretria (around 100 BC)
- The *probouloi* proposed: since Theopompos, preserving his goodwill towards the people that inherited from his ancestors ... has donated to the people 40.000 drachmas for the purchase of oil for the *gymnasium*... Let it be resolved by the council and the people to praise Theopompos... to crown him with a golden crown ... to set up two bronze images of him, one in the most distinguished place of the sanctuary of Artemis and the other in the *gymnasium*.

## Euergetism (εὐεργετῶ)

- **Foreign benefactors:**
- Hellenistic rulers: they may provide money for various civic needs or grain; the highest form of royal *euergesia* is the attribution of privileges such as freedom (*eleutheria*), autonomy (*autonomia*) and/or fiscal immunity.
- Other foreign benefactors: they may be royal officials and friends, providing political or financial services; they may be foreign merchants or businessmen selling basic commodities at low prices; they may even be doctors or artists.
- **Local Benefactors**: wealthy citizens voluntarily assuming the cost of public services either in the capacity of elected magistrates who perform their duties without using the allocated civic funds or independently from the exercise of a civic office
- Serving as ambassadors; financing the gymnasium; restoring public buildings; financing festivals; financing the food-supply

# Factors that contribute to the spread of *euergetism*

- Need to legitimize royal power
- Need of local wealthy citizens to increase their political and social influence
- Relative luck of civic funds, mainly in relation to the shift of profitable economic activities to the East and the increasing financial burden imposed by constant warfare and piracy (needs to build and retain walls, to pay mercenaries)
- Increase of civic festivals and other civic ceremonies



# Honours and Privileges Awarded to Benefactors



- **Hellenistic rulers or Roman officials** receive (semi)cultic honours
- **Foreign benefactors** are awarded the titles of euergetes (benefactor) and proxenos (public guest: a foreigner representing the citizens of the city which gives him this title in his own city or royal court; *proxenia* was a honorific distinction with practical benefits as well, such as access to the local courts).
- **Foreign benefactors** receive privileges such as the right to hold property (*engtesis*) or to import and export without paying taxes (*ateleia*), or a fiscal status equal to that of citizens (*isoteleia*) or sometimes even full citizenship rights (*politeia*).
- **Both foreign and local benefactors** may receive the privilege to import and export without paying taxes (*ateleia*), honorific seats in public events (*proedria*), a public praise, an honorific crown or even an honorific representation (statue).
- **The cultic honours are the highest ones; gradually** these honours (initially awarded only to kings) are **given** to both other foreign benefactors and **local citizens as well**.

## Honorific Decree from Amorgos



Resolved by the council and the people; Soterides son of Phidias of Cosyllus was president, Philoxenus son of Philothemis of Alsus moved: since, when pirates made an incursion into the countryside at night and captured a total of more than 30 girls, women and other persons both free and slave, and scuttled the ships in the harbour and captured the ship of Dorieus, in which they sailed off with their captives and the rest of their booty; when all this had happened, Hegesippus and Antipappus, the sons of Hegesistratus, who were themselves prisoners, persuaded Soclidas, the captain of the pirates, to release the free persons and some of the freedmen and slaves, and volunteered to act as hostages on their behalf, and showed great concern that none of the citizen women or men should be carried off as booty and be sold, nor suffer torture or hardship, and that no free person should perish; thanks to these men the prisoners were saved (and returned) home without suffering harm; therefore be it resolved by the people, to crown Hegesippus and Antipappus each with an olive wreath for their merits and the concern they showed for the citizens who were taken prisoners, and to proclaim this decree at the Dionysia during the tragic contest; let the herald proclaim that the people crowns Hegesippus and Antipappus for their merits and the concern they showed for their fellow prisoners. Let this decree be inscribed on a stele and placed in the sanctuary of Athena Polias, and let Hegesistratus be responsible for the inscription.

*Syll.*4 521; *IG* XII.7.386



## Honorific Decree from Eretria (ca. 100 BC)

The *probouloi* proposed: since Theopompos, preserving his goodwill towards the people that inherited from his ancestors has donated to the people 40.000 drachmas for the purchase of oil for the *gymnasium* ... .. Let it be resolved by the council and the people to praise Theopompos... to crown him with a golden crown ... to set up two bronze images of him, one in the most distinguished place of the sanctuary of Artemis and the other in the *gymnasium*.



# Euergetism as a multi-dimensional phenomenon

- it was not munificence in itself but the timai, the highly esteemed public reward, which enabled benefactors to re-affirm and further increase their political and social capital and to inscribe themselves within the civic memory.
- **euergetism performs a double function.**
- On the one hand, by **facilitating access to the amenities of what was conceived as a proper Greek civilized life, it ultimately gave to the rule of local elites a publicly proclaimed popular legitimacy.**
- On the other hand, by constituting a major issue in local political life and a major concern and source of prestige and power for local politicians, **euergetism provided the institutions that awarded the honours and controlled access to them with the means to exercise a significant measure of influence over the behaviour and the public choices of the political class.**
- The citizen assembly in particular, being a collective body before which benefactions were promised, had an institutionally recognized say in both approving or modifying the terms of benefactions and in deciding the content of the benefactors' reward, sometimes even refusing to play along and rejecting both the utility of an intended act of munificence and the anticipated public praise.

# Relations between Cities: Interstate Arbitrations

- Interstate arbitrations are increasingly used as an alternative to war, mainly in relation to disputes between neighbouring cities over frontier lands.
- The two rivaling parties agree to invite a third party to act as an arbiter.
- This third party may be a Hellenistic ruler (if both litigants are under his influence); the king then may send an arbiter chosen by him or assign the arbitration to a third city also under his influence
- The two rivalling parties may also invite another city to act as an arbiter. Then a usually quite large board of arbiters arrives at the spot to carry out inspections and to render judgment.
- Sometimes these arbitrations do not provide permanent solutions.
- Border disputes going on for centuries.

# Foreign judges

- The recurring failure of many Greek cities to provide for the regular and/or the impartial functioning of their own justice was characteristic of the Hellenistic age.
- To palliate this deficiency there developed the institution of calling on other cities to provide a panel of judges to settle the lawsuits in suspense;
- The institution is known from over 250 inscriptions honouring the judges after the completion of their mission.
- Hellenistic rulers often acted as mediators in inviting such panels and may in fact have been responsible for promoting the practice in the generation after Alexander, as a means of securing the internal stability of Greek cities.

# *Asyilia* (Territorial inviolability)

- From the 260s to early Roman imperial times a number of Greek cities, mostly in the Aegean and Asia Minor, sought and received from the wider Greek world – cities, kings, leagues – and later from Rome herself recognition of their *asyilia* ('inviolability', literally 'immunity from reprisals' (*syle*)).
- The *asyilia* could be that of an important sanctuary controlled by the city (Cos), the city and its territory (Magnesia; Teos ), or the city as well as a sanctuary (Smyrna) – individual cases vary.
- Much of the evidence is provided by inscriptions set up by the beneficiary cities in which they record the recognition of the grant in response to a specific request.
- The international prestige conferred by such a recognition is evident, and accounts for the trouble cities went to secure it.
- What concrete benefits the privilege was expected to confer is less clear.
- The phenomenon has often been interpreted as a response to the insecurity of the age – the cities concerned sought to secure protection against arbitrary violence in peacetime, such as that practised by the Aetolians.

## Decree of Philippi granting *asylia* to the sanctuary of Asklepios at Cos

- Decree of Philippi. Sacred matters. Concerning the sacred embassy sent from Cos. Decision of the assembly. Since the city of Cos, in accordance with ancestral custom and the oracle (concerning) the sanctuary of Asclepius has sent Aristolochus son of Zmendron as chief sacred ambassador and as sacred ambassador Makareus son of Aratus to announce to the assembly the sacrifice in honour of Asclepius and the truce, and they came before the assembly, declared and renewed the kinship which exists between the city of Cos, the city of Philippi, King Antigonos (Gonatas), and all the other Greeks and Macedonians, and requested that the sanctuary should be considered inviolate (*asylos*); with good fortune be it resolved by the assembly: the city should accept the proclamation of the *Asclepia* at Cos and the truce as announced by the sacred ambassadors; the city of Cos should be praised for the honours which it pays to the goddess and for its goodwill towards King Antigonos, the city of Philippi, and the other Greeks and Macedonians; the sanctuary of Asclepius at Cos should be considered inviolate, in accordance with the policy of King Antigonos.

## Treaty of *isopoliteia* between Pergamon and Temnus

- Resolved by the council and people; proposal of the generals: Since the people of Temnus are well disposed towards the people of Pergamum, for good fortune, the council and people shall resolve to send two envoys to go [to Temnus] and declare the good will which the people of Pergamum continue to have towards them, and to enter into discussions so that there shall be a vote of *isopoliteia* ['equal citizenship'] between the two cities. If it seems appropriate to the Temnites, the men who are sent shall have authority to reach agreement on this. Elected: Apollonides son of Apelles; — — son of Hermippus.
- Resolved by the Temnites and the Pergamenes... the Temnites acquire citizenship rights at Pergamum and the Pergamenes at Temnus...the Temnites have the right to own land and house at Pergamum and the Pergamenes at Temnus.
- *Isopoliteia*: Mutual exchange of potential political rights; these rights are exercised if the recipient settles at the city which awarded them.