

# The *Gens Varinia* in Macedonia: On the Serrai Decree *SEG* LIV 617

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THE *GENS VARINIA* is one of the approximately 560 Italic *gentes* recorded to have members living in the province of Macedonia.<sup>1</sup> Nineteen Latin and thirteen Greek inscriptions spanning the period from the first century B.C. to the third A.D. indicate that members of this *gens* had settled only in cities in the province, specifically Perinthus, Philippi, Thasos, Thessaloniki, and Serrai. One of these was Varinius Rebilus, who is honoured in the decree under consideration here.<sup>2</sup>

The history of the decree and its reconstitution is a long one. Charles Edson was the first to record fragments A and B, as number 727 in his Notebooks (hereafter NB), on a visit to

<sup>1</sup> For the *gentes* in Macedonia see Ath. Rizakis, “L’émigration romaine en Macédoine et la communauté marchande de Thessalonique: perspectives économiques et sociales,” in Chr. Müller and Cl. Hasenohr (eds.), *Les Italiens dans le monde grec II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C. – I<sup>er</sup> s. ap. J.-C.* (*BCH* Suppl. 41 [2002]) 109–132.

<sup>2</sup> For the evidence on the *gens Varinia* see A. Tataki, *The Roman Presence in Macedonia. Evidence from Personal Names* (Meletemata 46 [2006]) 432–434, who however is unaware of the debate over the identification of Varinius Rebilus (his no. 18) with [- - -]nium Rebilum of Thasos and does not mention the Varinii of Perinthus (prob. 1<sup>st</sup> c. B.C.). Other names that should be added to his list are [- - -] Varinius [- - -], attested by a fragment of a sarcophagus in the necropolis of Eleutheroupolis (near Philippi) and dated to A.D. 56: Ch. Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, “Ένα αρχαίο πόλισμα στην Ελευθερούπολη Νομού Καβάλας,” *Tekmeria* 4 (1998/9) 49–52 [*AE* 1999, 1445]; and Varinius Pothus and Publius Variniu(s), mentioned in funerary inscriptions from Thessaloniki: P. Nigdelis, *Επιγραφικά Θεσσαλονίκεια* (Thessaloniki 2006) 277 (late 2<sup>nd</sup>/early 3<sup>rd</sup> c.) and 283 (2<sup>nd</sup> half 2<sup>nd</sup> c.). For the probable relationships among the members of the *gens* who settled in the different cities of the province, see Nigdelis 283–287 (with corrigendum for the name Rebilus).

Serrai on 24 July 1937;<sup>3</sup> they were published a few years later by Greek and Bulgarian scholars (see the lemma of the inscription below). The decree excited interest because it was thought that the honourand, given his unusual cognomen, [- - -]νιος Ῥέβιλος, was the same person as the [- - -]νιος Ῥέβιλος who appears in a long inscription from Thasos, possibly dating from before A.D. 69, preserving a decree honouring a prominent citizen who bequeathed certain fields to the city, and a fragmentary official addendum probably relating to the execution of his testament.<sup>4</sup> The identity of the Rebilus in the two inscriptions and the determination of his *gens* divided scholars for many years: some thought that the *gentilicium* in the Thasian inscription should be [Καν]ίνιος, associating him with the fabulously wealthy C. Caninius Rebilus (A.D. 56+) who was consul suffectus in 37;<sup>5</sup> some thought [Οὐαρ]ίνιος, considering him to be a member of the *gens Varinia*. The main argument of this latter group was the mention in the Thasos testament of at least four persons, presumably heirs or legatees of the testator, whose names appear with this *gentilicium* in full.<sup>6</sup>

The *gens* name and the identity of the person remained open questions until 2004, when Christian Habicht, on the basis of Edson's squeeze, read the name *Varinius* in the first line of fr. A

<sup>3</sup> Edson saw the two fragments "in the basement of the Gymnasium" and records that he does not know where they came from.

<sup>4</sup> C. Dunant and J. Pouilloux, *Recherches sur l'histoire et les cultes de Thasos II* (Paris 1958) 76–82 no. 185 [SEG XVIII 350], with the emendations of G. Daux, "Quelques noms, quelques texts," in *Thasiaka* (BCH Suppl. 5 [1979]) 351–373, at 358, 360.

<sup>5</sup> This is the view of Dunant/Pouilloux, *Recherches* 81–82, followed by H.-G. Pflaum, "Histoire et cultes de Thasos," *JSAV* 1959, 75–88, at 80; Daux, in *Thasiaka* 358, 360; and D. Samsaris, "La vallée du Bas-Strymon à l'époque impériale," *Dodone* 18 (1989) 203–382, at 234.

<sup>6</sup> J. and L. Robert, *Bull.épigr.* 1948, 106, and 1959, 328 (p.232), followed by F. Papazoglou, "Le territoire de la colonie de Philippes," *BCH* 106 (1982) 89–106, at 102 n.62 (who thinks that the full name is M. Varinius Rebilus), and Fr. Camia, "Il 'testamento' di Rebilus e l'epistola di Vinuleius Pataecius ai Tasi," *ZPE* 146 (2004) 265–271, at 267. For other suggested completions of the name see the apparatus criticus below on line 10 of the inscription.

of the Serrai decree, putting an end to the debate.<sup>7</sup> We are also indebted to Habicht for the final and till now most complete version of the inscription, with the addition of a previously published fragment of considerable importance for comprehending its content. As Habicht rightly observes, this fragment, which Edson found and identified on his second visit to Serrai, on 27 July 1938,<sup>8</sup> preserves part of the beginning of the decree, which earlier editors had not realised.<sup>9</sup> Understanding of the inscription was further aided by several restorations proposed by Angelos Chaniotis, concerning the crucial fragment C, in *SEG LIV*.

Despite these improvements, some points in the text remain problematic. And given this inscription's unique importance in the documentation of the social history of Serrai, an exhaustive and substantiated discussion of its reconstruction and interpretation is warranted.<sup>10</sup> To enable the reader to follow the discussion more easily, I give here the full text of the decree, based on Edson's squeezes, photographs, and transcriptions, which I was able to study at the Institute for Advanced Study (*figs.* 1–4).

**Fr. C:** Edson, NB 727 C; G. V. Kaphtantzis, *Ἱστορία τῆς πόλεως τῶν Σερρῶν καὶ τῆς περιφερείας τῆς I* (Athens 1967) 96–97, no. 22 (with photograph); G. Mihailov, “Inscriptions de la Thrace égéenne,” *Philologia* (Sofia) 6 (1980) 9, no. 13 [*SEG XXX* 614]; Samsaris, *Dodone* 18 (1989) 256, no. 75; Habicht, *ZPE* 148 (2004) 286

<sup>7</sup> “Das Ehrendekret von Serrai für Rebilus,” *ZPE* 148 (2004) 283–288, esp. 287.

<sup>8</sup> NB 727 C. Edson recorded it as “lying inside of the ἀρχαιοφυλάκιον of the now abandoned old Metropolis.”

<sup>9</sup> *ZPE* 148 (2004) 286. Earlier editors, e.g. Kaphtantzis, Mihailov, and Samsaris (see the lemma below) thought that the fragment came from a funerary inscription. For the position of the fragment in the inscription see n.12 below.

<sup>10</sup> A critical edition of the (ca. 75) inscriptions from Serrai and its environs—most of them funerary—is still a desideratum. For useful collections of these inscriptions see the works of Kaphtantzis and Samsaris cited in the lemma below, and cf. L. D. Loukopoulou, “Sur la structure ethnique et sociale de Serrai à l’époque impériale,” in *Poikila* (Meletemata 10 [1990]) 173–187, at 181–183.

[*SEG* LIV 617 (A. Chaniotis); *AE* 2004, 1333 (M. Sève)].

**Frs. A+B:** Edson, NB 727 A+B; V. Besevliev and G. Mihailov, *Belomorski Pregled* 1 (1942) 326, no. 18 (photograph no. 11);<sup>11</sup> J. and L. Robert, *Bull. épigr.* 1948, 106; Kaphtantzis 91, no. 17 (with photograph); Daux, *Thasiaka* 356–360; Mihailov 7, no. 10 [*SEG* XXIX 775]; Samsaris 233–235, no. 36; Habicht 284 [*SEG* LIV 617; *AE* 2004, 1333].

Cf. Dunant and Pouilloux, *Recherches* II 80–82 (J. and L. Robert, *Bull. épigr.* 1959, 328); Pflaum, *JSAw* 1959, 80; Papazoglou, *BCH* 106 (1982) 102 n.62 [*SEG* XXXII 842]; D. S. Samsaris, *Ἱστορία τῶν Σερρών κατὰ τὴν Ἀρχαία καὶ Ρωμαϊκὴ Ἐποχὴ* (Thessaloniki 1999) 291, no. 184; Camia, *ZPE* 146 (2004) 265–271; Tataki, *The Roman Presence* 434, no. 18. Nigdelis, *Επιγραφικὰ Θεσσαλονίκεια* 286 n.60.

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 C [ ca. 2-3 ] | | | | [ ca. 12 τὸ ]<sup>12</sup>  
 ἀγαλμα αὐτο[ὺ ca. 8 δα]-  
 πανάσθαι ἐν τῆ[ι ca. 9 ]  
 4 ἡμέρα εἰς τὸν δ[ ca. 9 ]  
 εἰ δέ τις εἰση[γῆσεται ca. 2 ]  
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 A [ 7 ] Οὐαρίνιογ Ῥέ[βιλον]  
 [κα]λείσθαι τε καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ  
 [τῆ]ς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ ἀπελευθέ-  
 4 ρους, στηλο[γ]ραφηθῆναί τε  
 τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο γενομε-<sup>vv</sup>  
 B [.] ἸΝΕΙ [ ca. 3 ] ὩΝΤΩΝΤΕ βουλευ-  
 [τῶν] | \ Α | | Ο | Δ , , / [ ca. 3 ] ' ' ' ^ | τ . ἠῆνα[ι]  
 8 [τῆν] στήλην ἀπέναντι του[<sup>3-4</sup> ]

<sup>11</sup> Who are in error concerning the number of lines of the inscription, adding a further line where the two fragments A and B meet.

<sup>12</sup> According to Habicht's calculations (284), the average number of missing letters is 21. He also gives the dimensions of the three fragments based on Edson's measurements. The necessary completion [γενεθλίωι] in line 3 shows that his calculation is correct. Also, comparing this fact with the larger number of letters in the lines in the lower part of the stele (e.g. AB.7 and 8, with ca. 24 letters each), we may conclude that the monument tapered slightly towards the top, as was customary with Macedonian funerary steles (see e.g. the decree *SEG* LI 786 from Amphipolis in honour of the gymnasiarch Philippos).

[<sup>ca.3</sup>]ιου ἔχουσαν ἐπιγραφὴν  
 [Οὐαο]ινίωι ῥεβίλωι εὐεργέτη  
 [ vac. τ]ῆς πόλεως [ vac. ]  
 12 [ vac. ]<sup>rD</sup> ^ [ vac. ]

**C: 1** [ ] | | | | lapis; Edson discerns traces of a round letter before the four vertical lines. **2** ΑΓΑΛΜΑΥ | C lapis, Edson; ἄγαλμα αὐτο[ῦ - - - δα] Karhtantzis, Mihailov, Samsaris; ἄγαλμα αὐτο[ῦ <sup>ca.8</sup> δα] Habicht, Sève; ἄγαλμα αὐτο[ῦ καὶ προσδα] Chaniotis. **3-4** ΠΑΝΑΣΘΑΙΕΝΤΗ [ ] / ΗΜΕΡΑ lapis, Edson; νάσθαι ἐν τῇ τῶν Ῥοζαλίωι / ἡμέρα Karhtantzis; νάσθαι ἐν τῇ (τῶν) Ῥόδων? / ἡμέρα Mihailov; νάσθαι ἐν τῇ[ι (τῶν) Ῥόδων?] / ἡμέρα Samsaris; νάσθαι ἐν τῇ[ι <sup>ca.9</sup>] / ἡμέρα Habicht, Sève; νάσθαι ἐν τῇ[ι γενεθλίωι] / ἡμέρα Chaniotis. **4** ΕΙΣΤΟΝΔ lapis, Edson; εἰς τ[ὸ]ν δειπνον πλησίον τοῦ τάφου μου] Karhtantzis, Mihailov, Samsaris; εἰς τ[ὴ]ν δ[ <sup>ca.9</sup>] Habicht; εἰς τ[ὴ]ν διανομῆν] Chaniotis. **5** ΕΙΔΕΤΙΣΕΙΣΗ lapis, Edson; εἰ δέ τις εἰς ἡρώιον Karhtantzis; ἡρώιον Mihailov, Samsaris; εἰ δέ τις εἰση[γῆσεται <sup>ca.5</sup>] Habicht; εἰση[γῆσεται] Chaniotis.

**A+B: 1** | A | | N | | N | L lapis, Edson; ΠΑΙΝΟ Besevliev/Mihailov, Mihailov, Samsaris; Οὐαο[ίνωι] ῥεβίλωι Habicht. **2** | L ΙΣΟΛΙ lapis, Edson; ΕΙΣΘΑΙ Besevliev/Mihailov; -εἶσθαι τε J. and L. Robert; [...]εἶσθαι Karhtantzis, Mihailov, Samsaris; [...]λείσθαι Habicht; [κα]λείσθαι Chaniotis. **2-3** ΚΑΙΤΟΥΣΑΠ[ ] ΣΟΙΚΙΑΣ lapis, Edson; ΚΑΙΤΟΥΣΑΠΟ / [τῆ]Σ ΟΙΚΙΑΣ Besevliev/Mihailov; καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ / [τῆ]ς οἰκίας J. and L. Robert; καὶ τοὺς ἐντὸς / τῆ]ς οἰκίας Karhtantzis; καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ / [τῆ]ς οἰκίας Mihailov, Samsaris, Habicht. **3-4** ΑΠΕΛΕΥΘΕ/ΡΟΥΣ lapis, Edson; ΑΠΕΛΕΥΘΕ/Ρ[ου]Σ Besevliev/Mihailov; ἀπελευθέρους J. and L. Robert; ἀπελευθέ[ρ]ους Karhtantzis; ἀπελευθέ[ρο]υς Mihailov, Samsaris; ἀπελευθέ[ρους] Habicht. **4** ΣΤΗΛΟ[.] | ^ΦΗΟΗΝΑΙΤΕ lapis, Edson; ΣΤΗΛΟ [γρα]Φ||C|ΝΑΙΤΕ Besevliev/Mihailov; στηλογραφεῖναι τε Karhtantzis; στηλο[γρα]φηθῆναι Daux; στηλογραφηθῆναι τε Mihailov, Samsaris; στηλο [γρα]φηθῆναι τε Habicht. **5** ΤΟΨΗΦΙΣΜΑΤΟΥΤΟΙ lapis, Edson; ΤΟΥΗΩΙΣΜΑΙΟΥ.Ο.ΕΝΟ ΛΕ Besevliev/Mihailov; τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦ γορευομέω Karhtantzis; τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο γενομε. Mihailov; τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο γενο Samsaris; τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο γενομε Habicht. **6** [.] ^ ΝΕ [ <sup>ca.3</sup>] | ^ ΩΝΤΩΝΤΕ lapis, Edson; ...Ε...^ΟΝΤΩΝΤΕΒΟΥΛΕΥ Besevliev/Mihailov; τῶν τε βουλευ J. and L. Robert; ε βουλευόντων τε βουλευ Karhtantzis; - - -ε-οντων (ἢ - - -ε—υον τῶν) τε βουλευ Mihailov; [βουλε]υόντων τε βουλευ Samsaris; [ν]ον ...υόντων τε βουλευ Habicht. **7** [ ] \ Λ | ^ Δ | ^ [ <sup>ca.3</sup>] | ^ | ^ . ^ ΗΝΑΙ [ ] lapis, Edson; ..... ^ ΗΝΑΙ Besevliev/Mihailov; [σαμένων, ἐδεδόχθαι] τεθῆναι Karhtantzis; [τῶν - - -]τεθῆναι Mihailov; [τῶν ἐδεδόχθαι] τεθῆναι Samsaris; [τῶν] καπ..δ <sup>8</sup> θῆναι Habicht. **8-9** [...] ΣΤΗΛΗΝΑΠΕΝΑΝΤΙ | ΟΙ [ <sup>3-4</sup>] / [ ] | ΟΥ lapis, Edson; [καὶ] ΣΤΗΛΗΝ-ΑΠΕΝΑΝΤΙΤΟ[ῦ βου/λευτη]ΡΙΟΥ Besevliev/ Mihailov; στήλην ἀπέναντι το[ῦ βουλευτη]ρίου J. and L. Robert; στήλην ἀπέναντι το[ῦ ἡρω/ε]ίου Karhtantzis; [τῆ]ν στήλην ἐπέναντι το[ῦ βου/λευτη]ρίου Mihailov; [τῆ]ν στήλην ἀπέναντι το[ῦ βου/λευτη]ρίου Samsaris; [τῆ]ν στήλην ἀπέναντι το[ῦ

...] / [...]ίου Habicht; [τὴν] στήλην ἀπέναντι τοῦ Σεβ[α] / [στε]ίου Chaniotis. **10** [ΝΙΩ] lapis, Edson; [Ἀνω]ΝΙΩ Besevliev/Mihailov; [Οὐαρε]νίου J. and L. Robert; [Ἀν]νίου Kaphtantzis; [Γ. Καν]νίου Daux; [- - -]νίου Mihailov; [Κανει?]νίου Samsaris; [Οὐα]νίου Habicht. **11** [ ]'Σ lapis, Edson; [τῆ]Σ Besevliev/Mihailov; [τῆ]ς Kaphtantzis, Mihailov; [τῆ]ς Daux, Samsaris; [τῆ]ς Habicht, Sève, Chaniotis. **12** [ ] lapis, Edson; [τῶν Σ]ερα[ίων] Kaphtantzis; [τῶν Σ]ιρα[ίων] Samsaris.<sup>13</sup>

The starting point for deciphering the decree is the word ἡμέρα in C.4. On the basis of the number of missing letters (nine) the only possible completion of the preceding line is [γενεθλίω]. As Chaniotis correctly proposes, we must accept that the decree concerned the anniversary of the birthday of Varinius Rebilus.<sup>14</sup> The third line, where the infinitive [δα]πανάσθαι evidently depends on a verb of the type ἔδοξεν found in the decision of the *boule* and the *demos*, leaves no room for doubt that the subject is a sum of money that was to be distributed on that day. The custom of prominent citizens leaving a sum of money to their city to be distributed on the anniversary of their birthday is attested by a considerable number of inscriptions and causes no surprise: a typical example comes from Gortyn in Crete: the *boule* and the *demos* erect a statue in honour of the prominent citizen Titus Flavius Xenion (whose death is placed in the period A.D. 174–182). A later inscription on the second side of the base informs us that Xenion left money to the city to be distributed on eight different anniversaries, including his birthday and the birthdays of three other members of his family.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> For the views that have been expressed concerning the end of the inscription see below.

<sup>14</sup> Sève (*AE*) thinks that the decree concerned the erection of a statue, a view that is only partially tenable, see below.

<sup>15</sup> *I. Cret.* IV 300 B: στηλογρα[φία] διανομῶν] τῶν καταλε[ιφθεισῶν ἐπὶ] κωδικίλλοις Φλ[α(ουίου) Ξενίωνος] ἡμερῶν ἡ ... πρὸ ια' Καλανδ(ῶν) Δεκεμβριῶν Φλ(αουίου) Ξενίωνος γεν[εθλίω], Εἰδοῖς Ὀκτωβριῶν Λαμπριούς καὶ Ξενοφίλου γεν[εθλίω], πρὸ ζ' Καλανδ(ῶν) Αὐγούστων Ζηνοφίλου γενεθλίω, πρὸ α' Καλανδ(ῶν) Αὐγούστων Κλ(αυδίας) Μαρκελλείνης γενεθλίω]. Cf. M. Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca* III (Rome 1974) 299–300, and for the prominent citizen J. Oliver, *Hesperia* 21 (1952) 397–399. Distributions of money to members of the *boule* of Miletos upon the anniversaries of the birthdays of private citizens and of the emperor, with a host of parallels, have been

Details regarding the distribution to be made on the anniversary of Varinius' birthday are given at C.4. The reconstitution of this line presents difficulties, however, since the letter determining the gender of the article of the last word is imperfectly preserved. The completion εἰς τ[ῆ]ν δ[ιανομὴν Χ]<sup>16</sup> is syntactically justified if we assume that this was how the sum to be distributed to each beneficiary was stipulated and that this sum was, as in similar instances, a single-digit number. It conflicts, however, with Edson's reading, who discerned traces of the letter omicron on the stone, traces that are confirmed by the squeeze.<sup>17</sup> This being the case, the most probable restoration—again taking into account the number of missing letters—is εἰς τὸν δ[ῆ]μον \* numerus (vel sim.).<sup>18</sup> Whether this sum was the whole of the bequest or the amount to be distributed to each person cannot be determined with any certainty; both gestures are documented in similar inscriptions.<sup>19</sup> It is also possible that the terms of the bequest were recorded in the (preceding and missing) rationale to the decree.

There appears to have been a connection between this distribution of money and the statue of the honorand mentioned at C.2 (ἄγαλμα αὐτο[ῦ]).<sup>20</sup> One possible completion for this line is

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collected and studied by N. Erhardt, "Ein milesische Festkalender aus severischer Zeit," *IstMitt* 34 (1984) 371–404.

<sup>16</sup> Proposed by Chaniotis, who follows Habicht's reading.

<sup>17</sup> Traces of a curve may be seen in the upper left and upper right portion of the letter. Traces of a round letter can also be seen in the photograph published by Kaphtantzis.

<sup>18</sup> Denarii (assuming that the sum was expressed in denarii) could be indicated in a variety of ways. There is nothing to preclude the possibility that the word was indicated on the stone by an abbreviation, e.g. δην. For the expression δαπανᾶσθαι (or equivalent) εἰς + accusative of person see L. and J. Robert, *Clarus* I (Paris 1989) 15 [*SEG* XXXIX 1243], IV.20–23, ἐκδεχόμενος δὲ καὶ Ῥωμαίους (meaning the officers who visited the city) καὶ τελῶν τὴν ἰς τοῦτους δαπάνην ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων.

<sup>19</sup> See Erhardt, *IstMitt* 34 (1984) 393 ff.

<sup>20</sup> For the use of ἄγαλμα for statues of prominent citizens in Macedonia, see e.g. *SEG* XXXV 744 with the restorations of M. B. Hatzopoulos and L. D. Loukopoulou, *Recherches sur les marches orientales des Téménides* (Meletemata 11 [1992]) 77–80, no. K2, lines 43–46: ἐψηφίσθαι αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ Ἀπολλωνίου καὶ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Στραττοῦς ἐκάστου ἄγαλμα

[καὶ προσδα]/πανᾶσθαι,<sup>21</sup> but it is difficult to determine precisely what the connection between the two might have been. Greek inscriptions of the imperial period do of course attest cities giving prominent citizens the right to erect statues, on which occasion they distributed sums of money;<sup>22</sup> but since what we have here is a gift marking a birthday, this version (i.e. a direct distribution) does not hold. There are many possible ways of completing this line: the passage could for example refer to the place where the distribution was to be made upon the decreed day, viz. the person's statue, as was the custom in other regions, e.g. Thyateira in Lydia, where the city honoured a distinguished citizen inter alia because he left \* ςφ' πρὸς τὸ δίδοσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν τόκων αὐτῶν ἐκάστῳ βουλευτῇ καὶ τετειμημένῳ (sc. magistrate) ἐν τῇ γενεθλίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Αἰλιανοῦ κατ' ἔτος · μη(νὸς) Ξανδικοῦ· ιη' \* α' ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀνδριάντος αὐτοῦ.<sup>23</sup> It could also refer more simply to the erection of a statue in honour of Rebilus, presumably in a prominent position in the city, as a precondition for the distribution of sums of money to the *demos* on the anniversary of his birthday. In this case the condition would be expressed with one of the customary formulas, e.g. ἐφ' ᾧ τε. Consequently C.1–4 should be completed as follows:

λίθινον, σταθῆναι δὲ τὰ ἀγάλματα καὶ τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο ἔνθ' ἂν αὐτὸς ὁ ἀγωνοθέτης ἐπισημοτάτῳ τῆς ἀγορᾶς αἰρῆται τόποι. The possibility of this referring to the statue of an emperor can be excluded: such a statue would have been designated as ἄγαλμα Σεβαστοῦ, and it is very doubtful that in that case protective clauses ensuring the bequest would have been necessary. Note τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ ἀπελευθέρους in AB.2–3.

<sup>21</sup> Proposed by Chaniotis (*SEG*), without explanation.

<sup>22</sup> E.g. the honorary inscription of the third century from Tenos *IG XII.5* 951.12–14, ἐτείμησεν καὶ δευτέρῳ ἀνδριάντι, δόντα καὶ πάλιν πᾶσιν τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν διανομήν.

<sup>23</sup> *TAM* V.2 926.8–13. Compare two examples from Philadelphia, V.3 1457 ἀναθέντα τῇ ἱερωτάτῃ βουλῇ \* βφ' καὶ [τῷ] συνεδρίῳ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων \* αφ' πρὸς τὸ ἀπὸ τῶν τόκων κατ' ἐνιαυτὸ[ν] ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀνδριάντος τοῖς ἐλθοῦσιν ἐξ αὐτῶν δίδοσθαι διανομήν τῇ γενεθλίῳ αὐτο[ῦ] ἡμέρα, ἥτις ἐστὶν μ[η](νὸς) Π[ε]ρειτίου η', and 1475 [ἀνα]θείσαν τῇ κρ(άτιστῃ) [β]ουλ[ῆ] χ[ω]ρίον πρὸς τὸ νέμεσθαι τὴν ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ πρόσοδον τοὺς βουλευτὰς ἐν μ[η](νὶ) Ἀρτεμισίῳ γι' τ<ῆ> γενεθλίῳ ἡμέρα τοῦ [ἀ]δελφοῦ πρὸ τῶν ἀνδριάντων.



C [ 2-3 ] | | | | [ ca. 12 τὸ]  
 ἄγαλμα αὐτοῦ[υ, ἐφ' ᾧ τε / ἐφ' οὐ ἀεὶ δα]-  
 πανᾶσθαι ἐν τῆ[ι γενεθλίῳ]  
 4 ἡμέρα εἰς τὸν δ[ῆμον Χ(?)].

As regards the nature of the bequest, the first editors of the Thasos decree assumed, on the basis of the reference to freedmen in A.2, that the bequest in the Serrai text was testamentary in nature, like that on Thasos.<sup>24</sup> The Serrai decree and the interpretation proposed above lend significant additional weight to this assumption, since in most known cases, donations in the form of distributions of money on the anniversary of a birthday are testamentary bequests that take effect after the death of the person honoured.<sup>25</sup> In any case, it is clear that what we have here is a bequest which its author has taken care to safeguard with a series of provisions that have been incorporated into the text of the decree. This may be concluded from the fragmentarily preserved C.5, whose wording εἰ δέ τις εἰση[γήσεται] is the same as that of the first line of the Thasos decree, which prohibits any change in the use of the bequest to which it refers, rendering null and void any proposal to sell or mortgage all or part of the donated farmland.<sup>26</sup> It is very likely that in both cases there were other safeguard clauses as well,

<sup>24</sup> This argument is also accepted by Camio, *ZPE* 146 (2004) 266 n.10, although it is mistakenly attributed to the Roberts.

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. the example from Gortyn (n.15 above), with the technical terms *καταλείπω* and *κωδίλλοι*, indicative of a testament. For similar examples from Macedonia see the Derriopos decree *IG* X.2.2 300 (A.D. 95), which provides for monetary gifts to be distributed to the *boule* on the anniversary of the birthday of Vettius Bolanus, which he ἀφήκεν αὐτῆ κατὰ διαθήκην (11–12), or the votive inscription 336 (A.D. 126/7) from the same city, which tells us that the heirs of one Anthestia Fusca δηνάγια πεντακιχίλια ἠρίθμησαν τῆ βουλῆ ἐκ διαθήκης (2). For examples from other areas see Erhardt, *IstMitt* 34 (1984) 396.

<sup>26</sup> Dunant/Pouilloux, *Recherches* no. 185.11–14: ἐὰν δέ τις εἰση[γήσεται] περὶ τι[μ]νος τούτων ἢ γράψῃ ἢ ἐπιψηφίσῃ ἢ ἐ]νγράψῃ εἰς τὸ τῆς πόλεως γραμματοφυλακίον τ]ὰ μὲν γραφέντα καὶ τὰ ψηφισθέντα ἄκυρα εἶναι. Cf. Habicht, *ZPE* 148 (2004) 286, who concluded from this *Schutzklausel* in both texts that “die beiden Urkunden ein- und derselbe Rebilus im Zentrum steht und dass die beiden Urkunden gleichzeitig sind.”

perhaps fines to be paid to some authority (in the case of Thasos, the priests responsible for the cult of the emperor).<sup>27</sup>

The question that arises is whether the Serrai bequest was protected by other safeguards as well. It is my belief that one such safeguard is concealed in the part of the inscription that has not yet been read, lines 6–7, where the two fragments A and B meet. Further study of Edson’s squeeze and transcription leads to the following new reading and restoration:<sup>28</sup>

τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο, γενομέ-<sup>vv</sup>  
 B [ν]ων ἐν[όρ]κων τῶν τε βουλευ-  
 [τῶν] καὶ τοῦ δή[μου], καὶ τεθήνα[ι]  
 8 [τὴν] στήλην

On this reading the council members and the *demoi* were required to take an oath before the decree was engraved and published. The phrase γενομένων ἐνόρκων is surprising, particularly in the position it occupies, for this is its first occurrence in a Macedonian decree,<sup>29</sup> although it is known from treaties between cities, which of course is not the case here.<sup>30</sup> What the nature of this oath was, and how, to whom, and before whom it was to be sworn, are questions that cannot be answered with any assurance. Given, however, that the text concerns a be-

<sup>27</sup> Lines 14–18: [τὸν δὲ] εἰπόντα ἢ {δὲ} γράψαντα ἢ ἐπιψηφίσαντα ἢ ἀναγ[ράψα]ντα τὴν γνώμην εἰς τὸ πόλεως γραμματοφ[υλ]ακίον ὀφείλειν τοῖς τῶν Σεβαστῶν ναοῖς στατή[ρ]ας ἀτι[μ]ήτους [δ]ισμυρίους.

<sup>28</sup> The main difference between these and earlier readings has to do with the letters in the words ἐνόρκων (specifically, in the squeeze the lower right-hand stroke of the letter omega—which is rendered in open form with two horizontal strokes—appears clearly, while of the kappa what can be discerned is part of the downstroke and the upper part of the wedge shape) and δήμου (where the delta is unmistakable). ἐνόρκων is the only possibility that makes sense.

<sup>29</sup> For the decrees of Macedonian cities and their wording, see P. J. Rhodes and D. M. Lewis, *The Decrees of the Greek States* (Oxford 1997) 187–194.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. the letter of Antigonos Monophthalmus to Scepsis of 311 B.C. (*OGIS* 5; Welles, *Royal Corres.* 1; *Staatsvertr.* III 428) 58–61: εἰς δὲ τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἐνόρκων γενομένων τῶν τε Ἑλλήνων πάντων καὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς [π]ράγμασιν ὄντων μᾶλλον ἂν καὶ ἀσφαλέστε[ρ]ον διαμενεῖν τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν τὴν ἐλευθερίαν.

quest, it is fair to assume that the oath would have to do with complying with its provisions, which means that the question should rather be whether there are any indications that benefactors required that beneficiary cities swear to respect the terms of the bequest.

And indeed we do have such a case, in a first-century testament from Kibyra, where the provisions for safeguarding a legacy include the swearing of an oath: Quintus Veranius Philagros, a prominent citizen and former high priest of the imperial cult, left the sum of 400,000 drachmas to the city to provide for the maintenance in perpetuity of the gymnasium (αἰώνιος γυμνασιαρχία). In order to safeguard this bequest the donor stipulated that every year on the date of the “vows” (κατευχῶν) the ephebes and the *demos* should take separate oaths before the magistrates and the scribe of the *demos*, swearing to maintain the gymnasium and its endowment δι’ αἰῶνος. According to the most likely interpretation, the day of the “vows” was the official first day of the year, when sacrifices for the health of the emperor were made in Rome and the provinces (*vota annua*).<sup>31</sup> In this context it is obvious that the oath would have been made to the Tyche/Genius of the Augustus, especially since it is specified later in the text of the bequest that compensation for any infringement must be made in honour of the emperor or the senate, which suggests that the bequest was connected with the imperial cult.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *I.Kibyra* 43.5–11: ὁμνύωσαν δὲ καθ’ ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν οἱ ἔφηβοι ἐν τῷ γυμνασίῳ τὸν πάτριον ὄρκον συνφύλαξιν τὴν γυμνασιαρχίαν καὶ πάντας τοὺς πόρους αὐτῆς. ὁμνύτω δὲ καὶ ὁ δῆμος ἐν τῇ τῶν κατευχῶν ἡμέρᾳ διὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων καὶ τοῦ γραμματέ[ω]ς τοῦ δήμου, ὡς ὑπὲρ σωτηρωδεστάτου πράγματος, τηρήσειν τὴν γυμνασιαρχίαν ταύτην καὶ τὰ χρήματα αὐτῆς. Cf. P. Herrmann, “Kaiserliche Garantie für private Stiftungen,” in W. Eck, H. Galsterer, H. Wolf (eds.), *Studien zur antiken Sozialgeschichte* (Cologne/Vienna 1980) 339–356, at 348–350, who however does not exclude the possibility that such a day of the “vows” might exist in the local calendar. The oath stipulated here, like that of Gythion (see below), is construed by S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power* (Cambridge 1984) 119, as an oath to the Tyche of the emperor. For the oath to the Tyche/Genius of the emperor, see Fr. Bömer, “Der Eid beim Genius des Kaisers,” *Athenaeum* 44 (1966) 77–133.

<sup>32</sup> Lines 11–19: ἐὰν δὲ ποτε καθ’ ὃν δήποτε οὖν τρόπον καταλυθῇ ἡ γυμνασιαρχία, ὑπέϋθυνος ἔστω ὁ δῆμος τῷ αὐτοκράτορι καὶ τῇ συγγλήτῳ εἰς

A similar reading appears to apply to a bequest made in the Macedonian city of Kalindoia: in A.D. 87 Flavia Mysta and her children rebuilt the damaged part of the city's Augusteum, where the family's statues had been placed, and demanded that their fellow citizens swear an oath to the *Genius Augusti* to take care of the temple, and presumably of the statues as well.<sup>33</sup> This is the earliest known instance of an oath in the name of the Tyche of the emperor in Macedonia.<sup>34</sup>

The same oath was used in the case of a bequest made at Gythion in 41/2.<sup>35</sup> Here the donor was a wealthy woman Faenia Aromation, descendant of a freedman, member of the famous *gens Faenia*, and a trader in aromatic oils and perfumes. Having left the sum of 8000 denarii for the operation of the gymnasium, she entrusted her freedmen and slaves to the city and the councillors of Gythion, for them to look after and keep

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τὸ ἀποκαταστήσαι τὴν γυμνασιαρχίαν παρ' ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τοὺς πόρους αὐτῆς ταῖς τειμαί[ς] τῶν Σεβαστῶν καὶ τ[ῆ]ς συνκλι[ή]του, ὥστε μένειν τὴν γυμνασιαρχίαν ἐν τῇ πόλει καθὼς ἔταξεν Κόιντος Οὐηράνιος Φύλαγρος, with the comments of the editor (T. Corsten).

<sup>33</sup> K. Sismanidis, *AEMΘ* 18 (2004) [2007] 217–218 [*SEG* LIV 606; *AE* 2004, 1329; *Bull.épigr.* 2006, 253; *EBGR* 2007, 251]: ἐνευχόμεθα τὴν τῶν Σεβαστῶν τύχην τοῖς πολίταις ἡμῶν ... πρόνοιαν ποιείσθαι τοῦ ναοῦ, ἐν ᾧ τὸ γένος ἡμῶν ἀνάκειται, ὃν κατεσκευάσαμεν ἐκ θεμελίων ἐκ τῶν ιδίων, ὅπως μένη ἀκατάφθορος. Sismanidis thinks that the oath is associated with the inauguration of the temple. I believe that the text of the votive inscription is based on a prior bequest and that one (likely sole) safeguard attached to it was the oath by which the citizens of Kalindoia swore to maintain the temple and the statues of the family that were in it.

<sup>34</sup> For other inscribed examples of this oath in Macedonia, which concern however the protection of tombs, see Nigdelis, *Επιγραφικά Θεσσαλονίκεια* 391 ff.

<sup>35</sup> *IG* V.1 1208, with important corrections and the dating of the text by Ad. Wilhelm, *Griechische Inschriften rechtlichen Inhalts* [Athens 1951] 90–100 [*SEG* XIII 258]. Of the abundant literature on this inscription see most recently K. Harter-Uibopuu, “The Trust Fund of Phaenia Aromation (*IG* V.1 1208) and Imperial Gytheion,” *Studia Humaniora Tartuensia* 5.A.4 (2004) 1–17 (especially for the legal problems of the inscription and some different supplements from those of Wilhelm), and A. D. Rizakis, “Les affranchi(e)s sous l'Empire: Richesse, évergétisme et promotion sociale,” in V. Anastasiadis and P. Doukelis (eds.), *Esclavage antique et discriminations socio-culturelles* (Bern 2005) 233–241.

from harm, presumably at the hands of third parties, both for the remainder of her life and after her death, at which time the slaves were to be freed. The security demanded was an oath to be sworn by all the citizens and the councillors in the name of all the gods and the Tyche of the Augusti.<sup>36</sup> Given these examples, the Rebilus bequest can certainly be interpreted in the same way, that is, as a wealthy citizen requiring his compatriots to swear by the Tyche of the emperors that they would abide by the terms of his bequest.

This interpretation of ἐνόρκων γενομένων is also perfectly in keeping with the other safeguards Rebilus inserts in the Thasos decree, in the sense that they reveal a man who is strongly attached to the imperial cult: the sanctions for breach of the terms of this bequest are not restricted to payment of a monetary fine, but include prosecution for infamy and sacrilege towards the divine Augusti, while the bequest itself was placed under the protection of the imperial cult.<sup>37</sup> Whether the part of the Serrai decree that has been lost contained similar provisions we do not know, but it certainly cannot be excluded. The mere fact of Rebilus' particular attachment to the imperial cult is enough to warrant such an assumption. His relationship with the imperial cult appears to be confirmed by yet another of the clauses in the Serrai decree (AB.7–9), stipulating that a

<sup>36</sup> Lines 48–56: παρακατατίθεμαι δὲ τῇ [πόλει καὶ το]ῖς συνέδροις καὶ τοὺς θρεπτοῦς μου καὶ ἀπ[ελευθέρους] πάντας τε καὶ πάσας. ἐνεύχομαί τε ὑμῖν θε[οὺς πάντας] καὶ τὴν τῶν Σεβαστῶν τύχην, καὶ ζώσης ἐμοῦ [καὶ ἐὰν <ἀν>θρῶπιν]όν τι πάθω, καὶ κατὰ ἄνδρα καὶ κοινῇ, τὴν ἀρίστην [τῆς βουλήσεω]ς μου καὶ ὧν ἐγὼ τιμῶ καὶ τετιμηκα θρε[πτῶν καὶ ἀπελε]υθέρων διὰ παντὸς ὑμᾶς ποιήσασθαι πρόνο[ιαν, ὅπως αἰεὶ ἀν]πειλη<π>τοι διὰ τὴν ἀπάντων ὑμῶν εἰς ἐμὲ ε[ὔνοϊαν καὶ ἀνενόχλ]ητοι φυλαχθῶσιν. For the legal interpretation of the passage see Harter-Uiboruu, *Studia Humaniora Tartuensia* 5.A.4 (2004) 13–14. For the social origin of the benefactress, see Rizakis, in *Esclavage* 239–240.

<sup>37</sup> Dunant/Pouilloux, *Recherches* no. 185.18–20: ἄτιμον εἶναι καὶ αὐτὸν καὶ γέν[ος· ἐνέχ]εσθαι δὲ αὐτοὺς καὶ τῇ εἰς τοὺς Σεβαστοὺς [ἀσεβείαι]; cf. L. Robert, *RevPhil* III.10 (1936) 136–137. To the parallels for ἀσεβεία εἰς τοὺς Σεβαστοὺς add *Iscr.Cos* EV 279.3–4 ἐπι[τί]μιον ἔστω τὰς ἀσε[βείας τὰς ποτὶ τὸν] Σεβαστὸν (A.D. 42), and *Aphrodisias and Rome* 62.b.7 ἀσεβεία τῇ πρὸς τοὺς Αὐτοκράτορας καὶ ἱεροσυλία (A.D. 180–190). For *asebeia* towards *Sebastoi* see also K. Latte, *Heiliges Recht* (Tübingen 1920) 95.

copy be placed beside a building, presumably one of the most important in the city, as in the case of the Thasos decree.<sup>38</sup> Only the ending of the name of the Serrai building is preserved. Earlier scholars proposed [βου/λευτη]ρίου, but this was rejected, quite properly, as too long for the available space.<sup>39</sup> Since calculations based on careful measurement of this space show that either three or four characters are required to complete line 8 and possibly three for line 9,<sup>40</sup> there are only two plausible ways of completing the word: either [Σεβα/στε]ίου<sup>41</sup> or [Και/σαρ]είου. The latter seems less likely, as it requires four letters at the beginning of line 9, but cannot be totally excluded.<sup>42</sup> In either case, this would become the first inscriptional reference to a temple of the imperial cult in the city of Serrai.<sup>43</sup>

The date of Rebilus' presence and activity in eastern Macedonia may have a bearing on the final problem connected with the Serrai decree, which relates to its length. Some scholars tend towards Daux's view that the text ends at line 11

<sup>38</sup> Dunant/Pouilloux, *Recherches* no. 185.20–22, ἀνα]γραφήναι δὲ τότε τὸ ψήφισμα εἰς στήλας τ[ρε]ῖς [καὶ ἀνα]θῆναι εἰς τοὺς τῶν Σεβαστῶν ναοὺς μί[αν καὶ δύο εἰς τοὺς τόπους οὖς] ἂν δόξῃ τοῖς [κ]ληρονόμοις αὐτ[οῦ].

<sup>39</sup> This completion was proposed by Besevliev and Mihailov, who believed that they could distinguish traces of the letter rho at the beginning of line 9. Kaphtantzis (91) rejects both this restoration and others like ΓΥΜΝΑΣΙΟΥ (i.e. [γυ/μνασ]ίου) or ΠΥΡΤΑΝΕΙΟΥ (i.e. [πυρ/τανε]ίου) on the grounds of length. In his criticism of Kaphtantzis' work, Mihailov (7) insists that there are traces of a rho on the stone, but Edson's squeeze shows no trace of any letter before the iota IOY.

<sup>40</sup> So also Edson's transcription.

<sup>41</sup> Suggested by Chaniotis (*SEG*). Chr. Habicht suggests to me [βου/λε]ίου (unattested in Macedonian inscriptions), but the word is short for the space.

<sup>42</sup> Καισαρ[ε]ῖον appears occasionally in inscriptions from Macedonia, as e.g. in the fragment of an honorific text from Charakoma in Mygdonia: P. Nigdelis, "Μακεδονικά Επιγραφικά II," *Tekmeria* 6 (2001) 136 [*SEG* LI 808] line 13, and p.140.

<sup>43</sup> The existence of such a temple in Serrai is inferred from the inscription honouring T. Claudius Flavianus Lysimachus who served as ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ ἀγωνοθέτης τῶν Σεβαστῶν: Samsaris, *Dodone* 18 (1989) 235–236, no. 38; cf. F. Papazoglou, *Les Villes de Macédoine à l'époque romaine* (*BCH* Suppl. 16 [1988] 379 nn.15 and 16, and Loukopoulou, in *Poikila* 184.

and line 12 is the beginning of a new text or possibly an addendum to the first (presumably along the lines of the Thasos decree).<sup>44</sup> Others have read the traces of the surviving letters in a way that suggests to them the ethnic [Σι]ρρα[ίτος] / [Σ]ερα[ίτος].<sup>45</sup> None of these solutions appears to be consonant with the actual evidence. Apart from one high horizontal stroke, the three letters that I can discern on the squeeze must be read as EBA, giving part of the word Σεβαστός.<sup>46</sup> Since the letters in line 12 are taller and wider than those in the other lines of the inscription, as Edson had already observed,<sup>47</sup> I would propose: [ἔτους] Σεβα[στού Χ (καὶ Υ)].<sup>48</sup>

This means that the decree was dated by the era of Actium. While the gain from this new reading and restoration is not as great as it would have been had the numeral been preserved, if we accept it, as I believe we should, we gain a *terminus post quem* of 27 B.C. for the decree. This in turn has two consequences

<sup>44</sup> Daux, *Thasiaka* 358: “la ligne 11 est aussi la dernière du texte (au-dessous, on a le commencement d’un autre texte ou d’une annexe, dont les restes misérables).” He is followed by Mihailov, *Philologia* 6 (1980) 9 (“sur la photo chez K[aphtantzis] on distingue Γ Δ Α mais on ne peut être sûr, car les lettres sont passées par l’éditeur au crayon. Peut-être il s’agit d’un autre paragraphe: [τ]ῆς πόλεως suffit,” see *SEG* XXIX 775), and Habicht, *ZPE* 148 (2004) 284. The fact that the interval between lines 11 and 12 is 0.015 m. while those between lines 1–11 is around 0.009 could support this hypothesis, but see below.

<sup>45</sup> [Σι]ρρα[ίτων] is proposed by Samsaris, *Dodone* 18 (1989) 235, amending the completion [Σ]ερα[ίτων] given by Kaphtantzis, *Ἱστορία* 91, because the spelling Σεραίων is not attested until much later.

<sup>46</sup> Of the three legible letters the following marks can be discerned: (a) the upper part of one letter, formed of one vertical and one horizontal stroke, which could be gamma or epsilon; (b) the upper rounded part of what is more likely to be a beta than a rho (because of the distance between it and the following triangular letter, which shows that the bottom part of it cannot have been a vertical stroke); (c) the upper part of a triangular letter.

<sup>47</sup> Edson, NB 727: “The letters of l. 12 seem probably to have been larger and more widely spread than the rest of the text.” This observation is confirmed by the squeeze.

<sup>48</sup> For the expression ἔτους Σεβαστοῦ see *IG* X.2.1 130, 448 (Thessaloniki); *EKM* I 103, 136 (Beroea); *I.Leukopetra* 74. The position of the numeral(s) is not always the same.

that shed new light on a pair of problems relating to Varinius' activity in eastern Macedonia. The first has to do with the date of his presence there. Francesco Camia has recently argued that the consul named in the date formula in the addendum to the Thasos decree as [Σ]ολπίκιος Γάλβα[ς] was not necessarily the emperor Galba (Servius Sulpicius Galba), who was consul for the second time in 69 (first consulship 33), as the editors of the inscription thought, but could have been his father C. Sulpicius Galba, consul in 5 B.C.; and further reminds us that the emperor's elder brother, who had the same name, also served as consul, in A.D. 22.<sup>49</sup> While the revised text does not confirm any of these three versions, it does at least show that the earlier ones are just as possible as the later and certainly places Rebilus in the final years of the first century B.C. or the early part of the next century.

The second issue is the provenance of the decree, which Edson professed not to know. Dunant and Pouilloux maintained that it came from Philippi.<sup>50</sup> This now appears to be impossible: even if we accept that we have a *decretum* in Greek for the colony at this very early date, it would normally be dated in the usual Roman fashion (consuls, month, day) and not using the Actian era, which as far as we know was not used in any official document at Philippi.<sup>51</sup> This conclusion does not

<sup>49</sup> Dunant/Pouilloux, *Recherches* no. 185.37–38, [- - -] εἰδοῖς Μαρκτίαις [- - -] Σ]ολπικίωι Γάλβαϛ νι[ῶν] (in accordance with Daux, *Thasiaka* 359), and p.79. Cf. Camio, *ZPE* 146 (2004) 268–269. Camio places Varinius in the last years of the first century B.C. and the beginning of the first A.D., on the basis of the name Sulpicius Galba.

<sup>50</sup> *Recherches* 80 (“selon toute vraisemblance, le décret trouvé pres de Serrès emane de cette dernière cité”), on the assumption that Serrai was part of the territorium of Philippi. For an overview of older views on this complicated subject see Camia, *ZPE* 146 (2004) 266–267.

<sup>51</sup> For the Philippi inscriptions, all of them in Latin, which were transferred to Serrai, see Loukopoulou, in *Poikila* 173–187. Neither the catalogue of Philippi inscriptions published by P. Pilhofer, *Philippi II* (Tübingen 2000), nor *SEG* and *AE* since 2000 contain a single honorific inscription from Philippi that is dated by the Actian era (there are unfortunately no extant decrees from the founding of the colony of Philippi). See e.g. the grave inscription edited by Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, *Tekmeria* 4 (1998/9) 49 (with emendations and observations in *AE* 1999, 1445), where a *Varinius [libe]r(tus)*



of course preclude the possibility that Rebilus was indeed one of the first Varinii to settle in the colony, in the first century B.C.,<sup>52</sup> and that like others of his fellow Roman citizens he carried out his affairs primarily through his freedmen (see AB.2–4 of the decree) in the fertile valley of the Serrai district.<sup>53</sup>

The Serrai decree in honour of Rebilus is certainly an interesting text, which together with the Thasos decree shows how some Roman colonists in Macedonia developed considerable economic activity in various cities in the province, although this is attested for only a handful of similar cases.<sup>54</sup> With the new readings proposed above, however, the document acquires a more general interest: it enters the category of inscriptions attesting that the safeguarding of bequests was sometimes secured at the benefactor's insistence by an oath to be sworn by the beneficiary city in the name of the Tyche/Genius of the emperor. These texts show, finally, that the imperial ideology in the form of the imperial cult had become entrenched in the cities of the Greek-speaking world on the personal as well as the civic level. A major role in this process would have been played by distinguished and influential Roman citizens who were devoted to the emperor and invoked him in their private documents, whether they were of Greek descent like Veranius Filagros and Flavia Mysta or merchants of Italic origin like Faenia Aromation and Varinius Rebilus.<sup>55</sup>

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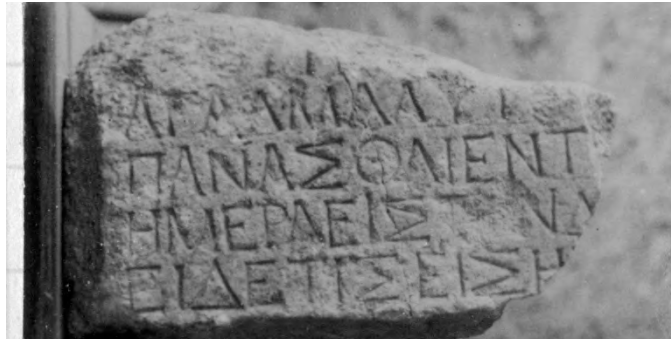
*Aug(usti) VVir Augustalis* dated his sarcophagus using the official Roman system, i.e. the name of the month and the consuls for the year (A.D. 56).

<sup>52</sup> For the first known Varinius attested in an inscription in the Philippi district see n.51 above.

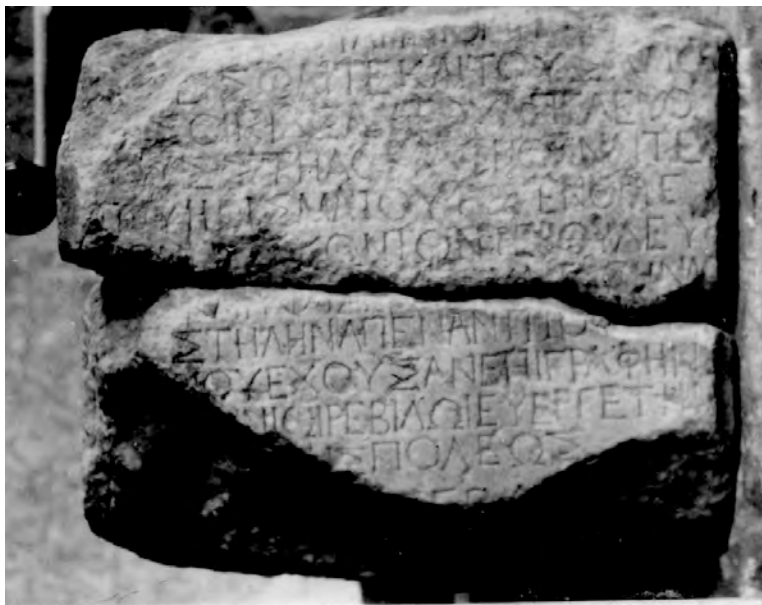
<sup>53</sup> For the composition of Serrai society in the imperial period see Loukopoulou, in *Poikila* 187, who concluded that there were no Roman merchants established in Serrai and that the city's non-Greek citizens were either veterans or freedmen from known colonial families from Philippi.

<sup>54</sup> See Rizakis, in *Les Italiens* 109–132.

<sup>55</sup> I wish to thank Chr. Habicht, G. Thür, C. Bonnet, and G. Bowersock for their comments and useful suggestions.



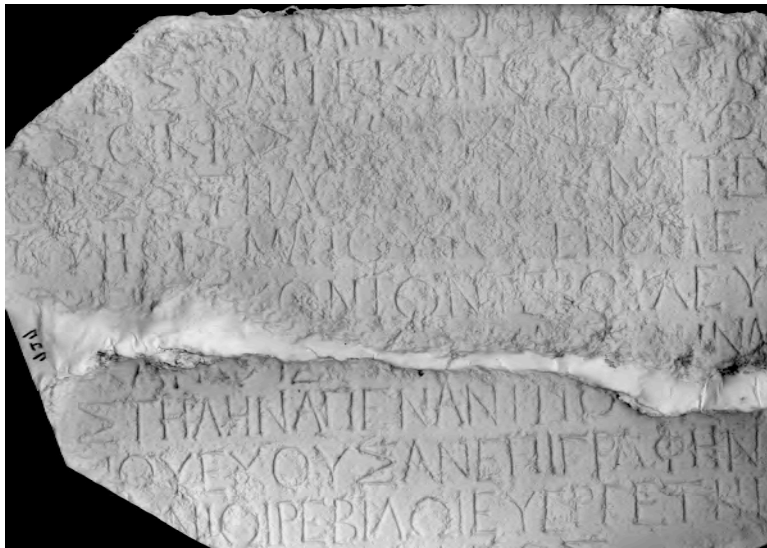
*Fig. 1: fr.C, photograph*



*Fig. 2: frs. AB, photograph*



*Fig. 3: fr.C, squeeze*



*Fig. 4: frs. AB, squeeze*