

# EPIGRAPHIC UPDATES ON THE KARIAN MAGNATE OLYMPICHOS AND HIS TRANSACTIONS WITH LAODIKE, WIFE OF ANTIOCHOS HIERAX\*

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In memory of my friend  
Alexandru Avram,  
who left us too early

**Keywords:** *Alinda, Karia, Olympichos, Seleukos II.*

**Abstract:** *The Karian dynast Olympichos was formerly said to be of Alinda, though more likely hailed from Mylasa. He entered the historical stage by expelling Ptolemaic garrisons from Mylasa around 244 BC. He acted as an official of Seleukos II (246–225), even though the king was distant and fighting to re-establish his own royal authority in Syria. Olympichos probably acknowledged Antiochos Hierax as king, when Seleukos ceded his brother the Anatolian territories in 242. As of 227, he began to cooperate with Antigonos Doson (229–222), when this one took over Karia. Olympichos maintained his pre-eminence also under Philip V (222–179). Soon after 220, we lose his traces in the historical record, except for a recently discovered inscription, which proves that he was still honoured in the later 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. Besides his military and economic resources, his diplomatic skills permitted him to navigate smoothly between the demands of the (not always powerful) kings and queens on the one hand and the needs of the populace on the other. The purchase of estates from queen Laodike, the wife of Antiochos Hierax, probably around 242 and the grant of part of it to the sanctuary of Zeus Osogoa of Labraunda exemplify how he succeeded in establishing bonds of loyalty with the upper and lower levels.*

The Karian dynast Olympichos, son of Olympichos, was one of the most famous local magnates of Asia Minor in the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. He

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successfully navigated between the needs of the populace on the one hand and the ambitions of the Seleukids, Ptolemies and Antigonids on the other. Olympichos is one of the three “Asian dynasts” without the royal title whom Polybios mentions among the benefactors supporting the Rhodians after the disastrous earthquake of 228/27 BC.<sup>1</sup> No other man of his rank has been attested in over a dozen inscriptions. The combined evidence allows us to follow up on his career for more than a quarter-century.

### Olympichos of Mylasa

Nothing certain is known about his or his father’s origins or the roles they might have played under Antiochos II. Traditionally, the family residence was assumed to be Alinda in Karia, but this is only because the first document on Olympichos known in modern times has been found there. The manifold evidence that is now available characterizes him as well-resourced and connected throughout northern Karia, with a concentration of his estates around Mylasa. One might thus speculate, of course with all due caution, that he could be a descendent of the Hekatomnid dynasty, whose strong links to this city and its main sanctuary of Zeus Osogoa in nearby Labraunda are well known.<sup>2</sup>

Olympichos enters the historical records early during the turbulences of the Third Syrian War (246–241) and the War of Brothers (new chronology: 246–242; old chronologies: 241/227). He decided for Seleukos II (246–225) when the latter was about to regain Syria from Ptolemy III and Antiochos Hierax. This fact may (though need not) imply that he or his family had suffered hardship during the Ptolemaic conquests of 246. The greatest feat recorded for Olympichos is the liberation of Mylasa from Ptolemaic occupation, which most likely happened in 244. He might have done so as the *strategos* of Seleukos, unless the appointment only followed upon his service as a reward.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Polyb. 5.90.1, mentioning him besides Lysanias and Limnaios, whose territories are less certain.

<sup>2</sup> Olympichos was first known through an inscription from Alinda, dating from after 222: LAUMONIER 1934, p. 291, no. 1, l. 2 (with p. 295 for the date), still followed by BENCIVENNÌ 2003, p. 264, although origin from Mylasa is conceded as a possibility on p. 298 with n. 86. CAPDETREY 2007, p. 119 rightly questions Alinda as his home, but leaves his origin open. Hekatomnos, the father of Maussollos and Artemisia the Younger resided in Mylasa and maintained close relations with the sanctuary of Labraunda. For the latest on this dynasty, see RUZICKA 2021, with p. 164f. on Hekatomnos, though without my speculation. MA 1999, p. 125 draws a territorial connection: “the area west of the Marsyas river, the old Hekatomnid, then Ptolemaic dominion ... administered as a unit by Olympichos”. And VAN BREMEN 2016, p. 17 and 20 observes that the estates purchased from Laodike may have had significant overlap with those of Maussollos. A link with the latter may also be implied in the joined honours they received by the citizens of Mylasa, on which see n. 7 below.

<sup>3</sup> The title *strategos* is first attested under Seleukos II (*I.Labraunda* I 9 = PHI 260033) and once more from Alinda (see previous note). His ambivalent status has been discussed in most detail by KOBES 1996, p. 98–100, 109f., who regards him as a *philos* of Seleukos and his *strategos* in Karia; KOBES (p. 136–144, 257–259) believes that he maintained his independence under Hierax, but gradually fell under the

We have no firm evidence to decide whether Olympichos had to shift his allegiance to Hierax, when Seleukos II ceded Asia Minor to his brother around 242, as I assume, or whether he gained complete independence, as many scholars infer from the silence of the sources on this matter. But this negative conclusion is largely based on a low chronology of the War of Brothers (setting the revolt of Hierax after 241), which is no longer tenable.<sup>4</sup> At any rate, Olympichos maintained his prominent position and even carried it forth, when the Macedonians became the leading force in Karia under Antigonos Dason in 227. He also kept his role as *strategos*, when Philip V succeeded his uncle in 222.

### New Epigraphic Evidence for Olympichos

This is a brief outline of how I reconstructed Olympichos' biography in the context of my research on Laodike I and the Third Syrian War by 2015 (published in 2016 and 2018). It was based on the nine inscriptions explicitly referring to Olympichos as included in the edition by Jonas Crampa (1969).<sup>5</sup> There are more inscriptions that help us complete the picture of this powerful man. Two honorary decrees from Iasos convey insights into the later stages of his career under Philip V and to draw a picture of a potentate who was acting as a military

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sovereignty of Antigonos Dason, on whom see more below. MA 1999, p. 42, 47, 116, 125 seems to surmise the opposite trajectory, regarding Olympichos as Seleukid governor, who gradually extended his autonomy and may even have called in Dason (cf. GRAINGER 1997, p. 110: "he had made himself effectively independent by the 220s"); but on p. 168 he assumes that Olympichos had to evacuate the fort of Petra on the territory of Mylasa after holding it illegally for over twenty years (see n. 9 below for further references). cf. p. 176: "The 'dynast' Olympichos started off as a Seleukid governor, perhaps a hyparch, and continued as an Antigonid governor." CAPDETREY 2007, p. 119 (with troubled chronology) thinks that he first acted independently, though with the consent of Seleukos II as of 246, before becoming his *strategos* in 240. More references on Olympichos' changing position are given in notes 4 and 9 below. On Hierax and the War of Brothers, see below, esp. notes 6f. and 15.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., AUBRIET & HENRY 2015, p. 700: "Suite à l'affaiblissement du pouvoir séleucide dû à la guerre civile entre Séleucos II et son frère Antiochos Hiérax, Olympichos acquiert une indépendance de fait et jouit d'un incontestable prestige". Cf. KOBES 1996 (as in the previous note); BENCIVENNI 2003, p. 266f. (influence of Hierax is questioned); 271 (Olympichos extended his territory at the cost of Hierax by 227, with the support of Seleukos II) and 281–286 (detailed table ignoring Hierax altogether); CAPDETREY 2007, p. 119; VAN BREMEN 2016, p. 16–18.

<sup>5</sup> COŞKUN 2016b, p. 12–15, based on *I.Labraunda* I, with ample bibliography, though omitting BENCIVENNI 2003, p. 247–298 (republishing *I.Labraunda* 3–5 and 7–8 = SEG LIII 2203). And COŞKUN 2018 on the War of Brothers; cf. COŞKUN 2016a; forthcoming. The most important inscription that I did not account for dates from the rule of King Philip V and shows Olympichos acting with a high level of independence when he first tried to conquer Iasos with his Cretan mercenary forces under a certain Podilos, but then agreed to a peaceful arrangement after the intervention of the Rhodians: see *I. Iasos* 150; cf. MA 1999, p. 69f. – As Mustafa Adak indicated to me in 2021, two honorary decrees have recently been found in Euromos that shed more light on Antigonid rule over Karia, one of them also containing information on Podilos. These documents will hopefully be published soon by Koray Konuk in *Philia* 9 (2023).

leader loyal to his *basileus*, while enjoying monarchical prestige of his own at the same time.<sup>6</sup>

More recent discoveries add further detail to his biography. In 2008, Signe Isager and Lars Karlsson published a decree from Mylasa that spurred fresh interest in the Karian dynast. It documents the grant of a bronze statue and a cult to the benefactor Olympichos still during his lifetime, honouring him side by side with the satrap Maussollos of the late-Achaemenid period. Since the text was re-inscribed at Labraunda in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, we can assume that Olympichos' merits for the city had lasting effects.<sup>7</sup>

No less spectacular is the letter that Olympichos wrote to the citizens of Mylasa. It is probably the earliest document we have from him, drafted during the turmoil of the war with the Ptolemies. We learn about a garrison that Olympichos' troops were still occupying, after freedom and democracy had been formally restored. The agreement was that his soldiers would evacuate, once a promised tribute would be paid to the king (Seleukos). The inscription further attests to the oath that Olympichos had sworn to respect the rights of the citizens and of the Zeus sanctuary. The document has been published by Damien Aubriet and Olivier Henry (2015), who also explore (together with Naomi Carless Unwin) the historical geography and political history of the area.<sup>8</sup> This new reference to the fortress (Petra) on the territory of Mylasa once more raises the question whether Olympichos held on to it for up to a quarter century or whether we

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<sup>6</sup> *I.Iasos* 35 (= FABIANI 2015, p. 311, no. 5 = SEG LXV 980) and 150. Olympichos' ambivalent role oscillating between subordinate military leader, vassal and independent ally had been noted previously. See, e.g., KOBES 1996 (as in n. 2 above); also CHRUBASIK 2016, p. 58: "Antigonid agent". Less convincingly, ERRINGTON 1990, p. 178 thinks that Dason followed the request of Mylasa for arbitration against Olympichos. Dason's "military commitment had been large enough to impress Olympichos and curb him". Likewise, Errington assumes that Philip V was summoned against him in 220. In contrast to this, Errington p. 185 presents the relation of Dason and Olympichos as a "partnership". GRAINGER 2010, p. 182 regards the two as allies, too. See notes 3–4 above for further positions. Mustafa Adak has suggested to me that WELLES 1934 (1974), 29 (a letter to the citizens of Mylasa previously attributed to an Attalid ruler) was likely written by Olympichos as well.

<sup>7</sup> ISAGER & KARLSSON 2008 = SEG LVIII 1220; cf. ISAGER 2011 = SEG LXII 834 = BE 2012, no. 373; AUBRIET 2012 = SEG LXII 833; also see SEG LXIII 907 and BE 2014, no. 434 on Maussollos.

<sup>8</sup> AUBRIET & HENRY 2015 = SEG LXV 996; cf. CARLESS UNWIN & HENRY 2016; BE 2017, no. 499; also AUBRIET 2012. It is not exactly clear if Olympichos had already evacuated the last fortress or was still holding on to it until a specific (and probably singular) contribution for the king would be collected. The indicative aorist of ἀπέδωκα (ll. 11f.) might point to the latter option, but the adverb ὕστερον (l. 11), combined with the future tense of κατέξω (l. 10) and συνδιατηρήσω (l. 13) (cf. the subjunctive aorist of κομίσωμαι in l. 11) point to the former option. Cf. the (harmonizing) translation by HENRY & AUBRIET, p. 680: "plus tard, (il apparaîtra) que j'ai restitué au peuple cette forteresse elle aussi". See also next note on Petra.

should distinguish a different occasion for its renewed occupation shortly before 220 under Philip V.<sup>9</sup>

### The Land Sale by Laodike and the Land Donation by Olympichos

The sale involving queen Laodike is attested in an epigraphic dossier carved in stone around 220 under the rule of Philip V.<sup>10</sup> This low date constitutes no more than a *terminus ante quem* for the letter that Olympichos sent to the council and people of Mylasa to notify them about his benefaction (I.Labraunda I 8b, ll. 10–26). It attests to his donation of certain estates purchased from queen Laodike to the temple of Zeus Osogoa. The majority of scholars opt for the most famous name bearer Laodike I, though they remain undecided as to whether the first transaction occurred under the rule of her husband Antiochos II (266/61–246), during the Third Syrian War, which broke out immediately after his death in summer 246, or even after the peace with Ptolemy in 241.<sup>11</sup> Biagio Virgilio is one of the few who prefer Laodike II, the wife of Seleukos II. I previously endorsed this choice in the face of the *terminus a quo* that I perceived (and that I still see): the liberation of Mylasa by Olympichos in 244.<sup>12</sup>

Very recently, another inscription has been found that attests to the same grant by Olympichos to the sanctuary of Zeus Osogoa. It likewise identifies the estates with those purchased from “queen Laodike”. This document details administrative aspects of the land transfer and may have been on display in Mylasa itself, whereas the previously-known text hailed from Labraunda (I.Labraunda I 8b), the site of the sanctuary. In its *editio princeps* and a follow-up study (2016/17),

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<sup>9</sup> I.Labraunda I 4.9–16 announces the instant return of the fortress of Petra under king Philip. The traditional view is that Olympichos had held on to it for decades, with sinister intentions, but eventually accepted his subordination to Philip, see BENCIVENNI 2003, p. 259–264 (with references); further references are in notes 3 and 8.

<sup>10</sup> I.Labraunda I 8 = McCabe Labraunda 40 = PHI 260068, ll. 19f. For a new edition with corrections and photograph, see VAN BREMEN 2016, 7f. She (p. 1–16, 21) also adduces paleographical arguments to date the whole dossier I.Labraunda I 1–9 to the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, rather than regarding them as copies of later centuries, as Crampa saw it.

<sup>11</sup> I.Labraunda I 8. p. 52 for the earliest date and p. 55; 60f. for the latest, followed by GRAINGER 1997, 47f.; the middle date is proposed by KOBES 1996, p. 137f., followed by HÄMMERLING 2019, p. 90, n. 394; MARTINEZ-SÈVE 2002/3, p. 698f. remains undecided. Further suggestions are discussed below.

<sup>12</sup> VIRGILIO 2003, p. 175; cf. BENCIVENNI 2003, p. 258–262, 272–281, 293–298 (presenting the liberation of Mylasa from Ptolemaic oppression as one of the ‘constitutional projects’ of Seleukos II at the very beginning of his rule, before Olympichos gained independence between 240 and 227); MARTINEZ-SÈVE 2002/3, p. 698f.; COŞKUN 2016b, p. 213, n. 8. D’AGOSTINI 2021, p. 205, n. 37 is undecided between Laodike I and II. The chronology of AUBRIET 2012, p. 191f. is confused: on the one hand, he dates the beginning of Olympichos’ public career to ca. 240 (perhaps following I. Iasos I, p. 130) and the liberation of Mylasa thereafter; on the other hand, he regards him as *strategos* of Seleukos around 246/45. AUBRIET & HENRY 2015, 295 suggest 245/40 for the liberation, which SEG LXV 996 misleadingly turns into 246/45.

Riet van Bremen accounted for all the mentioned steps of the transaction.<sup>13</sup> She concludes, among other things, “that the land which Olympichos bought from Queen Laodike was not just one estate in the plain around the city, as most seem to think, but a whole cluster of estates in the plain between Labraunda and Olymos.” She further assumes that those lands had formed part of the estates of the aforementioned Maussollos.<sup>14</sup>

### Chronology and the Identity of Laodike

Van Bremen further suggests that *I.Labraunda* 45 and 51 belong to the same thematic complex as inscriptions 3–5, which attest to conflicts about the control of temple funds between the citizens and the high priest Korris. *I.Labraunda* 3 specifies that a certain Sophron and “Ptolemy, the brother of king Ptolemy” had dealt with such quarrels before Olympichos. She is following the reconstructions of Christian Habicht and Alice Bencivenni, who previously identified this Ptolemy of royal stock with “Ptolemy the Son” of Ptolemy II (285/82–246), and hence with a brother of Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–222). This son is commonly believed to have been the governor of the Ptolemaic possessions in Asia Minor from ca. 266 until 259 or 258, when he perished after revolting against his father. According to this view, Sophron had been involved in the land dispute as Ptolemaic official before 266.<sup>15</sup>

As I tried to show in 2016, however, there is a much better solution available: Sophron is not attested in the service of Ptolemy II, but as *strategos* of Antiochos II in Ionia; he is also known to have revolted against Laodike I only a few days or weeks after the king had passed away. This betrayal set in motion a chain of perilous events: the encroachment of Ptolemaic forces into Seleukid Asia Minor, the death of Laodike as a result of her staunch resistance, and the revolt of Hierax against Seleukos, instigated by their uncle Alexander. Before the end of 246, Sophron had fallen in the naval battle at Andros, so that the Ptolemaic commander of the Aegean, a half-brother of Euergetes called Ptolemy Andromachos, took over Ephesos. He began ruling over adjacent territories and may have stayed there well into the 220s, although his territory shrank, as the lion’s share of Asia Minor gradually fell into the hands of Hierax. This one was reconciled with his brother Seleukos in 242 and thus became the official Seleukid king in the area.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> VAN BREMEN 2016 and 2017, also suggesting several corrections for *I.Labraunda* I 1–9.

<sup>14</sup> See n. 2 above on VAN BREMEN 2016, p. 17 and 20.

<sup>15</sup> From the ample bibliography on those Ptolemies, I here quote HUSS 1998 (his argument for the identity of most Ptolemies active in Asia Minor in the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century is unconvincing, but provides best access to the relevant sources) and BENNETT *TPD* s.v. ‘Ptolemy the Son’ (the most authoritative treatment of Ptolemaic prosopography by a single author). They both unconvincingly identify ‘Ptolemy the Son’ with the Ptolemy active in Ephesos a generation later, as KOBES 1994, p. 2 and VIRGILIO 2003, p. 173 do. But see the strong criticism of Tunny 2000, which is more convincing and clearer than that of GYGAX 2002.

<sup>16</sup> COŞKUN 2016a on the death of Laodike I and the revolt of Sophron, COŞKUN 2016b on all Ptolemies active in 3<sup>rd</sup> century Asia Minor, and COŞKUN 2018 on Sophron’s and Hierax’ military campaigns; cf. Coşkun forthcoming for most recent

In favour of the higher chronology for Sophron, however, van Bremen points to palaeographical and prosopographical indications in *I.Labraunda* 51 and 45. For her, these require the first half of the 3rd century. Her observations are plausible in principle, albeit without compelling force against a date in the mid-240s. To further buttress her case, she adduces the dossier of Pannoukome, in which supposedly the same Laodike appears engaged in land sales in Western Asia Minor in 254/53. Van Bremen surmises a similar time for the purchase of the Mylasa estates by Olympichos.<sup>17</sup> There are several challenges to this reconstruction, however, and van Bremen seems to be aware of some uncertainties, since she adds: “Olympichos, when concluding the transaction, will have dealt with the woman who was queen at the time of the sale, and presumably was so named in the contract. But the question has to remain open.”<sup>18</sup>

This vague statement is a distraction from the actual problem. While we do not have the earlier sales contract (and do not know which title the previous landowner had in this), we do have two texts documenting the later land transfer from Olympichos to Zeus Osogoa. I continue in maintaining, together with Biagio Virgilio, that the “queen Laodike” mentioned in those documents should have been alive and ruling at the time those documents were composed.<sup>19</sup> If, however, the seller had been Laodike I after 246 and my conclusions about her early death

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discussions. It is quite possible that a fragmentary letter by a royal official inscribed on stone at Euromos mentions a letter to Ptolemy the brother of king Ptolemy, and Olympichos might even have been the author of both letters: SEG XLIII 705 (although not dating from around 260, as GAUTHIER BE 1995, 705 suggests, but rather 246/44).

<sup>17</sup> For the document, see OGIS I 225 II–IV = WELLES 1934 (1974), 19; 18; 20 = *I.Didyma* 492A ed. REHM (Letter of Metrophanes); 492B (Letter of Antiochos II to Metrophanes, specifying the sale agreement and ensuing administrative steps); 492C (Letter of a *hyparches*) = VIRGILIO 2003, no. 19 (p. 268–72) = APERGHIS 2004 no. 3 (p. 315–8, cf. 102–3; 144–5; 290–2) = AUSTIN 2006 no. 173 = MILETA 2008 App. I. 6 = II. E. 2 (pp. 141–3; 155–6) = \**I.Didyma* 20 ed. McCabe = PHI 247011. For the date and its historical content, see COŞKUN 2016a, p. 117; RAMSEY 2020; KLOKOW forthcoming.

<sup>18</sup> VAN BREMEN 2017, p. 244–246 (on Laodike I also see VAN BREMEN 2016, p. 16–18, 21, quotation on p. 17), with HABICHT 1972, 168f. However, VAN BREMEN (2016, p. 16, n. 47) rightly acknowledges: “We should avoid the temptation to attribute the Mylasan land to this queen merely because we happen to know that she owned land elsewhere: near Kyzikos”. And see *I.Labraunda* 3, ll. 3–7 on Sophron and Ptolemy: ἐπέδειξαν δὲ ἡμῖν οἱ πρὸς βεβυταὶ καὶ χρηματιστῆς ἄλλους τε καὶ τὰ παρὰ Σώφρονος γραφέντα πρὸς [ ] | [ ] ἄς καὶ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα οἰκονομηθέντα ὑφ’ ἡμῶν. BENCIVENNI 2003, p. 283 and 291 does not explore a chronological implication of the queen’s name.

<sup>19</sup> VAN BREMEN 2016, p. 16: “B. Virgilio and others have put forward the argument that only the current queen would be referred to with the title of βασιλισσα”. Beforehand, she argues that it is implausible to assume that Laodike II might have acquired the estates in or after 246, and then sold them to Olympichos before he decided to donate them in 242/41. I see no argumentative force here, not even against my own even tighter timeline, since Laodike might have taken over the territories of the previous royal wife and Olympichos may well have purchased them to ingratiate himself to the people of Mylasa. More details below.

and the geopolitical developments in Asia Minor were wrong, Laodike should have been called the widow of king Antiochos (II) or the mother of either king Antiochos (Hierax) or king Seleukos (II).

The framework I set up earlier is more apt to account for the diverse evidence we have, pre-empting the need for special pleading. Since Laodike I is never addressed as *basilissa* in any ancient source and likely died as early as summer 246, the previous owner of the Mylasa estates should be the royal woman in control of the Karian territories in the late 240s. There is a chance that it was the wife of Seleukos II, if indeed she was called Laodike (II) and she held the queenly title. Since neither is ascertained,<sup>20</sup> I would rather be inclined to identify the *basilissa* with the wife of Antiochos Hierax, whose name Laodike, royal title and activity in Western Asia Minor as of 243/42 are now all confirmed by the latest epigraphic find from Kos.<sup>21</sup>

### Conclusions

A tentative timeline may therefore look as follows: Antiochos Hierax possibly married Laodike, daughter of Ziaelas around 245 or 244, he took on the *basileus* title in his Armenian campaign in 243/42, and immediately granted the *basilissa* title to his wife, who might have controlled Western Asia Minor for him during his absence. The royal couple gained control of northern Karia following

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<sup>20</sup> This is often taken for granted based on the information that Polyb. 8.20.11 identifies Andromachos, the father of Achaios the Younger, with the brother of Laodike, the wife of Seleukos (albeit without using royal titles). Andromachos and Laodike were children of Achaios the Elder, and Porphyry / Eusebios (FGrHist / BNJ 260 F 32.9 ed. JACOBY / ed. TOYE) seem to confuse the Laodike mentioned by Polybios with Laodike I. The strange wording, if taken literally, would seem to make this Laodike only the mother of Antiochos II's daughters, not of his sons; more likely, however, the mother's name seems to have been misplaced in the shortened text. While Polyb. 8.20.11 might have thought of Laodike as the wife of Seleukos II, the broader context rather seems to point to his son Seleukos III (225–223) as the husband. Cf. GRAINGER 1997, p. 1 and 47–50 (for the previous standard); D'AGOSTINI & MCAULEY 2018 (for the latest reconstructions) and COŞKUN 2018, p. 243f. (for a survey of scholarship on the genealogical problem), though all with different solutions; note that the latest treatment by OLBRYCHT 2021, p. 175 still follows the dated assumption that Achaios was a half-brother of Antiochos I. Olbrycht is also inconsistent as to which Laodike was the daughter of Achaios the Elder (in contrast with p. 176). The queenly title has often been accepted for Laodike I and II due to various inscriptions mentioning a *basilissa* Laodike, but these queens are better identified with either the wife of Hierax, the wife of Achaios the Younger or the wife of Antiochos III (Laodike III). Cf. MCAULEY 2018b and COŞKUN 2021 on the multiple Laodikai in the orbit of the Seleukid kingdom.

<sup>21</sup> The inscription was first published by BOSNAKIS & HALLOF 2020, who identified her with Laodike I, but, based on the entire evidence for all royal Laodikai of the 240s (COŞKUN forthcoming) and further on a revised reconstruction of the diplomatic activities of the Koans in 243 and 242 (COŞKUN 2021), I argue that this must be the wife of Hierax, herself a daughter of Ziaelas of Bithynia (Porphyry / Eusebios, FGrHist / BNJ 260 F 32.9). For previous scholarship on Kos and attempts at a synthesis of the diplomatic engagements of the 240s, see RIGSBY 1996 and KNÄPPER 2018.

the agreement with Seleukos II in or soon after 242, and Hierax may have chosen to grant those ‘crown’ lands to his wife. A part of them may have been cashed in, perhaps even below the market price, to gain the goodwill of Olympichos. He, in turn, donated at least a part of them to the sanctuary of Labraunda, to strengthen his authority as local magnate. It is possible that several years passed before this second land transaction. We are no longer bound by the end of the Third Syrian War (246–241) as a putative *terminus ad quem*, after which Seleukos II lost his grip on Asia Minor. There is no reference to him in *I.Labraunda* 8a, 8b, 8c or the new inscription published by van Bremen.

However, an even simpler reconstruction might lead us back to the year 242, in which Laodike confirmed the *asylia* and the penteteric games of Kos, before her husband had returned from the east. She might very well have sold part of the *basilike chora* in her capacity as his deputy. Either way, the first land transaction would bind Olympichos more closely to the new branch of the Seleukid dynasty. At the same time, the land grant to the temple strengthened his own ties to the local community of Mylasa and the priest dynast Korris of Labraunda. It would help Olympichos gain a high profile as a benevolent quasi-monarchical authority in his own right.<sup>22</sup> While diligently acknowledging the supremacy of kings or queens throughout his career, he avoided defying or irritating them, and this way effectively became the *de facto* ruler on the ground.

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<sup>22</sup> It is inconsistent to explain the land grant as a means to emancipate himself from Seleukid rule, while at the same time presenting this land transaction as typical for Seleukid rule, as CAPDETREY 2007, p. 146 does.

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