

SIG³ 593: THE LETTER OF FLAMININUS TO CHYRETIAE

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THE LETTER OF FLAMININUS, returning to the city of Chyretiae some property which had been considered as belonging to Rome, has played a large part in discussions both of his claims to philhellenism and of his dealings with Greeks in general.¹ So it should. Short though it is, it is the only surviving document from his own hand setting forth one of these transactions, and the only direct evidence for the quality of his Greek. Because it is so brief, however, and because it deals with a seemingly unimportant transaction, scholars have hesitated to press its evidence very far or to analyze its language and implications in detail. Nonetheless, such an examination of the language, style, date, and context will produce important results. (1) The letter is written in grammatically and idiomatically perfect koine. Its rhetoric is modeled elaborately and in detail on the style that Greek states and monarchs regularly employed in this period. (2) This sample of Flamininus' personal style illustrates the correct meaning of his ancient reputation for philhellenism—expertise in the details of contemporary Greek language, politics, and constitutional and civil law. (3) The document accurately mirrors the policies and propaganda of Flamininus' speech at Corinth in 194, and can be securely dated as part of his farewell tour of Thessaly following that speech. (4) It is important evidence of the scrupulous care that Flamininus bestowed on his constitutional settlement of Thessaly, a remarkably lasting settlement which should be given greater prominence in modern discussions of his career. Finally, (5) the inscription returns, not confiscated property, but property that happened to be in Roman hands because of a sack that left Rome the unwelcome burden of managing it; and it can be shown that the inscription does not impose a prejudicial or partisan redistribution, but discreetly commands the Chyretians to take only property rights and civil law into account in the return of property.

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I. R. K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore, 1969), p. 211, provides a bibliography of the most important discussions of the inscription. In I. R. K. Sherk, ed., *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus*, Translated Documents of Greece and Rome 4 (Cambridge, 1984), p. 4, there is a careful translation from which we have borrowed some points, while differing in others, for our own.

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We will first give the text of the inscription and a translation:

Τίτος Κοῖνκτιος, στρατηγὸς ὑπατος Ῥωμαίων, Χυρετιέων
 τοῖς ταγοῖς καὶ τῇ πόλει χαίρειν. Ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς
 πᾶσιν
 φανερὰν πεποήκαμεν τὴν τε ἰδίαν καὶ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ῥωμαίων
 προαίρεσιν ἦν ἔχομεν εἰς ὑμᾶς ὀλοσχερῶς, βεβουλήμεθα καὶ
 5 ἐν τοῖς ἔξης ἐπιδεῖξαι κατὰ πᾶν μέρος προεστηκότες
 τοῦ ἐνδόξου, ἵνα μήδ’ ἐν τούτοις ἔχωσιν ὑμᾶς κατα-
 λαλεῖν οἱ οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ βελτίστου εἰωθότες ἀνα-
 στρέφεσθαι. “Οσαι γάρ ποτε ἀπολείπονται κτήσεις
 10 ἔγγειοι καὶ οἰκία τῶν καθηκουσῶν εἰς τὸ δημόσιον
 τὸ Ῥωμαίων, πάσας δίδομεν τῇ ὑμετέραι πόλει,
 δπως καὶ ἐν τούτοις μάθητε τὴν καλοκαγαθίαν ἡμῶν
 καὶ ὅτι τελέως ἐν οὐθενὶ φιλαργυρῆσ[α]ι βεβουλήμεθα,
 περὶ πλείστου ποιούμενοι χάριτα καὶ φιλοδοξίαν. “Οσοι μέν-
 τον² μὴ κεκομισμένοι εἰσὶν τῶν ἐπιβαλλόντων αὐτοῖς,
 15 ἔὰν ὑμᾶς διδάξωσιν καὶ φαίνωνται εὐγνώμονα λέ-
 γοντες, στοχαζομένων ὑμῶν ἐκ τῶν ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ γεγραμ-
 μένων ἐγκρίσεων, κρίνω δίκαιον εἶναι ἀποκαθίστασ-
 θαι αὐτοῖς.

”Ερρωσθε.

Titus Quinctius, consul of the Romans, to the *tagoi* and people of Chyretiae, greetings. Just as in all other matters we have made clear the favorable policy both I and the Roman people have toward you in general, we have decided in the following matter also to demonstrate how in every detail we stand for what is honorable, so that not even in such matters as this can persons find any opportunity to slander us who are themselves not accustomed to act by the highest standards of behavior. For any landed property and buildings that may still be left in possession of the Roman treasury we hand over in entirety to your city, so that in this too you may recognize our good character, and because we are resolved not to look for financial profit in any instance at all, valuing as we do above all else good will and a good name. But as for any persons who have not yet recovered any of their property, if they offer proof and appear to have a reasonable claim when you form your inferences according to my own written examinations of such cases, I consider that it should in justice be returned to them. Farewell.

I. LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE INSCRIPTION

Paul Viereck, editing this inscription in his Göttingen dissertation, imagined that he could find seventeen separate objections to its Greek.³ All, on closer inspection, either are mistaken or mean merely that the grammar and syntax are not “classical” but (understandably) Hellenistic. Since Sherk sensibly rejected most of these on reediting Viereck’s texts, they

2. For this dialect form, which is due no doubt to the local stonecutter, cf. *SIG*³ 543 (Larisa), n. 30, and *LSJ*, s.v.

3. *Sermo Graecus* (Ph.D. diss., Göttingen, 1888), pp. 75–76.

need not be discussed here.⁴ Some of them, however, persist, and have been used to impugn Flamininus' reputation as a Greek-speaker and even his sincerity as a philhellene.⁵

Words and phrases that demonstrate Flamininus' elegant command of koine idiom and vocabulary may be pointed up first. Ὁλοσχερῶς (line 4), "generally, altogether," is a good Hellenistic word (Polybius, Cicero); so are: ἐπιδείκνυμι + nominative (5) (found first in Xenophon); ἀναστρέφεσθαι (7 f.), "behave oneself" (Aristotle, Polybius); ἀπολείπεσθαι (8) instead of classical περιεῖναι; κτήσεις ἔγγειοι (8 f.), "real property" (cf. *CIG* 2056 [Odessus]; Polyb. 6. 45. 3); εὐγνώμων (15), "reasonable, just" (cf. Arist. *MM* 119a2); στοχάζεσθαι ἐκ τινος (16), "infer from something" (cf. *SIG* 601. 13 [Teos, ii B.C.]; Polyb. 1. 14. 2, etc.).⁶ We may also note that the large number of perfect tense-forms—six in seventeen lines, all correctly used to denote states of affairs and permanent characteristics—is typical of Hellenistic formal Greek. Polybius has all the perfect forms that Flamininus uses, and employs the perfect tense, on average, more than twice as often as the classical historians.⁷

Moreover, some of the touches are not merely commonplace koine but quite exquisite. For example, Viereck denounced φιλαργυρῆσαι (12) as a rare word; but in fact it is in itself merely a reflection of the overfondness of Hellenistic formal Greek (nicely pointed up by C. B. Welles⁸) for compounds in φιλ-. That leads us to two further points. First, Flamininus is sensitive enough to verbal aspect to know the difference between ἐν οὐθενὶ φιλαργυρῆσαι and (e.g.) ἐν παντὶ φιλαργυρεῖν. Second, φιλαργυρῆσαι is there for a pointed contrast with one of the key words (as, again, Welles pointed out) of Hellenistic propaganda and politics, φιλοδοξία. This signifies "the desire for glory coming from great deeds" and is "proper to great men" as opposed to "little ones, for whom φιλοτιμία alone is possible."⁹ Or indeed "proper to nations," one might add in this case: the whole letter implies that the style proper to "the Romans" as a people ought to be that of a regal personage like Antiochus III.

In a letter of 193 B.C.,¹⁰ written (as we shall see) within a year of Flamininus', Antiochus uses the following phrase (lines 25–27): ὅπως . . . πᾶσιν φανερὰ γίγνεται ἡ ἡμετέρα καὶ ἐν τούτοις πρὸς τὴν ἀδελφὴν

4. *Documents*, p. 199.

5. E.g., by H. E. Stier, "Zum römischen Philhellenismus der Flamininuszeit," *Studium Berolinense* (Berlin, 1960), pp. 619–20; E. Badian, *Titus Quinctius Flamininus: Philhellenism and Realpolitik* (Cincinnati, 1970), pp. 54–55. Emphatically contrary to all this is the analysis of A. S. Gratwick, "The Range of Old Latin Prose: Cato and Flamininus," in E. J. Kenney, ed., *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1982), p. 148. Gratwick rightly treats the letter as important evidence for rhetorical study and style at Rome in Flamininus' period.

6. Where we have not given precise citations, the parallels are listed in Viereck, *Sermo*, p. 75.

7. For Polybius' use of perfect forms, considered both statistically and in detail, see A. Schøy, *De perfecti usu Polybiano* (Ph.D. diss., Bonn, 1913).

8. *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (London, 1934), pp. 373–74 (s.v. Φιλοδοξία).

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*, no. 36, pp. 157–58. On the date, see L. Robert, "Encore une inscription grecque de l'Iran," *CRAI* (1967): 281–97.

προαιρετις. Compare also the following in a letter of his written in 189 B.C. appointing a priest at Daphne (lines 14–16):¹¹ θέλοντες καὶ ἐν τούτοις φανερὰν ποιεῖν ἡν̄ ἔχομεν εἰς αὐτὸν αἴρεσιν. Compare lines 2–4 of Flamininus' letter: he not only employs the meaning of (προ-)αἴρεσις common in Hellenistic diplomatic Greek (“policy”), but structures the entire phrase in this standard manner. So also, the thought, almost a ritual in Hellenistic inscriptions recording benefactions,¹² runs throughout his letter, that the present benefactions are merely a single reflection (καὶ ἐν τούτοις) of a grander general policy of benevolence.

Again, both Viereck and Sherk thought that the unusual word ἔγκρισις, used by Flamininus to describe his personal judgments, was bad Greek.¹³ But there is point in choosing a vague rather than a common and official word. At Lucian *Pro imaginibus* 11 ἔγκρισις is used as a synonym with ἔξέτασις, and in fact ἔξέτασις and κρίσις are words that Flamininus might indeed have used¹⁴—if he had not been as anxious as he shows himself throughout to avoid words that imply he has any *imperium* over the Chyretians. In short, he deliberately chose a rare word to avoid defining his legal authority for making these written judgments.

But this brings us to the broader question of the rhetoric of the letter, which is not only clearer and cleaner than that of many a royal chancery scribe of the period, but considerably less conventional and more subtle. The painstaking balancing of phrases is noteworthy.¹⁵ The first sentence consists of three quite long clauses; the second, of a long clause describing the gift, a short one offering it, and three clauses of balanced length each underlining the Romans' generosity in a different way. The third and last sentence consists of four clauses of more or less balanced length. The effect, like that of “diplomatese” in all ages, is dignified, a little verbose, and at first sight perfectly conventional.¹⁶ But consider the brilliantly understated slap at the Aetolians (“so that not even in such matters can persons find any opportunity to slander us who are themselves not accustomed to act by the highest standards of behavior”), which owes its powerful effect to the circumstances: the property that Flamininus has to redistribute is in the treasury because the Aetolians themselves had brutally sacked Chyretiae for plunder in 198 (Livy 31. 41. 5).

Furthermore, the dismissive and casual tone of several phrases, concerning the actual importance of the gift, conceals a no less clever point.

11. Welles, *Correspondence*, no. 44, p. 180.

12. Cf. Welles, *Correspondence*, no. 9, p. 55, and no. 14, p. 72.

13. Viereck, *Sermo*, p. 75; Sherk, *Documents*, p. 199.

14. Acilius Glabrio in fact uses κρίσεις in his letter to the Delphians in 191 (Sherk, *Documents*, no. 37, pp. 221–24): δόσαι μὲν ἔφ' ἡμῶν γεγόνασι κρίσεις κύριαι ἔστωσαν· ὑμεῖς δέ, κριτῆριον ἀποδεῖχνατες τὸ μέλλον ὅρθως διαλήμμεσθαι, διεξαγάγετε τὰς λοιπὰς . . .] (lines 4–5). The sentence offers a parallel with Flamininus' letter: “abide by my judgments and make more like them”; but Acilius uses a word implying legal authority.

15. Gratwick, “The Range of Old Latin Prose,” p. 148.

16. *Ibid.*

The purpose of the inscription, besides propaganda, is to encourage claimants to come forward and to notify them that cases must be decided according to written precedents which Flamininus has himself provided and which exist for consultation. But he does not want to make the issue seem so momentous that he appears to undercut or limit the authority of his own newly appointed *tagoi*—even as he publicly forbids these officials to depart from his precedents merely to punish opponents. It is for this same reason that he calls these decisions by the nontechnical name ἐγκρίσεις, leaving their status in local law purposely ambiguous. Without insulting the *tagoi*, Flamininus nevertheless makes it necessary for them to produce these decisions and follow them.

On this interpretation of the letter, Flamininus must have written it himself. Its astute manipulation of conventional diplomatic and legal language to achieve a complicated purpose without offense to either side, under a smoke screen of encomiastic language about Rome and sharp (if implied) criticism of the Aetolians, is not the achievement of a secretary mechanically turning out documents under mere general instructions. It is the work of a subtle and sophisticated politician, Flamininus. This might seem dubious to those ready to believe in Flamininus' authorship so long as the Greek could be described as bad. One could maintain that a Greek adviser assisted the proconsul in drafting this letter; but one should then also maintain that the same or another adviser helped Flamininus draft the speech he made in Corinth in 194: for, as we shall show, the letter reflects *in parvo* the structure of the arguments in that speech. But there is no need to imagine such an adviser, as a careful study of the evidence for Flamininus' command of Greek will show.

It has been argued that Flamininus' philhellenism was showy and insincere because it did not involve, as it did for Alexander, the patronage of poetry and art.¹⁷ Flamininus, of course, dedicated objects at Delphi, complete with verse compositions in Greek (Plut. *Flam.* 12. 6–7), and his statue at Rome had a Greek inscription, which Plutarch saw (*Flam.* 1. 1). But in fact he was motivated to know Greek well, not in order to sleep with Homer under his pillow, patronize poets, or imitate Philip V in bandying epigrams with Alcaeus of Messene,¹⁸ but in order to settle affairs in Greece, act as a civic arbitrator, deal with Greek legal and political problems in detail, and conduct political negotiations in person without relying blindly on interpreters and advisers. Nor did his reputation for philhellenism in antiquity ever rest on anything other than his competence in ordinary, contemporary Greek language, law, and politics.

Plutarch in his *Flamininus* characterizes him as greater in argument than war (2. 4 λόγῳ μᾶλλον ἢ πολέμῳ χρώμενος), praises his πιθανότης in audiences with Greeks, calls him φωνὴν καὶ διάλεκτον Ἑλλῆν (5. 5), and characterizes his Greek conversation, in flattering terms borrowed

17. Badian, *Flamininus*, p. 54.

18. *Ibid.*

from rhetorical theory, as ἐπίχαρις μετὰ δεινότητος (“combining charm with point”), giving several examples whose authenticity cannot be doubted on any reasonable interpretation of the evidence (17. 2–5). What resentment he felt against Greek politicians was vented ἐν λόγῳ παρρησίᾳν τινὰ πολιτικὴν ἔχοντι (17. 1). Not enough of Polybius survives to extract a similar characterization, but it is clearly implied by Flamininus’ self-confident conversations with Philip V (18. 1 ff.), especially by his smiling at Philip’s jokes (18. 6), and by the scene in which he sharply interrupts Phaeneas the Aetolian from his chair without bothering to rise (18. 37. 12). These are powerful indications that Flamininus’ Greek impressed contemporary Greeks as perfectly fluent, idiomatic, even perfect in accent. In a number of the situations described by these historians, quite small misunderstandings of verbal points would have involved disaster, and in others would have made Flamininus look unutterably foolish. But there were no such disasters; and since he could have written the letter to Chyretiae (and claims explicitly to have written earlier judgments about them) it would be gratuitous to deny him authorship.

II. BACKGROUND, DATE, AND PURPOSE OF THE INSCRIPTION

Since we shall be arguing in this section that Flamininus paid minute attention to Greek law and politics in city after city, not merely in Chyretiae, it will be as well to point out that this was nothing new for him. As governor of Tarentum in 205 and 204, and perhaps also in 203 and 202,¹⁹ he had to deal with circumstances very much like those he later found in Thessaly. On being taken back from Hannibal a second time in 209 Tarentum was sacked by the Romans so dreadfully that it never recovered completely. The question of its status for the future was postponed by the senate in 208 and not settled until some time after Hannibal’s departure from Italy in autumn 203. Subsequently, it lost its liberty but kept its city rights and Greek laws. In 208, however, the senate did proclaim the return of all Tarentine exiles and the restoration of their property;²⁰ and since this must have been a time-consuming process in so large a city, it will have been far from complete when Flamininus took over in 205. Surely one of his chief concerns, therefore, was the redistribution of property after a sack, although on a far grander scale and in a more complicated setting than at Chyretiae. It is certainly difficult to see why else Plutarch should state that his handling of legal decisions at this time won him as much credit as his military talents (*Flam.* 1. 3).

It might be imagined that these early decisions were rendered under some form of Roman law, since Tarentum was after all a city captured

19. Badian, *Flamininus*, p. 29, assumes the longer period, but A. M. Eckstein, “T. Quinctius Flamininus and the Campaign against Philip in 198 B.C.,” *Phoenix* 30 (1976): 120–21, argues that we are certain only of the first two years.

20. P. Wuilleumier, *Tarente, des origines à la conquête romaine* (Paris, 1939), pp. 161–67.

by and under the control of a Roman army. But given that the law of the city was Greek before and after his term, it makes better sense to assume that wherever possible he rendered his judgments under Greek law. That alone would have pleased the Tarentines, particularly the pro-Roman exiles who were now returning; and, conquered or not, they needed to be pacified, not provoked, if Flamininus' judgments were to win him praise. The Tarentine episode, therefore, can be seen as excellent training for Flamininus' later activities as judge and arbitrator of legal and constitutional questions on the larger stage of mainland Greece—activities, again, which won him much praise (*Flam.* 12. 3).

It should be remembered that the quarrelsome Greek city-states of this period were in the habit of settling disputes, and even clearing their dockets of internal law-cases which proved unmanageable for citizen-judges, by appeal to outside Greek arbitrators. Many inscriptions survive, not least from Thessaly, thanking such arbitrators for the successful resolution of disputes and cases.²¹ Flamininus, if the parties involved understood him and his secretaries and advisers to be competent judges, was not necessarily being officious in undertaking to resolve these disputes. Plutarch does not give specific examples, but Flamininus' interest in the minutest details of Greek custom and ceremony must be reflected in Plutarch's praise of his behavior as *agonothetes* at Nemea in 195 (12. 2). Such details explain why he is given special treatment in the Greek tradition, and why his failings are so often glossed over or ignored.

Flamininus' dealings with the Thessalians after Cynoscephalae are a particularly revealing example of his interests as lawgiver and arbitrator. He had the problem of setting up a newly independent Thessaly which would be able to resist pressure from Macedon and the Aetolians. Apparently he (with the assent of the *decem legati*) blocked out a constitutional revision of Thessaly in time for all three of his new leagues there—the Perrhaebian, Thessalian, and Magnesian leagues—to start functioning in 196.²² Another chief concern of Flamininus in the following two years was the fate of the territories around the two northern “fetters of Greece” of which he had just deprived Philip: Demetrias, the new capital of the Magnesian League and the “fetter” of Thessaly; and Chalcis, the “fetter” of Euboea. Corinth he could safely dismiss into the hands of the Achaean League, but the situation in Euboea and Thessaly and in the territories south of Thessaly, where the Macedonians had long dominated city governments, was given much greater attention.

This is why Flamininus spent the winter of 195 at Elatea in Phocis, administering justice and dictating constitutional revisions to various unspecified cities. The lawcases no doubt included many property claims caused by the war, similar to those noted in our inscription; the con-

21. On arbitration by foreign judges, see L. Robert, “Les juges étrangers dans la cité grecque,” in *Xenion: Festschrift Pan. J. Zepos* (Athens, 1973), pp. 765–82 (esp. p. 781, on the favorable attitude of the Romans to this practice), and A. J. Marshall, “International Jurisdiction in the Greek World,” in H. Temporini, ed., *ANRW* 2. 13 (Berlin, 1980), pp. 636–40.

22. The league of the Thessalians dates certainly from 196 (the year in which the lists of Thessalian *strategoi* begin in Eusebius), and the same can be assumed for the Perrhaebian and Magnesian leagues (cf. Livy 33. 33. 5 and 33. 34. 6–7).

stitutional arrangements, Livy says, undid many provisions through which Philip and his agents had intended to strengthen the pro-Macedonian party and depress the rest (34. 48. 2 “cum suae factionis hominum vires augendo ius ac libertatem aliorum deprimerent”). What degree of severity Flamininus showed the pro-Macedonians, and in what cities, is not clear from the passage. But since his conduct after the Nemean games of 195, to judge from the sequel, was directed to answering and refuting various criticisms brought up at the games by the Achaeans and Aetolians (Livy 34. 41. 4–7), we can conclude that, if only for propaganda purposes, he was fairly restrained.

Flamininus had gone straight from the Nemean games to Elatea; and from there, in early spring of 194, he went down to Corinth and made the speech which Livy reports, obviously after Polybius. He reviewed the whole relationship of Rome with the Greeks, concluding with his own achievements, and defending his behavior toward Nabis of Sparta (which dissatisfied the Achaeans by its mildness) as motivated by his desire to spare a historic Greek city. As Livy reports (34. 49. 3–7),

Praeteritorum commemorationi subiecit, proficisci sibi in Italiam atque omnem exercitum deportare in animo esse; Demetriadis Chalcidisque praesidia intra decimum diem audituros deducta, Acrocorinthum, ipsis extemulo videntibus vacuam Achaeis traditum, ut omnes scirent utrum Romanis an Aetolis mentiri mos esset, qui male commissam libertatem populo Romano sermonibus distulerint et mutatos pro Macedonibus Romanos dominos. sed illis nec quid dicerent nec quid facerent umquam pensi fuisse.

These last words, which as we shall see have also some relevance to understanding the Chyretian inscription, indicate that Flamininus was not worried lest his behavior at Elatea be cited as proof of the Aetolians' claim that the Romans behaved like *domini*. He then advised the Greeks to use their liberty well and to avoid both inter-city and civil strife, which would make them an easy prey to foreign powers (he meant principally Antiochus III). He ended by taking the garrison from the Acrocorinth as he had promised, a dramatic gesture which was enthusiastically received.

Flamininus then returned to Elatea and sent his troops across Greece to Oricum to await him. From Elatea he went to Chalcis, to remove the garrisons there and deliver an address to a congress of the Euboeans in the same style (Livy 34. 51. 1–3). Having done the same things at Demetrias, capital of his new League of the Magnetes, Flamininus went next to Thessaly. There

non liberandae modo civitates erant sed ex omni colluvione et confusione in aliquam tolerabilem formam redigendae. nec enim temporum modo vitiis ac violentia et licentia regia turbati erant, sed inquieto etiam ingenio gentis, nec comitia nec conventum neque concilium ullum non per seditionem ac tumultum iam inde a principio ad nostram usque aetatem traducentes.²³ a censu maxime et senatum et iudices legit

23. A. Aymard, *Études d'histoire ancienne* (Paris, 1967), p. 175, notes rightly that this presupposes a rather democratic assembly both in the cities and in the convention of the league, and that Flamininus did not restrict the franchise in Thessaly, whatever he did to the qualifications for office. J. Briscoe, *A*

potentioresque eam partem civitatum fecit cui salva et tranquilla omnia esse magis expediebat. ita cum percensuisset Thessalam per Epirum Oricum unde erat traiecturus venit (Livy 34. 51. 4–6).

The second part of Livy's statement, about the property qualifications that Flamininus introduced, has naturally received more attention than the first, about the confusion into which Thessaly had fallen. But Thessaly had not only been ravaged by the Romans and (particularly) by the Aetolians in 198, when they were still acting as Rome's allies and before Flamininus refused to allow them their conquests in Thessaly; it was also most unexpectedly subjected to a scorched-earth policy by Philip himself, after 150 years in which the Macedonians had never acted as anything but overlords and protectors of the Thessalians.²⁴

The property qualifications themselves are not very significant. Flamininus did not institute aristocratic government in Thessaly; it had been prevalent there since the beginning of history and had prospered all the more since Philip II and his successors (down to Antigonus Doson) had been virtual kings of Thessaly as permanent, *ex officio* heads of the Thessalian League.²⁵ Although Philip V occasionally courted democratic politicians in other parts of Greece for his own purposes, he is unlikely to have undermined the power of the class in Thessaly on which Macedon depended for its support before Flamininus came.²⁶ Since the alternative to Macedon was the Aetolians, the aristocratic party and the pro-Macedonian party in Thessaly, at least before 198, must have been more or less the same: if Flamininus was to favor the property-owning classes, he cannot very well have ruined those who were pro-Macedonian before 198.

Flamininus may well have established throughout Thessaly property qualifications for office of a kind that had only been known in some of its cities earlier. Yet he cannot, on the other hand, have unduly depressed the fortunes of any other important parties, for two reasons. In 194, Flamininus intended to depart from Greece in a blaze of popularity. By renouncing property-claims and withdrawing garrisons, he would refute forcefully the Aetolians' claim that the Romans' gift of freedom to Greece was a trick. Thessaly was an obvious choice for a showplace: it was precisely over Thessaly that he had incurred the enmity of the Aetolians in 196, when he refused to admit that they were entitled, by the terms of their alliance with Rome, to keep the cities that they had conquered

Commentary on Livy Books 34–37 (Oxford, 1981), pp. 127–28, objects that Livy's reference to the present turbulent character of Thessaly may simply be transcribed without thought from Polybius. But if Thessalian government was turbulent and democratic in the 140s, that is good enough evidence that Flamininus did not suppress freedom there. In fact, there was still some political turbulence in Thessaly in Augustus' day: the (somewhat sketchy) evidence is collected and discussed in G. W. Bowersock, "Zur Geschichte des römischen Thessaliens," *RhM* 108 (1965): 280–82.

24. Philip's unexpected destruction of various Thessalian cities is discussed in F. W. Walbank, *Philip V of Macedonia* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 153–54.

25. J. A. O. Larsen, *Greek Federal States* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 21–26; J. Toulioumakos, *Der Einfluss Roms auf die Staatsform der griechischen Stadtstaaten des Festlandes und der Inseln im ersten und zweiten Jhd. v. Chr.* (Ph.D. diss., Göttingen, 1967), pp. 70–71.

26. The possibility is discussed and rejected by Walbank, *Philip*, pp. 165–66; see esp. p. 165, n. 7.

there. It was in Thessaly, then, that he could least afford to lend credibility to the Aetolians' anti-Roman propaganda by leaving a part of Greece where they had territorial ambitions of long standing filled with deprived and dissatisfied politicians of any persuasion.

Moreover, Flamininus' chief objective was to leave Greece in some kind of harmony, united against outside influence—particularly that of Antiochus III, whom the indignant Aetolians were in fact soon to invite into Greece as their vindicator. His purpose was set out explicitly in the speech at Corinth: “concordiae in civitatibus principes et ordines inter se, et in commune omnes civitates consulerent. adversus consentientes nec regem quemquam satis validum nec tyrannum fore: discordiam et seditionem omnia opportuna insidiantibus facere, cum pars quae domes-tico certamine inferior sit externo potius se applicet quam civi cedat” (Livy 34. 49. 9–10). His settlement of Thessaly was directed both in large and in small to producing this kind of concord, and indeed achieved it. As an unintended but striking result, his new constitution for their league made Thessaly a little island of Greek political and legal antiquities that lasted, with only minor changes, at least into the age of the Antonines and probably until his constitution was abolished by Diocletian.²⁷

Flamininus' settlement lasted so long because of the thoroughness, creativity, and detail of his and his advisers' work on both constitutional and legal problems. Livy's statement (34. 51. 4–6) does not begin to set forth what we know Flamininus actually achieved; all this lurks in the three words *cum percensisset Thessalam*. Flamininus' general design for the three Thessalian leagues borrowed from the constitutions of other existing leagues the idea of representative government in an assembly and of an annually elected *strategos* as chief of the league.²⁸ Both ideas proved satisfactory and lasted as long as the leagues themselves. The Chyretians at first belonged, not to the Thessalian League, but to its neighbor, the Perrhaebian League. The latter was organized with its own constitution by Flamininus and existed separately, like the Magnesian League to the east, presumably because the Perrhaebians, the Thessalians, and the Magnesians thought of themselves at this period as distinct peoples. When, about 146 B.C., the Romans merged the Perrhaebian League with the Thessalian,²⁹ Chyretiae adopted the Thessalian calendar and dated by the *strategos* of Thessaly, like the cities (Hypata for example) that Augustus made part of the league.³⁰ We

27. This is known to be true of the Magnesian League: cf. Larsen, *Federal States*, p. 295, and F. Stähelin, “Magnesia,” *RE* 14 (1930): 467. The Thessalian League's coinage ends, like so many local Greek issues, with Galienus. No doubt the invasions of 267 and after brought peace and order to an end long before Diocletian formally abolished the leagues (cf. J. A. O. Larsen, *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* [Berkeley, 1955], p. 147; id., *Federal States*, pp. 292–94).

28. Larsen, *Federal States*, pp. 284–87.

29. Cf. H. Kramolisch, “Das Ende des Perrhäbischen Bundes,” in *La Thessalie*, Actes de la Table-Ronde 21–24 Juillet (Lyon, 1979), pp. 201–19. Kramolisch's attempt to suggest some kind of tension between the Perrhaebians and the Thessalians, due to the Perrhaebians' greater residual loyalty to the Macedonians, is hardly supported by the one text from which he argues. Livy 42. 53. 5 ff. (p. 203).

30. Cf. Kramolisch, “Das Ende,” p. 202. Also: F. Stähelin, “Kuperiat.” *RE* 23 (1924): 170, and “Hypata,” *RE* 9 (1916): 239.

also know that Hypata's archons were changed to *tagoi* at this point, which shows that the Thessalian League prescribed a regular form of city government. Since the same was probably true also for Flamininus' Perrhaebian League, the *tagoi* in our inscription were all but certainly elected under Flamininus' new laws. From Flamininus' time, *tagos* is the regular title of the chief officials of cities in Thessaly and Perrhaebia both. The title had been known in only some cities earlier, and earlier still, before Macedonian rule, had been reserved for the head of the league.³¹

These general features were presumably in place from the start of the leagues' operation in 196. In the following years, Flamininus apparently examined the disputes between various cities in great detail, to preclude quarrels. Thus, on an inscription set up in the 140s B.C. which refers to his constitution as "the *laws* by which the Thessalians are now governed, which T. Quinctius the consul gave them with the approval of the ten commissioners" (*SIG³ 674, 50–53*), the subject-matter is actually one of Flamininus' arbitrations of boundary disputes between cities.³²

The Chyretian inscription supplies us with an interesting example of the sort of settlement Flamininus will have made all over Euboea and Thessaly as he departed in 194. That it was set up at this time is guaranteed by its reflection, in detail, of the policy and propaganda found in Livy's report of Flamininus' earlier speech at Corinth.³³ There, Flamininus reviewed Rome's behavior in general, then dramatically demonstrated its tendency by removing the garrison from the Acrocorinth; then he used this action as an object lesson to refute the Aetolians' criticism of Rome, characterizing them as equally careless of their words and their behavior—an oblique reference to their brutality in warfare. So also for the Chyretians he asserts the good behavior of Rome to them in general; then he makes what is clearly a final and exemplary gesture of goodwill and of withdrawal from their affairs, namely, the return of the property, taking the opportunity to imply that the Romans' temporary right of ownership had mainly been exercised in returning it to the claimants. Indeed, in this recently sacked town, which does not appear to have recovered much prosperity until imperial times,³⁴ that could well have been the truth; the Aetolian sack of 199 may not have left much behind to tempt the Romans. Once more, obliquely and with-

31. Larsen, *Federal States*, p. 285, cf. also Touloumako, *Einfluss*, p. 67, who thinks that there was little or no difference between the forms of city government in Thessaly and Perrhaebia even when the leagues were separate.

32. The inscription is edited and annotated in Sherk, *Documents*, pp. 49–50 (also now as no. 38 [pp. 37–38] in Sherk's *Rome and the Greek East*); see bibliography of discussions there and in Larsen, *Federal States*, p. 288. These laws were still in force at the time of the inscription (ca. 140) in which the senate refuses an appeal against one of them.

33. The majority of scholars have dated the inscription to 196–194 or 195–194 without being more precise; see Sherk, *Documents*, p. 212. M. Holleaux, *CAH* 8:192, conjectured that in the winter of 195–194 Flamininus wrote this letter to the Chyretians from Elateia (after earlier suggesting 196–194 in Στρατηγὸς Ὑπάτος [New York, 1918], p. 3, n. 3). A. Aymard, *Les premiers rapports de Rome et de la confédération achaienne (198–189 avant J.-C.)* (Bordeaux, 1938), pp. 258–59, n. 10, suggested that the letter was written probably around the time of the conference at Corinth in 194.

34. Stähelin, "Kuperiat," col. 170.

out naming them, he refers to the Aetolians as slanderers of Rome who “themselves are not accustomed to act up to the highest standards of behavior.”

There are, then, at least four elements in common between the speech at Corinth reported by Livy (from Polybius) and the inscription. There is a reference to Rome’s honorable behavior in general. There is a final gesture of goodwill returning what remains in Roman possession because of the war. There is a pointed reference to how this refutes Aetolian slanders of Rome. And there is an implication that the Aetolians are as irresponsible in their behavior toward other Greeks as in their talk: “sed illis nec quid dicerent *nec quid facerent* umquam pensi fuisse” and of οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ βελτίστου εἰωθότες ἀναστρέφεσθαι. These parallels, and with them the fact that the inscription clearly records a departing gesture of goodwill, date the inscription beyond question to the period of Flamininus’ visit to Thessaly in 194.

This in turn means that we must reject, as inconsistent with Flamininus’ propaganda and purposes, a number of hostile interpretations of the inscription that have appeared from its first publication onward. The idea of *clientela* has nothing to do with the purpose of the letter.³⁵ The political affiliations of the owners of the property can have nothing whatever to do with its return:³⁶ the “reasonable proofs” required are clearly proofs of ownership or of title by inheritance to vacant property. There is no evidence that the Romans profited from the property in question,³⁷ and there would be no parallel for that in any known action of theirs in Greece before 146 B.C.³⁸ And, just as there is no political qualification for the return of the property, so there was no political reason for its being in Roman hands:³⁹ the reason is simply that Chyretiae had been *foede direpta* by the Aetolians in 199. This is in itself enough to explain the presence of much unclaimed real estate in the public treasury, while the city government was disorganized or in abeyance.

35. Cf. Sherk, *Documents*, p. 213; N. Lewis and M. Reinhold, *Roman Civilization*, vol. 1 (New York, 1951), p. 309. Proponents of this view claim that the Romans were dictating to the Chyretians how to deal with the property in question (e.g., F. Abbott and A. Johnson, *Municipal Administration in the Roman Empire* [London, 1926], p. 250) or even see the letter as an exercise of *imperium* (so I. Calabi, *L’uso storiografico delle iscrizioni latine* [Milan, 1953], p. 176). But the phrase κρίνω δίκαιον εἶναι reflects an exercise of *auctoritas*, not *imperium*.

36. See, e.g., *SIG*³, vol. 2, no. 593 (notes) for this view.

37. As suggested, e.g., by M. Rostovtzeff, *Studien zur Geschichte des römischen Kolonates* (Leipzig, 1910), p. 286.

38. Cf. G. Colin, *Rome et la Grèce de 200 à 146 avant J.-C.* (Paris, 1905), p. 168. It would have been extremely poor public relations for Flamininus to claim that the Romans had wished ἐν οὐθενὶ φιλαργυρήσαι, and with this extraordinary lie to remind his victims of his greed and their suffering; yet public relations was a field in which Flamininus excelled, even according to his detractors: cf. Badian, *Flamininus*, p. 56: “One might see him in terms of McLuhan, as recognizing the demands and possibilities of a new medium: Greek public opinion in the east.”

39. See, e.g., Colin, *Rome*, p. 170, and Abbott and Johnson, *Administration*, pp. 249–50. E. L. Hicks, *A Manual of Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford, 1882), p. 327, and Sherk, *Documents*, p. 213, cite lines 8–10 as evidence that the property was confiscated; yet all the Greek tells us is that some property still belonged to the Roman treasury.

The interpretation of Larsen appears to us in its chief points unimpeachable. He assumes that the property had come to the Roman treasury by right of conquest⁴⁰ and had not yet been released because of complications arising from the sack; “Flamininus himself has restored some of the property to former owners and turns it over to the community with instructions to continue his work and to restore the property to such owners as have a reasonable case.”⁴¹ There is also an elegant *sous-entendre* in the inscription. By setting it up publicly, and warning the claimants that there are written judgments of his own which must be used for precedent, he intended to make it impossible, without insulting his new *tagoi* or undercutting their authority, for them to stir up trouble for his settlement by following their own party prejudices in returning the property. So beneath the bland surface of the diplomatic idiom there lurks a revealing instance of Flamininus’ habit of being ἐπίχαρις μετὰ δεινότητος in dealing with Greeks.

A full study of Flamininus’ activities in Thessaly, Perrhaebia, and Magnesia in 198–194 would illuminate more of our texts than merely the Chyretian inscription. It would make clear how behind Plutarch’s enthusiastic description of Flamininus’ tours of Greek cities (*Flam.* 12. 3) and behind Livy’s brief words “cum percensuisset Thessaliam” lies an incredible amount of hard work from Flamininus, distracted as he was by every possible problem in Greek politics on the mainland. This culminated in a final whirlwind tour, during which Flamininus, campaigning like a candidate to create goodwill before the coming war with Antiochus, dispensed benevolence and settled details in every city and town of Euboea and especially Thessaly, the two parts of Greece most exposed to invasion. In the course of this tour, Flamininus must have written out with his secretaries dozens, even hundreds, of minor dispensations like the inscription from Chyretiae.

Further evidence for this interpretation can be found in the embarrassment Flamininus experienced on revisiting Demetrias, capital of his new Magnesian League, in 192.⁴² His painstaking constitutional activities now came back to haunt Flamininus in what, as Livy transcribes it, must have been one of the wittiest and most satirical scenes Polybius ever wrote (Livy 35. 31–32. 1). Unlike the Thessalians, the Magnesians had long been directly subject to the king of Macedon and were governed from the royal palace at Demetrias, under a synoecism of the whole territory with the city of Demetrias as its capital. Flamininus founded in 196–194 a new *koinon ton Magneton* with an assembly—quite a rowdy one, evidently, like that of the Thessalians⁴³—and an elected head called

40. “Roman Greece,” in T. Frank, ed., *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. 4 (Baltimore, 1938), p. 311: “The entire course of the wars and the settlements that followed show that what Rome conquered was regarded as belonging to her until she again released it. This frequently took the form of restoring freedom to an entire community.”

41. *Ibid.*

42. This point was recognized by Stähelin, “Magnesia,” col. 465.

43. To judge from the crowd’s reaction to the Magnetarch’s accusations (Livy 35. 31–32. 1, esp. 35. 31. 13 “sub hanc vocem fremitus variantis multitudinis fuit partim adsensum, partim indignationem, dicere id ausum eum”).

the Magnetarch. Flamininus' constitutional creation did not impress his fellow senators so deeply, however, that they were not perfectly prepared to make a present of Demetrias and the Magnesians to Philip in 192, when he made that the price of his support against Antiochus. Consequently, although Flamininus' visit shortly thereafter to an assembly of the Thessalians was a great success, on his arrival in Demetrias he faced an unexpectedly hostile meeting of an assembly that he had himself created, and an extremely hostile holder of his new office of Magnetarch. To his discomfiture, the news had already arrived that the Romans were prepared to return them to Macedon, nor could Flamininus deny it. He could only try unconvincingly to avoid the issue.

The key point, however, is that the Magnesians were furious, not at being “clients” of Rome or at any detail of their new constitution, but at the prospect of its abolition and their return to the dominion of Macedon. As it happened, Philip, subdued and frightened by his defeats, was no very troublesome governor for his Greek subjects during the rest of his reign; and on the recovery of Magnesia from Perseus in 167 the league was refounded, assembly, Magnetarch, and all.⁴⁴ The series of this league's inscriptions ends in the reign of the emperor Carinus.

In Thessaly, the league lasted without even such short interruptions for the same stretch of centuries,⁴⁵ and appears to have been a major reason for the tranquillity, prosperity, and relative freedom from Roman presence discernible in accounts of Roman Thessaly.⁴⁶ We see this, for example, in Apuleius' picture of life in Hypata, a city originally of Aenis but made part of the Thessalian system by Augustus and given *tagoi*, like the other Thessalian cities, and the Thessalian calendar.⁴⁷ As for Chyretiae, the general conservative tranquillity there is well expressed in Livy's comment (once more, reproducing Polybius) that the debt agitations in Greece in 173 spread not only to Thessaly “*but even to Perrhaibia*” (42. 5. 7). Its last appearance for centuries in Greek history is in Livy's comment that when Perseus invaded Perrhaibia in 171, Chyretiae insisted on holding out against him for the single day its resources permitted before yielding (42. 53. 9). Presumably, like the rest of Perrhaibia, it merged without incident into the Thessalian League and adopted the calendar and other rules that applied to cities of that league, and kept them until Diocletian abolished all such leagues together. It appears, then, from both detailed evidence like our inscription, and the more general evidence of Flamininus' political settlements

44. Cf. n. 23 above; the same argument applies here, for no doubt Livy's present tense, “*Magnetarchen summum magistratum vocant*” (35. 31. 11), merely transcribes something similar in Polybius; in Augustus' time the inscriptions uniformly give the head of the league the title *strategos*. But that would show that the title lasted at least until the 140s, and consequently that it was restored in 167 and for some time afterwards. On the later history of this league, see Stähelin, “*Magnesia*,” col. 467.

45. Concerning Caesar's “granting” of freedom to Thessaly (G. W. Bowersock, *Augustus and the Greek World* [Oxford, 1965], p. 97), see Larsen, *Federal States*, p. 293.

46. Cf. Bowersock, “*Zur Geschichte*,” pp. 277–89; Larsen, *Federal States*, pp. 281–94; id., “A Thessalian Family under the Principate,” *CP* 48 (1953): 91–93.

47. Bowersock, “*Zur Geschichte*,” well reviews Apuleius' evidence for the tranquillity and prosperity of imperial Thessaly. One might specially note, in addition to his evidence, the freedom from Roman garrisons reflected in the phrase *praesidis auxilia longinqua* (*Met.* 2. 18).

all over Greece and especially in Thessaly, that he was no more an amateur in Greek politics than in the Greek language.

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