A New Inscription from Aphrodisias
and the Title πατήρ τῆς πόλεως

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Recent excavations at Aphrodisias in Caria, in particular since 1972, have revealed to the east of the Theatre a large piazza surrounded by colonnades which was remodelled at several periods. The latest phase of this piazza appears to be of the fourth or fifth century (we know from a recently discovered inscription that substantial work was done in the piazza under Julian), and several statue bases of the late Empire have been found in the area; two are in situ, and others have been found built into the Byzantine wall which blocked off the Theatre from the piazza when the acropolis was fortified.

Of the two surviving bases which stood just east of the Theatre with their inscribed faces towards the piazza, one is badly damaged, but the other is almost complete, and the statue which stood on it was found beside it. This statue is about to be published, accompanied by a very brief note on the inscribed base. The purpose of this article is to describe and discuss this base more fully.

The rectangular base of Aphrodisias marble (height 1.01 meters, width 0.48, depth 0.60) with upper and lower moulding is almost certainly reused; a half-moon, in relief, remains on the far side. The base stood, rather awkwardly, on another base cut down to receive it. The first line of the inscription is on the upper moulding. The letters, which are irregular and inelegant, average 4 cm in height (Plate 1).

1 For the current excavations at Aphrodisias, conducted by Professor Kenan Erim of New York University with the generous help of the National Geographic Society and many other benefactors, see the annual reports in the American Journal of Archaeology and Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi, as well as the bibliography in the Princeton Encyclopaedia of Classical Sites (Princeton 1976). I am preparing an edition of the late Roman and Byzantine inscriptions from Aphrodisias and assisting in the preparation by Miss Joyce Reynolds of a corpus of inscriptions from the site.

2 In Römische und frühbyzantinische Porträtplastik aus der Türkei, by E. Alföldi-Rosenbaum and J. Inan (Berlin 1979). The statue is now on display in the Aphrodisias Museum, and the base is in the Museum garden.
[(cross)] Αγαθή (cross) Τύχη (cross)  
Τὸν ἀνανεωτήν
καὶ κτίστην τῆς μητροπό(λεως)
kai εὐεργέτην πάνης
Καρίας Φλ(άβιων) Παλμάτουν
tón perίβλα(επτού) ύπα(τικόν) κ(αί) ἐπαίχο(ντα)
tón τόπου τοῦ μεγαλουρ(επεκτάου)
βικαρίου Φλ(άβιως) Ἀθηνέος
ὁ λαμπρ(.στατος) πατήρ τῆς
λαμπρ(.στάτης) Ἀφροδ(ευεὔνν) μητροπό(λεως)
eὐχαριστῶν ἀνέθη-
(vacat) κεν (leaf)

Flavius Palmatus was named in another inscribed monument, presumably from Caria, but not found (Anth.Pal. 16.35):

Μνήμονες οἱ Καρεῖς πολλέων εὐεργεσίας
Παλμάτου (Παλμάν ed.) ἵθυδίκην τόσσον ἀγασσάμενοι.

L. Robert pointed out that this epigram almost certainly derives from an inscription honouring a late imperial governor of Caria, and so probably at Aphrodisias; a Alan Cameron, in studying the manuscripts of the Planudean Anthology, showed that the original reading was Παλμάτουν. Caria was still governed by a praeses at the time of the redaction of the Notitia Dignitatum (ca A.D. 400) but was under a consularis by the time of the composition of the source for Hierocles’ Synecdemus (in the 440’s). It is attractive to associate such upgradings of provincial governorships (which are typical of the late Empire and appear unrelated to changes in the importance of the particular provinces) with a change in emperor or of ministry, and a consequent wish for senatorial support; but in Theodosius II’s long reign it is difficult to identify any one particularly appropriate moment which could serve as a terminus post quem for our inscription. A definite terminus ante quem must be Justinian’s Novel VIII, of May 536, which abolished the vicariate of Asia. The inscription reflects

5 For the date of the Notitia Dignitatum see A. H. M. Jones, Later Roman Empire II (Norman 1964) 1417–21 [hereafter, Jones, LRE]. For the date of the Synecdemus and its sources, see Jones, Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces2 (Oxford 1971) 514–21. The material is summarized in LRE 1451–61.
the withering away of that office, and Justinian’s legislation seems merely to have legalized the status quo; by 536 the vicariate appears to be held regularly by the governor of Phrygia Pacatiana (τῶν βικάριων τῆς Ἀσιανῆς, ὄντα δὲ καὶ ἄρχοντα τῆς Πακιτιανῆς Φρυγίας; so Jones, LRE 374). Our inscription presumably reflects an earlier stage in this process, before the vicariate came necessarily to fall to the governor of Phrygia Pacatiana.

It would be tempting to try to draw a conclusion about the date from Palmatus’ title περὶβλεπτος (spectabilis). The governor of Caria is referred to as λαμπρότατος ἄρχων in 426 and as μεγαλοπρέπετατος κόμ(ης) κε ὅπατικός under Anastasius, but neither of these usages allows definite conclusions to be drawn. The Anastasian governor very probably had another, more specific, rank as well as μεγαλοπρεπετατος, which was omitted in the curtailed style of this milestone inscription. As for Palmatus, he may well have been περὶβλεπτος by virtue of his office of deputy vicar rather than by virtue of being consularis of Caria.

Palmatus is called, with the standard rhetoric of the late Empire, ἀνανεωτῆς, κτίστης and, in the epigram, ἱθυδίκης. L. Robert has shown all of these to be typical epithets of the period. Εὐεργέτης is common at all periods. Palmatus’ benefactions to “all Caria” were sufficient, apparently, to earn him two statues, one put up by the Carians; this suggests that the expense was met by the provincial assembly, from their own funds (however these were raised). Our statue, however,
gives the appearance of having been put up, almost as in the good old days, by an individual, Flavius Athenaeus, the πατήρ τῆς πόλεως.

It is L. Robert, again, who has helped to clarify the use of this term. 10 The honorific titles 'father', 'mother', 'son' and 'daughter of the city' were given to benefactors of the cities in the classical period, but titles of this kind fell out of use with the diminution of civic benefactions in the late Empire. In 465 a law of Leo I (Cod. Just. 10.44.3) declared: Si quis vero ex his omnia decurionum munera vel functiones vel honores nulla imminente necessitate, sed sua sponte peregerit, eum pro sua liberalitate patrem civitatis, in qua voluntarius municeps apparebit, si hoc ei libuerit, fieri constituitque hac lege decernimus. It is an interesting indication of the loss of independence by the late Roman cities that a law should be considered necessary to allow them to offer such a title. It is quite likely that Leo's law, like so much late Roman legislation, in fact was inspired by existing piecemeal practice, itself based on a memory of the earlier usage. The title appears, however, to accompany a function which is more specific than the liberalitas of Leo's law. From the fifth century onwards, the title πατήρ τῆς πόλεως, and even the verb πατέρευω, are found quite frequently in inscriptions and in the laws. It may be useful to collect these examples here.

Among inscriptions, the following are known to me. While a few can be dated with some precision, the majority reflect the current state of the epigraphy of the period and are dated only within a margin of one or two centuries by editors.

**APHRODISIAS**

(1) (cross) ἐπὶ Φλ(αβίου) Φωτίου σχο(λαστικοῦ) καὶ πατρός (cross). Letters 3 cm. This new inscription is cut on the lower rim of a marble 'game-board', as is the similar inscription published by Reinach (REG 19 [1906] 297 no.213, whence IGC 264): (cross) ἐπὶ Φλ(αβίου) Φωτίου σχο(λαστικοῦ) (cross). Late fifth or sixth century.

(2) An inscription cut on the northeast gate at Aphrodisias, published most recently by Cormack (MAMA VIII 427, citing earlier publications), dates the repairing of the gate ἐπὶ Φλ(αβίου) Ἀμπελίου τοῦ ἐλλογμ(ωτάτου) σχο(λαστικοῦ) καὶ πατρός Ἰ.ν. (cross). A new fragmentary inscription on the rim of the Odeon stage at Aphrodisias, referring to work done on the Odeon in almost identical terms, refers to a σχο(λαστικός) καὶ πατήρ whose name is lost, but who is very probably also Flavius Ampelius. Fifth century.

10 See in particular Hellenica IV 130 and n.6; RevPhil 32 (1958) 50.
(3) L. Robert pointed out that Rhodopaios, apostrophized as πατέρ in an epigram published by him (Hellenica IV 127ff), was probably πατήρ τῆς πόλεως. Late fifth or sixth century.

(4) Flavius Athenaeus, in our new inscription.

(5) For another πατήρ τῆς πόλεως from Aphrodisias, Aristocrates, see below, p.182.

MILETUS
(1) IGC 219 (datable to 538): dates the building of a gate by regnal year, consulate, the governor, the bishop and πατερεύοντος Ἰωάννου τοῦ λαμπρο(οτάτου) κόμ(ητος).

SMYRNA
(1) Anth.Pal. 9.615 (cited by L. Robert, Hellenica IV 131) is apparently taken from an inscription, with the lemma εἰς λουτρόν ἐν Σμύρνη; the text is uncertain, but it appears to refer to a Theodore δὲ γὰρ ἐών πόλιος κτεάνων τομίῃς τε πατήρ τε restored the baths. Probably sixth century, perhaps even by Agathias—see Hellenica IV 132 n.3.

(2) Agathias (Anth.Pal. 9.662, with Hellenica IV 132; A. and A. Cameron, JHS 86 [1966] 9–10, believe that this is the poet himself; P. Maas, ByzNeugrJb 3 [1922] 163–64, had his doubts) πατήρ...πόλης repairs the public lavatories at Smyrna. Sixth century.

ATTALIA
(1) IGC 307: [ἐ]πὶ... an anonymous [ϲ]χο(λαστικοῦ) κ(αί) πατ[ρὸς...]; the context is not clear. Sixth century—Grégoire.

(2) IGC 309: ἐπὶ (the governor and) Ἰεροδόξου τοῦ λαμπρο(τάτου) πατρός, referring to the facing (πλάκωςεις) of a gate. Fifth–sixth century—Grégoire.

SIDE


TARSUS
A NEW INSCRIPTION FROM APHRODISIAS

(2) G. Laminger-Pascher (op.cit. 35, from R. Heberdey’s notes): ἐπὶ Φλ(άβιος) Ἱσωάνου τοῦ μεγαλοπρ(επεκτάτου) καὶ περιβλ(έπτου) κόμ(ητος) καὶ ἀρχοντος ἦμων κ(α)ί Ζήσωνος τοῦ λαμπρ(τάτου) κόμ(ητος) κ(α)ί πατρός τοῦ πάν ἔργων γέγονεν ἐν χρό(νω) ἱδ(ικτιώνοις) α’. The reference to the comes Isauriae as περιβλεπτος, particularly with the reinforcement of μεγαλοπρεπέστατος, ought to put this inscription well after Justinian’s Novel xxvii De Comite Isauriae (535), although it is not impossible that these titles were already being usurped by the comes; Laminger-Pascher’s proposed fourth-century date for both these inscriptions is unacceptable.¹¹

(3) A. E. Raubitschek, in H. Goldman (ed.), Excavations at Güzli Kule, Tarsus I (Princeton 1950) 384 no.8, with pl.258; reproduced, but with a question mark, in BullEp 1951, no.223. I would prefer to see this not as a fourth-century tombstone, [(cross) τόπος τοῦ μεγα]λοπρ(επεκτάτου) κόμητος [κ]ή Αξιας καὶ ρήτορος Μουσουνίου [...c.10] τοῦ περιβλ(έπτου) [...c.10] κρ Κομαὶ τοῦ [...c.10] επιρίου καὶ [...c.10] περιβλ(έπτου) τρ(ι)β [...c.10] ΤΝΣΩΝΤΟΣ [...c.10] ξοτέρου [...c.10] ΙΟΥ (cross)—so Raubitschek—, but as a building inscription: [(cross) ἐπὶ τοῦ μεγα]λοπρ(επεκτάτου) κόμητος [κ]ή Αξιας(καὶ) καὶ πατ]ρὸς Μουσουνίου, κ.τ.λ. If this restoration is correct, we should assume a late-fifth or sixth-century date (which would accord well with the letter forms) in view of the debased titulature; for another μεγαλοπρ(επεκτάτος) πατήρ, see below. The other people listed must then be private contributors to the building.

ELAEUSSA (CILICIA TRACHAEA)

(1) Bent and Hicks, JHS 12 (1891) 259 no.32; (cf. R. Heberdey, DenkschrWien 44 [1896] 50); Laminger-Pascher, from Heberdey’s notes, op.cit. 67: ἐπὶ Ἰμου τοῦ μεγαλοπρ(επεκτάτου) κόμ(ητος) πατρός, on an aqueduct supplying Elaeussa-Sebaste. Laminger-Pascher reads Ἰλλοῦ, which from the facsimile looks possible; but L. Zgusta, Kleinasiatische Personennamen (Prague 1964) 196, suggests that Ἰμου could be from Ἰμας, a widespread name. In any case, Laminger-Pascher’s identification with the famous general Illus is very improbable. Late fifth or sixth century.

CAESAREA (PALESTINE)


(2) B. Lifschitz, op.cit. 122–23, with n.51 for earlier bibliography: ἐπὶ (the governor and) Ἰλλοῦ λαμπρ(τάτος) πατρὸς τῆς πόλεως, concerning the

¹¹ For the abbreviation ἐν χρό, which puzzled Laminger-Pascher, see SEG VIII 34 and 35, whence M. Avi-Yonah, Abbreviations in Greek Inscriptions (QDAP IX Suppl., London 1940) 113.
building or repairing of a basilica; datable (by the same arguments) before 536.

**PALестINE** (location uncertain)


**Sepphoris (?)**

(1) B. Lifschitz, *ZDPV* 79 (1963) 94–95 (*SEG* XX 416, cf. *BullEp* 1964, 512) reediting *SEG* VIII 15, a private inscription on a lintel, conjectures a πατὴρ τῆς πόλεως. But the private character of this inscription and the difficulties at several points make this very uncertain.

**Jerusalem (?)**


**Perinthus (Thrace)**


**Gortyna (Crete)**

(1) M. Guarducci, *I.Creticae* IV 461; A. C. Bandy, *Christian Inscriptions of Crete* (Athens 1971) 32: ἔπὶ Βεγλίου τοῦ λαμπροτάτου εκκύνησε καὶ πατρὸς τῆς πόλ(εως), referring to the restoration of a pavement and (?) a church (a cistern, Bandy). The only copy of this inscription (A. Lollini, in *cod. Vat.gr.* 1759 fol.135r) is very unsure.

The pattern that emerges from this list is, first, that almost all the inscriptions are associated with public works, and secondly, that certain cities produce clusters of πατέρες while others, with abundant evidence of public works dating from this period (e.g., Gerasa and Syria in general), produce no mention of such an official.12

As to the references in the legislation, these also follow an interesting pattern. By far the majority of these passages speak of πατέρες and/or some other kind of official. Thus:

12 There are also mentions in papyri: see, e.g., C. Wessely, *StudPal* III (Leipzig 1904) nos. 67 (7th cent., Heracleopolis) and 176 (6th cent., Arsinoe); these, unhelpfully, are simply descriptions of individuals.
A NEW INSCRIPTION FROM APHRODISIAS

Cod. Just. 10.27.2.12 (Anastasius, on the organization of corn levies): καὶ οἱ πατέρες τῶν πόλεων καὶ πᾶς ἕτερος τῆς εὐνωνίας προνοούμενος.

Cod. Just. 1.5.12.7 (487 or 510): τοὺς δὲ αὐτούς αἰρετικοὺς οὔτε ἐκδίκους οὔτε πόλεως πατρὸς μετίηναι φροντίδα εὐγχωροῦμεν.

Cod. Just. 8.51.3.3 (529): concerning the protection of rights of abandoned children, entrusted to governors and episcopis nec non officiis praesidalibus et patribus et defensoribus civitatum et omni civili auxilio.

Cod. Just. 3.43.1.1 (529): concerning laws about dicing to be enforced a patribus seu defensoribus locorum (cf. Cod. Just. 1.4.25).

Cod. Just. 12.63.2.6 (530): the responsibility for not giving more than a stated amount to requisitions by governors is urged: οὐ χρη ἀπ᾿ οὗτος πατέρας οὔτε τοὺς πατέρας οὔτε τοὺς εἰπώνας...παρέχειν.

Just. Nov. 75.2 (537): concerned with the ratification of local legislation in Sicily—id est pro defensoribus vel patribus civilitatum decretum.

Just. Nov. 85.3.1 (539): responsibility for the control of private arms manufacture belongs to governors, their officia, καὶ τῶν τὰς πόλεις ἐκδικοῦντος καὶ πατέρων.

The implication of such phrases would seem to be that not every city had a πατήρ.

Against this background, it is useful to look at the laws which mention πατέρες more specifically. The earliest reference (after the law of Leo quoted above) is Cod. Just. 8.12 (Zeno, 485/6) which forbids central government officials from interfering with public works which are undertaken from civiles reditus—the cities’ own income—and which are the concern of patribus civilitatum.

Cod. Just. 11.33.2 is a law of Constantine (314) dealing with the regulation of debts by a private individual to a city. In the Theodosian Code (12.11.1) this money is to be invested periculo curatorium kalendarii, but in the Justinianic Code this is emended to cura patris civitatis.

Cod. Just. 1.4.26 (530) is also concerned with πολιτικαὶ πρόσωποι; the care of the land owned by the city (πολιτικὸν ἢ δημόσιον) is the responsibility of τὸν θεοφιλέστατον ἐπίσκοπον τὸν τε πατέρα τοὺς τε λουποὺς ἐν ὑπολήψει κτήτορας (9). Decisions about the reliability of a surety are to be reached by τὸν θεοφιλέστατον ἐπίσκοπον τὸν τε πατέρα τὸν τε ἐκδικοῦ τῆς πόλεως (12).

Just. Nov. xvii (535) contains the mandata to be given to provincial
governors, setting out their duties. Chapter 4 is concerned with the governor’s conduct vis-à-vis central government envoys on special missions—it instances the construction of waterworks, roads, bridges, walls, etc. as the object of such missions. The governor is instructed not to allow such officials to oppress his subjects, and to check their credentials; the passage continues, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἀφθονίας τῶν ἐπιτηδείων καὶ τῶν ἔργων τῶν πόλεων ἐπιμελήσῃ, παρακενάζων ἐκ τῶν πολιτικῶν χρημάτων αὐτοῦ συναντήσεις ταῦτα να̱ ἀναγκαίοτα τῶν ἔργων ποιέων καὶ γεφυρών ὁμοίως καὶ ὀδῶν καὶ λιμένων... καὶ τειχῶν ἐπιμελεῖσθαι (Lat. procurans ex civilibus pecuniis patres quae valde necessaria sunt offerum facere, etc.). This very compressed passage has been found difficult by others, as the manuscript variants show. The editors took the reference to patres to mean πατέρες τῶν πόλεων.13 But this requires rather an abrupt change of subject matter from the envoys, with whom the preceding sentences are concerned, to local officials; the remainder of the chapter discusses the governor’s relations with soldiers (also the representatives of central government) in his province. It seems preferable to take συναντήσεις as a rhetorical embellishment, characterizing the behaviour to be desired from the government envoys.14 The point of the sentence is that the envoys should use the existing resources of a city, rather than make a special requisition (ζημιόν, above). If this interpretation is correct, we presumably need to assume ut before patres in the Latin text. If, however, the sense of the passage is that the governor should appoint πατέρες to obviate the need for such envoys, we should omit the αὐτοῦ συναντήσεις of the Greek text; but this correction is more violent and therefore less attractive.

Just. Nov. 128.16 (545) is concerned with protecting the funds of cities from taxation. Neither tax collectors (ἀπαγορεύονται) nor local land owners (κτήτορες) nor the governor nor his officium are to interfere with this money; ἀλλὰ τῶν ἐκάστης πόλεως δεσμώτατον ἐπίκεφαλον καὶ τοὺς πρωτεύοντας τῆς πόλεως, οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς αὐτῆς κτήτορας προβάλλεθαι μὲν τὸν πατέρα τῶν τῆς πόλεως καὶ τὸν εἰσίων καὶ ἀλλοὺς τοιούτους διοικητάς. Such officials are to present yearly accounts.

13 Justinian, Novellae, ed. R. Schöll and W. Kroll (Berlin 1895) 120; so also R. Ganghoffer, L’évolution des institutions municipales en Occident et en Orient au Bas Empire (Paris 1963) 161.

14 For such embellishments, compare ch.1, where the governor is urged καθαράς φυλάττειν...τὰς χείρας: for this standard rhetorical cliché applied to governors, see Robert, Hellenica IV 38–39, and I. Ševčenko in A. Grabar, Synthronon (Paris 1968) 35.
For an example of this system in practice, we return to Aphrodisias; just. *Nov. clx* (not datable) was written in response to an appeal from Ἀριστοκράτης ὁ ἐλλογμώτατος πατήρ τῆς Ἀφροδισίας λόγω νόμων καὶ οἱ καὶ κατὰ αὐτὴν κεκτημένοι, over the management of the large legacies (χρυσίων χυτῶν) which had been left to the city, the income from which had been endangered by Justinian’s laws restricting the liabilities of debtors (*Nov. cxxxviii*, before 535). It is clear that at Aphrodisias a tradition of public benefactions by individuals continued to a late date. This may have been partly inspired by the continuance of pagan traditions (e.g., the elder Asclepiodotus, for whom see *Hellenica* IV 115–26; I hope to publish soon fresh evidence of public benefactors in this circle); but the generous Hermias was a Christian, as was Rhodopaios. It does not appear to be paralleled to quite such an extent elsewhere at this period, however.

Finally, the earliest reference to a πατήρ would appear to be in a letter of Nilus of Ancyra (*Ep. 2.36*) addressed to Δημοκράτης πατρὶ πόλεως and presumably written before *ca* 430. But Alan Cameron has recently demonstrated that the headings of these letters are largely the work of a sixth-century editor, and in view of our other evidence, this reference should probably be added to the list of anachronisms collected by Cameron.

There is, therefore, no reliable evidence to date the use of the title πατήρ τῆς πόλεως before the middle of the fifth century, although this situation largely reflects the general difficulties in dating late imperial inscriptions. It may well be that further work in this field will allow us to be more precise and perhaps to give an earlier date to some occurrences of the title; for the moment, its absence from the Theodosian Code is the most substantial indication of date that we can adduce. From the middle of the fifth century and throughout the sixth, the πατήρ τῆς πόλεως appears to be a civic official in charge...
of the civic revenues (τὰ ἓδια χρήματα, Side 2; τὰ πολιτικά, Caesarea 1; the civiles reditus [Cod. Just. 8.12] or πολιτικαὶ πρόσδοι [Cod. Just. 1.4.26]). Other subsidiary duties—supervising gaming (Cod. Just. 3.43) and protecting the rights of children (Cod. Just. 8.51)—were probably assigned to him simply out of administrative convenience. Buildings erected from these revenues are dated by the πατήρ; perhaps when they are also dated by the governor (e.g., Miletus 1, Attalia 2, Caesarea 2), this indicates more than one source for the money (and, if my interpretation of Tarsus 3 is correct, private citizens can also be involved). He is indeed well described as πόλιος κτεάνων ταμίης τε πατήρ τε (Smyrna 1). These functions have been known for some time.\footnote{18 See for example Waddington ad Le Bas-Waddington no.594; E. Hanton, Byzantion 4 (1927/28) 114; A. H. M. Jones, The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian (Oxford 1940) 250; LRE 726.}

Jones proceeds to equate the πατήρ with the curator, an office descended from the earlier λογιστής, and to attribute a πατήρ to every city.\footnote{19 Jones, op. cit. (supra n.18) 209; LRE 726 and n.30, 759 and n.104. This assumption creates some difficulties: cf. e.g., E. Stein, Histoire du Bas Empire II (Paris 1959) 212 n.1. R. Ganghoffer, op. cit. (supra n.13), devotes a section (170–72) to “Rapports du ‘defensor civitatis’ avec le ‘curator reipublicae’,” whom he too equates with the πατήρ. D. Claude found too many obstacles to the coexistence of the πατήρ and the defensor and concluded, “Eine Stadt besass demnach einen defensor oder einen pater civitatis”: Die byzantinische Stadt (Munich 1969) 115. But the pattern that emerges from the inscriptions—where πατέρες seem to turn up in clusters, at particular cities—seems to me to be reinforced by the tone of the legal evidence, where the πατήρ is so often referred to as one alternative in a list of officials. Modern understanding can be too easily influenced by the legislators, especially Justinian, who undoubtedly wanted to create a neat and uniform system of administration; but the reality was often different. I very much doubt whether every city had a πατήρ τῆς πόλεως. The office of ἐκδικος seems to have been more widespread—but then the functions of a defensor were more widely needed. It is not clear to me that a πατήρ would be required in a city whose revenues were merely those set aside for them from the imperial revenues (Jones, LRE 733–34); such an arrangement was probably very largely a fiction in any case. I suspect that the πατήρ τῆς πόλεως, as opposed, perhaps, to other officials with somewhat similar functions, will be found only in cities with a substantial income from possessions of their own—of which we know Aphrodisias to be one.
This money will have come from loan income (so Cod. Just. 11.33.2, and Just. Nov. clx) and from the cities’ own land (Cod. Just. 4.26), and the management of both of these is specifically entrusted to the πατηπεκ. Alternatively, it could be suggested that a πατήρ was always appointed but that in cities without their own wealth he was insignificant. This latter suggestion cannot be disproved; but it is based on an assumption of a uniformity of civic administration which seems to me improbable.

The overall history of the cities of the later Roman empire is of a constant struggle by the central government to keep them solvent and functioning, with diminishing success. The rate of decline, however, varied dramatically from city to city. I believe that it is necessary to reexamine the evidence on a geographical basis and to explore the diversities over time and over space which have made it possible to propose two contrary ‘models’ for the provincial life of the period: either one of flourishing municipal communities or one of irresistible municipal decline. The truth (not surprisingly) is likely to be far more complex.

In my own view, the appearance of the title πατήρ τῆς πόλεως at a particular city, especially if it appears more than once (e.g., at Attalia, Side, Tarsus, Smyrna, Caesarea and, above all, Aphrodisias) indicates that that city enjoyed in the later fifth and sixth centuries a considerable measure of independent, secular prosperity, as opposed to depending on the generosity of governors or of a well-endowed church. The balance between the two sources of funds is well illustrated at Aphrodisias. There, the governor’s generosity was still a matter of importance, which was acknowledged and encouraged, in the case of Palmatus, by two statues. One was erected by the provincial assembly with money to which Aphrodisias presumably contributed. The other, however, was put up by Flavius Athenaeus, either from his own money (demonstrating a still lively tradition of

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20 Thus perhaps the πατηπεκ found witnessing documents (supra n.12) were of little importance, and the pater citatis at Mopsuestia in 550 (Mansi IX 278 and 285, cited by Jones, LRE 760).
22 See the discussion of Ševčenko, op.cit. (supra n.14) 38.
23 It is particularly striking that, of these cities, Aphrodisias, Caesarea, Side and Tarsus were all metropolises, and as such particularly liable to central government benefactions. But the evidence from Aphrodisias suggests that the presence of the governor and his officium in the city contributed to the continuing prosperity of the local ruling class.
private munificence) or, as I believe, from the substantial city funds which he administered as ὁ λαμπρότατος πατήρ τῆς λαμπροτάτης Ἀφροδίτες μητροπόλεως; similarly, the work referred to as being done by the πατήρ in Smyrna 1 and 2 and Palestine 1 is probably work carried out in his official capacity from public money, even though this is not specifically mentioned, as it is in Caesarea 1. From the evidence of Justinian’s Novel clx (cited above, p.182) it is clear that these funds still gave the city a fair measure of fiscal independence and self-esteem well into the sixth century.24

Kuwait

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DEDICATORY INSCRIPTION ON STATUE BASE AT APHRODISIAS