

The school dedication of Polythroos (*SIG*³ 578) stipulates that three grammar-masters be hired to teach the citizen boys and girls. This is one of our greatest testimonies for literacy in the ancient world. Given the large body of inscriptions known from Teos, this literacy permits us to ask some very interesting questions: Where and why did the citizens inscribe these documents? How might a Teian, reading these inscriptions, have conceived of his city? This study is limited to one period of time, the 190s BC, the time during which Polythroos himself lived. Two areas of publication, the temple of Dionysos and the temple of Herakles, are given special attention in this paper although others will be alluded to.

It has long been held that inscriptions in sanctuaries were placed under the protection of a god. The choice of a particular religious space for the publication of a public decree also helped to define the space for the literate citizen. The citizens of Teos certainly could read and understand inscriptions in their context. It is by no means a big jump from this idea to the realization that the placement of the inscriptions within the city of Teos was then also a reflection of how the Teians viewed their city. Reading the inscriptions of Teos through the lens of their publication sites allows for a deeper understanding of Teian identity within the varying spaces of the polis. Turning to our examples, the decrees inscribed on the walls of the temple of Dionysos categorize the space as international, public and religious. That the temple was the space of the city most tied to the larger Hellenistic world through the great number of *asylia* recognition decrees published on its walls (Rigsby 1996: nos. 132-161). The Antiochos III decrees are likewise linked to the greater Greek world but also describe a festival to be performed in every *symmory* and private household of the city (*SEG* 41:1003 II.3-28). Participated in by every constituent part of the city, the festival re-affirmed Teos' self-conception as the city of Dionysos (and also of Antiochos III; Ma 1999:220). Indeed, through deeper analysis of these and other inscriptions published there, the temple of Dionysos becomes evident as the cultural center of the city. Any Teian reading the inscriptions published there would not only be reaffirmed of their own place in their city but also be comforted by their city's place in the larger world. In contrast, the temple of Herakles was a more local space, where the citizen body defined and honored itself. Our inscriptions from the Herakleion are all honorary decrees for citizens of the city (e.g. *SIG*³ 29; *SEG* 44: 949). Any Teian who read these decrees would have seen the qualities that other citizens had displayed in the past. The cult of Herakles is a well-attested cult at Teos; the god had been a guardian of the citizen body since as early as the 5th C imprecations (*ML* 30; *SEG* 31: 985). The Teians of the early second century, however, would have understood the sanctuary of Herakles in a more personal way, where not only the god but also their fellow citizens protected the interests of the city. In sum, the citizens of Teos culturally identified themselves at the temple of Dionysos and kept the sanctuary of Herakles for local civic honors.