

This famous Chian inscription (*CIG 2222* = *RDGE 70* = McCabe *Chios* 34) has been widely discussed with regard to questions of substantive law (e.g. Sherk 1969; Marshall 1969; Dmitriev 2005) but has been largely ignored with respect to the insights it provides concerning procedure and the role of legal documents in the governor's assize court (Marshall 1966; Burton 1975; Haensch 1997). The main purpose of this paper will be to describe in detail the procedure and documents exemplified by the inscription and to contextualize the vivid hearing before the governor's *tribunal* within the growing sense of anxiety over civic status and privileges in the early Principate.

First, it will be noted that the Augustan governor in question speaks repeatedly of his "general procedure" in such cases. Once that procedure – involving at least five discrete steps in this case – is outlined from the text, the question follows to what extent it is possible to generalize in connection with other provinces. Additional evidence, both documentary (e.g. *P. Hamb.* 29; *P. Flor.* 61; *CIL X* 7852) as well as literary (e.g. *Vell. Pat.* 2, 117; *Pliny Epist.* X 58,3; X 65), suggests that we may in fact cautiously sketch a general arbitral routine for the first century.

Next, it will be argued that such a routine was closely connected to, and further elucidates, the "complex systems" involved in the archiving and retrieval of legal documents (Culham 1987; Crawford 1996, 27). What were the physical and formal characteristics of the *ἐπίστολοι* and *ὑπομνήματα* mentioned by the governor at Chios (see Williamson 1987; Rhodes 2001; Clarysse 2003), documents which respectively contained a former governor's decision and at least one *senatus consultum* and one Augustan *ἐπιστολή*? From where and by whom were these documents produced in the context of this assize hearing? Although provincial archives existed and the governor maintained his own portable files (see Cockle 1984; Haensch 1992; Austin and Rankov 1995; Vanderpe 2009), the evidence indicates that the parties in this instance preserved and supplied their own documentary proof.

Finally, the interplay between process and documents in this Augustan inscription will be seen to confirm recent arguments concerning the value of legal texts in the Roman world (Ando 2000; Meyer 2004). But this striking proconsular decision, in favor of a Greek city against the Romans in her midst, also suggests a nuanced interpretation of the increasing and widespread anxiety in the provinces over the nexus of *lex* and *fides*, especially in relation to civic status and privileges (cf. Lewis 1999) right from the start of the Principate.