

THE EGYPTIAN GODS IN ATTICA: SOME EPIGRAPHICAL EVIDENCE

(PLATE 40)

IN April 1961, part of an inscribed column of blue-gray marble, veined with white, was discovered during the digging of a grave in the courtyard of the church of the Metamorphosis in the Attic village of Pikermi.¹ Previous epigraphical finds in this area make it clear that the site of this church is within the area of the Attic deme of Teithras.² The stone has now been removed to the Epigraphical Museum in Athens and given the EM number 13342. Another uninscribed fragment of the same column or the same series of columns still remains in the courtyard of the church.

The inscribed surface of the stone bears two separate inscriptions placed one below the other. Of the upper one, portions of 21 lines of smaller letters are extant; the lower one consists of 8 complete lines of larger letters. The first is a decree of the Athenian Boule concerning the regulation of the cult of the Egyptian gods. The second inscription records a dedication to Isis of a fence or grille by a certain Dionysios of Sounion.

Max. preserved height, 0.685 m.

Approximate diameter, 0.40 m.

Average height of letters, larger letters, 0.015-0.02 m.; smaller letters, 0.008-0.01 m.

Max. circumference of preserved surface, 0.57 m.

The stone is broken above, below and behind. The break behind the inscribed surface appears to have occurred roughly in the middle of the column, so that its diameter can be estimated with some certainty.

The inscriptions clearly date from the Roman period, but within that period their date is difficult to determine accurately. The two series of letters, although generally similar, differ markedly in the execution of certain letters, notably the rendering of alpha, delta, mu, and omega (Pl. 40). The forms of the larger letters are generally more complex, although in the case of the omega the smaller letter, with its larger vertical side strokes, is more elaborate. This last fact would tend to

¹ E. Curtius and J. A. Kaupert, *Karten von Attika*, Bl. XII (Pentelikon). I am grateful to Mr. Costas Xindaris of Pikermi and Professor Eugene Vanderpool for bringing the stone to my attention. I further thank Professor Vanderpool for many helpful suggestions about the interpretation of the stone.

² The deme was first identified by an inscription published by Möbius and Lehmann, *Ath. Mitt.*, XLIV, 1924, pp. 1-13; and the identification is reinforced by another decree recently published by E. Vanderpool, *Hesperia*, XXXI, 1962, pp. 401-403. Other inscriptions from the same area were published by this writer in *Hesperia*, XXX, 1961, pp. 293-298.

contradict the hypothesis that the cases in which the larger letters differ from the small can be explained by the greater amount of space, and hence freedom of movement, allotted to the forms. Rather it seems likely that the two inscriptions were cut by two different hands, and that one is slightly later in date than the other. The smaller series of letters is very similar to those in an Attic ephebic inscription dating from the year 38/37 B.C. illustrated by Kirchner.³ The larger letters, especially the very distinctive rendering of the letter mu, have their closest parallels among Attic inscriptions dating from the mid-first century after Christ, most notably in a dedication of the emperor Claudius dating from the year 42.⁴ Although letter forms are not an extremely precise index for dating, we may perhaps tentatively suggest that the inscription with the smaller letters was carved in the last half of the first century B.C., and that the inscription in larger letters dates from the mid-first century after Christ. The chronological implications of word forms and phraseology will be discussed below.

Text:

NON-ΣΤΟΙΧ. 38-42

1. [----- *Ι]σιδι Σαρ[άπι]δι [-----]
[-----] .s προσιδρυσάτω [-----]
[-----] ετω τὸ παρὰ ταῦτα [-----]
[----- ὁμ]οίως δὲ μήτ' ἐν τ[-----]
5. [-----] ενα εἰ δὲ μὴ ὀφιλέτωσαν κα[...^{ca.}8...]
[-----κ]αὶ ἔνοχοι ἔστωσαν τῇ ἀσεβήᾳ [...^{ca.}7...]
[-----]ων μὴ ἐξέστω δὲ ζακορεύειν δ[...^{ca.}6...]
[ἐὰν δέ τι]ς παρὰ ταῦτα πράξῃ ἢ βιάσῃται ἔστω κ[ατὰ αὐ]
[τοῦ φάσι]ς πρὸς τὴν βουλὴν καὶ τὸν βασιλέα Ἀθή[νησιν]
10. [τῷ βουλομέ]νῳ οἷς ἔξεστιν. κωλύετωσαν δὲ καὶ τ[οὺς]
[τῶν παρε]ληλυθότων ὅσους ἂν ἐπίγνωσιν ^v. εἰς[ελθεῖν]
[τὸ ἱερ]ὸν τῶν θεῶν ^v. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἀνατιθ[έντας]
[...^{ca.}5...]α... χωρὶς τοῦ αἰτήσασθαι τὴν πάντων κυρί[αν...]
λην . ἀναγραφάτωσαν δὲ οἱ εἰσενένκαντες τόδε [τὸ δόγ]
15. μα ἐν τῇ παραστάδι τῇ<ς> στοᾶς ἢ οὐ ἂν τοῖς φαί[νηται]
ἐπιτήδηον εἶναι πρὸς τὸ μένιν εἰς τὸν πάν[τα χρόνον]
τὰ δόξαντα τῇ βουλῇ . τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐν σανίδι λε[λευκο]
μένη καὶ παραδότω<ς>αν τῷ ἱερῷ ὅπως ἐκκίμενον [δι' ἐκάσ]
της ἡμέρας πρὸ τοῦ ναοῦ ἵνα τούτων συντελου[μέ]

³ J. Kirchner, *Imagines Inscriptionum Atticarum*², Berlin, 1948, no. 116 = *I.G.*, II², 1043.

⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 125 = *I.G.*, II², 3271. Cf. also Kirchner no. 124, an ephebic inscription dated between 40/1 and 53/4 after Christ = *I.G.*, II², 1973; and a list of *πωλοροί* dated 37/8 after Christ illustrated in P. Graindor, *Album d'inscriptions attiques d'époque impériale*, Paris, 1924, pl. XI, no. 16 = *I.G.*, II², 2292 = Kirchner no. 123.

20. νων φαίνεται ἡ βουλὴ πλίστην πρόνοιαν ποιούμεν[η]
vacat τῆς πρὸς τὴν θεὸν εὐσεβείας *vacat*
 Δημόφιλος
 Διονυσίου
 Σουνιεύς
25. ὁ καὶ Δάφνος
 βαστάζων τὸν
 ἡγεμόνα τοὺς
 κανκέλλους
 Ἰσιδι ἀνέθηκ[ε]

Epigraphical Commentary:

In the inscription with the smaller letters none of the lines (excepting the final one, line 21, which was indented at both ends) is complete, but several may be restored to their full length with reasonable certainty. Of these the shortest, line 19, has 38 letters, and the longest, lines 15 and 17, have 42.

Line 1. The lower horizontal stroke of the first sigma is preserved. Of the fourth letter there is only a trace. Of the fifth letter, a sigma, parts of the lower horizontal and the lower diagonal strokes are preserved. The alpha and rho that follow are faint but sure. The lower parts of the delta and the iota are preserved.

Line 2, at left edge. Before the sigma the lower end of a stroke is preserved; the letter may be eta or iota.

Line 8, at left. Before the word ταῦτα, the lower parts of five letters are preserved which may be read with assurance as given in the text.

Line 12, at left. The diagonal stroke of the first nu seems to have been omitted.

Line 15, middle. ΤΗΣΤΟΑΣ

Line 18. ΠΑΡΑΔΟΤΩΞΑΝ

Commentary on Text:

Line 1. [Ἰ]σιδι and Σαρ[άπι]δι can be restored with confidence. Isis is the recipient of the dedication referred to in the second inscription (line 29). Since no other deities are mentioned, it seems certain that the first inscription deals exclusively with a sanctuary of the Egyptian gods.

Lines 5-13 deal with the punishment to be imposed upon those who violate the sacral regulations which must have been enumerated in the first part of the inscription.

Line 5. At the end of the line some such phrase as κα[τὰ τὸν νόμον],⁵ κα[θὼς γέγραπται],⁶ or even κα[τὰ τὰ εἰρημένα]⁷ perhaps followed by a specific sum, might be restored.

⁵ Cf. *I.G.*, II², 1629, line 216; *I.G.*, II², 780, line 21; Dittenberger, *Sylloge*³, 1108, line 10.

⁶ Dittenberger, *Sylloge*³, 736, line 44.

⁷ *I.G.*, I², 94, line 10.

Line 6. *τῇ ἀσεβήῃ*—the substitution of *η* for *ει* is most common around the time of Augustus and tends to confirm the general date already proposed for our inscription.⁸ Compare *ἐπιτήδηον* in line 16.

Line 7. *ζακορεύιν*—the spelling is again characteristic of the period between 100 B.C. and 100 after Christ. Compare *μένιν* in line 16, *ἐκκείμενον* in line 18 and *πλίστην* in line 20.⁹

The office of *ζάκορος* was limited to the cult of a few specific deities, mostly foreign, among them the cult of Isis and Serapis.¹⁰ In the Serapeion at Delos the office was frequently held by non-Greeks¹¹ and possibly also by slaves and freedmen.

It is perhaps possible to restore *ζακορεύιν* δ[ιὰ βίου] or δ[ις ὁ αὐτός] at the end of this line. The *ζάκορος* sometimes had the function of overseeing and checking on the financial affairs of the priests and priestesses. Appointing a new *ζάκορος* each year rather than appointing a single one for life or for an extended term may have been intended to prevent collusion between the priest and the *ζάκορος*. An arrangement of this sort is recorded in *I.G.*, II², 1328A, lines 16-20, a decree of the early second century B.C. from Peiraeus relating to the cult of Kybele.¹² For the phrase *ζάκορος* etc. διὰ βίου cf. again *I.G.*, II², 1328B, lines 35 and 39.

Lines 8-10. The text is restored here on the basis of other inscriptions which also make provisions for a formal denunciation (*φάσις*) of those who violate sacral regulations. Compare the inscription recording provisions for the establishment of the cult of Artemis Leukophryene at Magnesia on the Meander (first half of the second century B.C.): καὶ εἶναι φάσιν τῷ βου[λ]ομένῳ τῶν πολιτῶν οἷς [ἐ]ξεστίν ἐπὶ τῷ ἡμίσει πρὸς τοὺς εὐθύνους;¹³ likewise in a decree of ca. 200 B.C. relating to the cult of Serapis in Priene : καὶ ἔστω φάσις αὐ[τοῦ] πρὸς τοὺς ἄρ[χ]ον[τα]ς.¹⁴ The informer, as the inscription from Magnesia indicates, was frequently entitled to half the fine.¹⁵

Line 11. [παρε]ληλυθότων. παρέρχομαι is probably used here in the sense of “slight”¹⁶ or “transgress.”¹⁷

⁸ Cf. K. Meisterhans, *Grammatik der Attischen Inschriften*, Berlin, 1900, p. 47, par. 21.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48, par. 25.

¹⁰ Cf. G. Glotz, s.v. Zacorus in Daremberg-Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*.

¹¹ P. Roussel, *Les cultes égyptiens à Délos*, Paris, 1915, p. 269 and appendix table p. 272. Most of the *ζάκοροι* are named without a patronymic.

¹² Cf. also P. Foucart, *Des associations religieuses chez les Grecs*, Paris, 1873, pp. 21 ff.

¹³ Dittenberger, *Sylloge*³, 695, lines 83-85; F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie mineure*, Paris, 1955, no. 33, lines 83-84.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 36, lines 24-25.

¹⁵ Cf. also *I.G.*, II², 43, lines 41-44: ἐὰν δέ τις ὠνήται ἢ κτᾶται ἢ τιθήται τρόπῳ ὀτωιούῳ, ἐξεῖναι τῷ βουλομένῳ τῶν συμμάχων φήναι πρὸς τοὺς συνέδρους τῶν συμμάχων. οἱ δὲ σύνεδροι ἀπο[δ]όμενοι ἀποδό[ν]των [τὸ μὲν ἢ] μισν τῷ φήναντι (378/377 B.C.).

¹⁶ Demosthenes, *Or.* XXXVII (πρὸς Πανταίνετον), sec. 37: τοὺς κοινούς παρελθὼν νόμους.

¹⁷ Lysias, *Andocides*, 52: ἔτι δὲ παρελθὼν τὸν νόμον ὃν ὑμεῖς ἔθεσθε.

Line 13. A small word or phrase of about five letters should be restored at the beginning of the line, perhaps an object such as *στήλας* or simply a qualifying phrase such as *τῷ θεῷ*.

Lines 13-14. *κυρίαν βουλήν* is a possible reading.

Lines 14-21. These lines constitute a fairly conventional prescription for the publication of the rules and decisions handed down by the *βουλή*.

Line 15. *ἐν τῇ παραστάδι τῇ<ς> στοᾶς* etc. Actually the inscription appears to have been carved on one of the columns of the stoa rather than on an anta.

Line 19. *πρὸ τοῦ ναοῦ*. The *ναός* in question was probably a temple of Isis and Serapis and may have stood on or near the site of the present Metamorphosis church in Pikermi. The stoa mentioned in line 15 was perhaps also part of the sanctuary.

Line 25. *ὁ καὶ Δάφνος*. In the Athenian ephebic catalogues the *ὁ καὶ* formula for alternate names begins to appear in about the middle of the first century after Christ (cf. *I.G.*, II², 1979, line 7), which is the date we have proposed for our inscription on the basis of letter forms. Most examples of the *ὁ καὶ* formula are later in date, e.g. *I.G.*, II², 1999 (late first century after Christ), *I.G.*, II², 2239 (238-244 after Christ).¹⁸

Lines 26-27. *βαστάζων τὸν ἡγεμόνα*, literally “carrying aloft the leader,” an obscure phrase, the meaning of which may only have been clear to those familiar with the cult of Isis. A clue to the interpretation of the phrase is possibly provided by an inscription for Serapeion C at Delos which reads:

Ἀνούβι Ἡγεμόνι Σαράπι
Σωτήρι Ἰσι Σωτε[ί]ραι
Ἀπολλώνιος Χαρμίδου
συνδοноφόρος
κατὰ πρόσταγμα τοῦ θεοῦ¹⁹

In the Graeco-Egyptian theology of the Hellenistic and Roman periods the Egyptian god Anubis, like the Greek Hermes with whom he was identified,²⁰ was conceived of as the *ἡγεμών* of souls to the underworld. The word *ἡγεμόνα* in our inscription may well refer to an image or representation of Anubis-Hermes. The carrying of sacred objects in ritual processions was apparently an extremely important and highly de-

¹⁸ In literature, however, the earliest use of the formula occurs in a fragment of the historian Ktesias of Knidos (early fourth century B.C.). Cf. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, III, c, Leiden, 1958, 688 frag. 15.49 (from Photios). In general see L.S.J.⁹, s.v. *καί*, B.2.

¹⁹ *I.G.*, XI, 1253. P. Roussel, *op. cit.*, no. 49.

²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 277. The names of the two deities were sometimes amalgamated to “Hermanubis”; cf. *ibid.*, no. 156. The concept of Hermes leader of the souls of the dead is already present in Homer, *Od.* XXIV, lines 1 ff.; for Hermes as *ἡγεμών* cf. *I.G.*, II², 1496, lines 84-85 *ἐκ τῆς θυσίας τῷ Ἑρμῇ τῷ / Ἡγεμονίῳ* (334/3-331/0 B.C.). In general see Drexler, in Roscher, *Lexicon*, s.v. Hegemon Archegetes.

veloped aspect of the cult of Isis. The dedications from Delos mention individuals who had been delegated the responsibility of carrying various sacred objects—such as the *συνδονοφόροι*, *παστοφόροι*, *κανεφόροι* and *μελανηφόροι*²¹ implying that a certain pride was taken in these functions. In the elaborate description of an Isis procession in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* XI, 8 ff. we find descriptions of many individuals who not only carried sacred objects but also wore costumes which had a ritual significance. One such costume represented Anubis: “.hic horrendus ille superum commeator et inferum, nunc atra nunc aurea facie sublimis, attolens canis cervices arduas Anubis, laeva caduceum gerens, dextera palmam virentem quatiens” (*Met.* XI, 11). The individual here described apparently wore an Anubis mask which he could raise and nod in an expressive manner. The Latin verb “attolo” which is employed here is very close in meaning to the Greek *βαστάζω*. Possibly, then, the phrase *βαστάζων τὸν ἡγεμόνα* in the inscription signified that Demophilos, the son of Dionysios, had the responsibility of carrying an image of Anubis or perhaps of wearing an Anubis costume in the sacred procession of Isis. An individual with just such a function is depicted on a relief in Germany²² and perhaps also in a marble statuette from Serapeion A at Delos.²³

Line 28. *κανκέλλους* = Latin *cancelli*, a latticework screen or fence. The reference may be to a free-standing fence set up around one of the buildings of the sanctuary or possibly to grille-work placed between the columns of one of the buildings, perhaps the stoa from which our inscription appears to have come. A more common Greek term for these structures was *κινκλίδες* (*κιγκλίδες*). One inscription from Delos records the dedication of *τὸ λιθόστρωτον καὶ τὰς κινκλίδας* apparently before the temple of Isis within Serapeion C;²⁴ *κάγκελλοι* also occur in *I.G.*, VII, 1681 (from Plataea) and in the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, 2146.12 (third century after Christ), the latter being the inventory of a house in which the *κάγκελλοι* are connected with a portico.

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²¹ For example cf. Roussel, *op. cit.*, summary pp. 273 ff. and index; Daremberg-Saglio, *s.v.* Isis, p. 584.

²² Illustrated in Nilsson, *Geschichte der Griechischen Religion*², II, Munich, 1961, pl. 11, 1.

²³ Cf. P. Perdritz, *Les terres cuites grecques d'Égypte*, Strasbourg, 1921, p. 60 (drawing).

²⁴ Cf. Roussel, *op. cit.*, no. 146. For *κινκλίδες* used for intercolumnar screens cf. *I.G.*, II², 1668, line 65 (347/6 B.C.).



E. M. 13342