

INSCRIPTIONS FROM NEMEA

(PLATE 113)

DURING an examination that was carried out in May-July 1964 prior to final publication of the monuments uncovered in the campaigns of 1924-27 at the site of the ancient Nemean sanctuary near the modern village of Herakleion in the Korinthia, two additional inscribed stones were found in a well immediately north of the baptistery of the Byzantine Church.¹ The well was uncovered during an examination of the stratigraphy associated with the walls of the baptistery and was excavated as far as its prolific water production would allow. The lettering of both stones suggests a date late in the fourth century B.C.

1) On June ninth at a depth of —2.20 m. an inscribed fragment of white marble, slightly encrusted, was found. The only preserved original surface is that of the inscribed face.

Height (inscribed face), 0.085 m., (total), 0.12 m.; width, 0.11 m.; thickness, 0.08 m.

Height of letters, 0.008-0.009 m.

Inv. No. NEM I-3.

312 or 311 B.C.

NON-ΣΤΟΙΧ.

	[-----]
	[-----] Ἀκροκορ[ινθ]-----]
	[-----] πεντακισχιλί[ους]-----]
3	[-----] πρὸς ἑπτακ[οσίου]-----]
	[-----] Κεῖλοι πρὸς[ς]-----]
	[-----] ο]υς Κύνθιο[ι]-----]
6	[-----] ον]ς Μυκ[όνιοι]-----]
	[-----]

Three restorations are possible in line 6: Μυκ[ηναῖοι, Μυκ[αλήσσιοι or Μυκ[όνιοι. The first two represent cities hardly distinguished in the late fourth century, while the last would be supported by readings of Κεῖλοι (line 4) and Κύνθιο[ι] (line 5).²

¹ The inscriptions of the 1924-27 campaign have been published by D. W. Bradeen, *Hesperia*, XXXV, 1966, pp. 320-330. The baptistery is discussed by C. W. Blegen, *AJ.A.*, XXXI, 1927, p. 435, and its relationship to the other buildings may be seen on plate I of B. H. Hill, *The Temple of Zeus at Nemea*, Princeton, 1966. More precise publication of the church and the ancient structures over which it has been built is forthcoming.

² The author thanks Professor James H. Oliver for discussing the problems of this stone with him and for his suggestions.

Not only are these the names of three Cycladic islands, but in the early third century all were members of the *κοινὸν τῶν νησιωτῶν*,³ a league descended from a *συμμαχία* (Diodoros, XIX, 62, 9) founded in 315 B.C. by Antigonos Monophthalmos.⁴ Since the document is a catalogue of soldiers (*πεζούς*) from these islands, why should it not be a levy from this very league? The protectors of the league were first Antigonos Monophthalmos and his son Demetrios Poliorketes and later the Ptolemies, Soter and Philadelphos. The league seems to have become less of a factor under subsequent rulers.⁵ Since the Ptolemies were hardly active militarily in the Peloponnese while the league was under their protectorate, the occasion commemorated must have been in the interest of Antigonos and Demetrios. Support for this position is to be found in the policy of Antigonos toward the Greek cities⁶ as announced in his speech at Tyre in 315, that is, a campaign for freedom and autonomy for the Greek cities. In order to win over the good will of the cities to his cause, Antigonos seems to have encouraged their union into leagues, over which he would serve as protector. The island league was but the first of several with which he dealt. Indeed his policy was not a matter of words alone, but it also involved active military commitment with forces being dispatched in 315 under Dioskourides to the islands (Diodoros, XIX, 62, 9), in 313 under Telesphoros to the Peloponnese (Diodoros, XIX, 74, 1), in 312 under Ptolemaios "into Greece" (Diodoros, XIX, 77, 1-2) and with a general, Aristodemos, being sent to the Peloponnese in 315, who recruited his troops from among the Spartans (Diodoros, XIX, 60, 1). Demetrios Poliorketes continued the same policy when he entered mainland Greece in 307 B.C. (Diodoros, XX, 45) and in 303 (Diodoros, XX, 102).

Antigonos apparently made sure that the "liberated" peoples were well reminded of his benefactions. Diodoros' account probably echoes his propaganda when it repeatedly describes the activities of Antigonos' armies in Greece in terms of "liberation." The remains of Antigonid propaganda⁷ consistently record this policy of "liberation." It is evident that in such a campaign Antigonos would hardly have dared to use his non-Greek Asiatic troops. Indeed, when the nationalities of the troops used on the mainland are recorded by Diodoros, they are invariably Greeks.⁸

³ W. König, *Der Bund der Nesioten*, Diss., Halle, 1910, pp. 49-50.

⁴ For the date of foundation and its related problems, see A. Guggenmos, *Die Geschichte des Nesiotenbundes bis zur Mitte des III. Jahrh. vor Chr.*, Diss., Würzburg, 1929, pp. 12-29; cf. H. Bengtson, *Griechische Geschichte*³, Munich, 1965, p. 365.

⁵ For the decline of the league see E. Bickerman, "Sur les batailles navales de Cos et d'Andros," *Rev. des Ét. Anc.*, XL, 1938, pp. 369-383, especially pp. 380-383.

⁶ On this policy see R. H. Simpson, "Antigonos the One-Eyed and the Greeks," *Historia*, VIII, 1959, pp. 385-409.

⁷ For examples see Dittenberger, *Syll.*³, 322; 328, lines 5-8; 342, line 17; 343, line 14; 344, line 89; etc.

⁸ For examples, Aristodemos' recruiting in Sparta in 315 (Diodoros, XIX, 60, 1) and in the Aetolian League in 314 (XIX, 66, 2); Ptolemaios' use of Rhodian ships donated *πρὸς τὴν τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐλευθέρωσιν* and his use of a Boeotian levy in 313 (Diodoros, XIX, 77, 3-4).

Is it not likely that his reliance on Greek troops was vital to the propaganda? Viewed in the light of these speculations, the Nemean document can hardly be other than one more instance of Antigonos' propaganda, since it catalogues a contingent of Greek troops, whose presence can easily be explained as part of the "liberating" forces. Further, the document was displayed at a great Panhellenic sanctuary where every two years masses of Greeks from the whole Greek world congregated.

It now remains to attempt to connect the inscription with a specific campaign. In view of the fact that the islands did not support large populations and, indeed, were not particularly fertile recruiting grounds,⁹ is it not likely that the number πεντακισχιλί[ους] (line 2) represents the total number of the contingent? If this is so, then it hardly seems coincidental that Diodoros, in giving the details of Ptolemaios' expedition to Greece (XIX, 77, 2), declares that among the forces there were στρατιώτας δὲ πεζοὺς μὲν πεντακισχιλίους, using the very same word (πεζοὺς) to describe the type of soldier. Further, it hardly is likely that Ptolemaios' army contained non-Greek troops, and from Diodoros' account they seem to come from outside of the Greek mainland. Could they not well have come from the islands, where Antigonos had established his first allied league? During the initial stages of the expedition this force remained primarily in Euboea and Boeotia, going no farther afield than Phocis and Locris, but later it mounted an expedition into the Peloponnese (Diodoros, XIX, 87) to restore Elis and Olympia, when the former had been enslaved and the latter plundered by Telesphoros, a general appointed by Antigonos, but turned renegade. At what moment of time during the campaigning season this expedition accomplished its purpose is unknown, and therefore there is no indication of its chronological relationship to the Olympic games celebrated that year. But it does seem significant that the inscription was found at Nemea, where the next year Panhellenic games were celebrated. Probably a similar monument was set up at Isthmia, whose festival also occurred in the spring of 311. The Nemean festival then would occur in the summer. Certainly these two festivals must have been the first for which there would have been time to erect a suitable memorial to commemorate this expedition of Greek troops from free and autonomous cities, but at the behest of Antigonos, troops who had restored liberty to a Greek city enslaved by a renegade general of this same Antigonos.

The role played by Acrocorinth (line 1) is not clear. At the time of the expedition it was still in the hands of Polyperchon. He had been appointed στρατηγὸν . . . τῆς Πελοποννήσου in 315 by Aristodemos, acting for Antigonos;¹⁰ but he seems to have lost his attachment to Antigonos' cause by 313, when Telesphoros, acting as general

⁹ For the proportions of island soldiers among the various Hellenistic garrisons about which we have evidence, see M. Launey, *Recherches sur les armées hellénistiques*, Paris, 1949, I, pp. 63-103.

¹⁰ On the relations between Antigonos and Polyperchon see R. H. Simpson, "Antigonos, Polyperchon and the Macedonian Regency," *Historia*, VI, 1957, pp. 371-373.

for Antigonos, was deterred from dislodging him because Polyperchon διέτριβεν δυνάμεις ἀδράς ἔχων καὶ πιστεύων ταύταις τε καὶ ταῖς τῶν τόπων ὀχυρότησιν (Diodoros, XIX, 74, 2). Indeed in 310 Polyperchon introduced Herakles, a son of Alexander, as his own pretender to the Macedonian throne (Diodoros, XX, 20, 1), but slew him and joined forces with Kassander the next year (Diodoros, XX, 28, 2-3).

2) On July eighteenth, at a depth between —4.30 m. and —5.20 m., a fragment of opisthographic stele of white marble veined with pale blue and pale yellow was found. Portions of both faces and of one side are preserved. Anathyrosis on the preserved side indicates the probable presence of a second stone to the right of side A and to the left of side B. It is possible that the lines of text ran across the two stones.

Side A

Height, 0.11 m.; width, 0.12 m.; thickness, 0.137 m.

Height of letters, 0.009-0.011 m.

Inv. No. NEM I—2A.

Late fourth century

NON-ΣΤΟΙΧ.

[-----^{traces}-----]
 [-----] τῇμ περὶ τῆς [.]
 [-----] ον διὰ τρίτο[υ .]
 [-----] των τιθέναι [.]
 5 [-----] εσθαι δὲ τῇμ
 [-----] δὲ εἶναι κα[.]
 [-----] π]ανήγυριν τ[.]
 [-----] δ]έκα δὲ ἀπ[ὸ]
 [-----] ἵππων οἱ ε-
 10 [-----] ης ἔνεκε[ν]
 [-----]

Side B

Height, 0.10 m.; width, 0.152 m., thickness, 0.137 m.

Height of letters, 0.008-0.010 m.

Inv. No. NEM I—2B.

Late fourth century

NON-ΣΤΟΙΧ.

[-----]
 [.] πᾶσιν [-----]
 [.] σιώτας, ἐὰν δὲ μη[-----]

[.]ων καθάπερ τοὺς α[-----]
 αι πρὸς τινὰς τῶμ μ[-----]
 5 μένοις, ἐὰμ μὴ τιν[-----]
 [.]σιν τῶν μετεχόντ[ων -----]
 [.] τινες τούτων τιΓ[-----]
 [-----]

The two sides of the stone seem to represent each a different document. The styles of lettering differ: the letters of side A are slightly larger and have smaller interlinear spaces than those of side B; although for the most part the letter shapes are the same, those of side B have the appearance of being more carefully incised. The lettering of both sides resembles that of inscription number 1 above.

The nature of the documents is not clear, although certain words are suggestive. Side A, line 3 διὰ τρίτο[ν.]: the Nemean and Isthmian games were held every second year, as contrasted with the Olympic and Pythian, which occurred every four years. Line 7 π]ανήγυριν: as in modern times, this word referred to a large festival drawing large crowds for the festival and its surrounding fair.¹¹ Line 8 -- -- δ]έκα δὲ ἀπ[ὸ]: such a phrase can be used in fixing the duration of a festival, i.e. "ten days from such and such a date."¹² Line 10: -- --]ης ἔνεκε[ν] probably is a formula similar to ἀπετῆς ἔνεκεν frequently found in honorary decrees.

Side B seems to be concerned with groups of people, who are usually referred to by indefinite pronouns. The only clear indication of who they are is the phrase τῶμ μετεχόντ[ων] of line 6. The ἐὰμ μὴ clauses would seem to indicate that the inscription contained regulations of some sort.

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¹¹ For a description see M. Nilsson, *Geschichte der Griechischen Religion*, I³, Munich, 1967, pp. 826-831.

¹² For examples of similar phraseology see *Syll.*³, 344, lines 124-125; *I.G.*, IV, I², 126, lines 22-23.



No. 1



No. 2 Side A



No. 2 Side B

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