

# THE ISTHMIAN DOSSIER OF P. LICINIUS PRISCUS JUVENTIANUS

(PLATE 56)

A LARGE FRAGMENT<sup>1</sup> from an inscribed limestone stele (Corinth I 2194 = Stele B, lines 14–32) was found in the colonnade of the South Stoa at Ancient Corinth in 1934 and was assumed to have been set up at Corinth. Oscar Broneer, the initial editor, recognized the similarities in subject matter and text between this stele and a second stele originally seen at Isthmia by Spon and Wheler in 1676 (Stele A). The latter were able to read the whole text except for the last two lines. Scipione Maffei transferred Stele A to Verona to be installed in the Museo Lapidario. He was able to add the important last two lines to the edited versions of the text. This stone currently resides in Verona, and it has not been consulted. The text given here is based upon that of *IG* IV, 203 and the excellent photograph which Broneer included with his edition of Stele B. Louis Robert indicated some additional details which related the subject matter of the two steles even more closely. During excavations at Isthmia in the Fortress of Justinian on June 7, 1954 a fragment (Isthmia I 261 = lines 1–14 of Stele B) was found which joins the Corinthian stele at the top (Pl. 56). The discovery of a joining piece at Isthmia raises the question whether the stele may not originally have stood at Poseidon's shrine and been transported to Corinth for re-use, possibly as a building stone.

Although the lettering of the new fragment is extremely worn, the readable traces suffice to indicate a potential continuity from Stele A to Stele B. The two steles, which must have been set up in proximity to one another, appear to be part of a single dossier recording the benefactions of P. Licinius Priscus Juventianus to the Isthmian sanctuary. It is possible that a third stele containing additional documents once intervened between Stele A and Stele B,

<sup>1</sup> Comments offered by Dr. John Hayes and Dr. Elizabeth Gebhard have been incorporated into the text of this article, but responsibility for its conclusions remains solely with the author.

Works frequently cited are abbreviated as follows:

- Broneer, 1939 = O. Broneer, "An Official Rescript from Corinth," *Hesperia* 8, 1939, pp. 181–190  
 Geagan, 1968 = D. J. Geagan, "Notes on the Agonistic Institutions of Roman Corinth," *GRBS* 9, 1968, pp. 69–80  
*Isthmia* II = O. Broneer, *Isthmia*, II, *Topography and Architecture*, Princeton 1973  
*Isthmia* III = O. Broneer, *Isthmia*, III, *Terracotta Lamps*, Princeton 1977  
 Kent = J. H. Kent, *Corinth*, VIII, iii, *The Inscriptions 1926–1950*, Princeton 1966  
 Meritt = B. D. Meritt, *Corinth*, VIII, i, *Greek Inscriptions 1896–1927*, Cambridge, Mass. 1931  
 Puech, 1983 = B. Puech, "Grands-prêtres et helladarques d'Archaïe," *REA* 85, 1983, pp. 15–31  
 Robert, 1940 = L. Robert, *Hellenica* I, Limoges 1940, pp. 43–53  
 Robert, 1966 = L. Robert, "Inscriptions de l'antiquité et du bas-empire à Corinthe," *REG* 79, 1966 (pp. 733–770), pp. 754–755  
 West = A. B. West, *Corinth*, VIII, ii, *Latin Inscriptions 1896–1926*, Cambridge, Mass. 1931

I am grateful to the editors and referees of *Hesperia* for helpful suggestions; any errors or omissions, however, remain my own responsibility.

but its existence has not been demonstrated. The color of the stone, the characteristics of the lettering, and the surface dressing of the stele from Verona have not been verified, and therefore it is not possible at this time to determine whether the physical characteristics of the two steles are similar. Comparison through the excellent photographs published by Broneer, however, suggests that the formation of the letters differs in several small details. Stele A, including the new fragment from Isthmia, was examined in 1969 in the courtyard of the Museum at Ancient Corinth. The text on the joining fragment has been recovered from examination of the stone and of squeezes. Careful examination assisted by charcoal under better conditions of lighting than were then available may still be rewarding.

Stele B as it now stands consists of ten mended fragments of blue-gray limestone. Portions of the sides and bottom are preserved. The two sides are neatly picked with a toothed chisel, and the back is roughly picked. The beginning of the text is lost, but the conclusion appears to be intact.

#### Stele A (Verona)

θεοῖς πατρίοις  
καὶ τῇ ὕ πατρίδι

- 3 Π(όπλιος) Λικίνιος Π(οπλίου) υἱ(ὸς) ὕ Αἰμ(ιλία) Πρέϊσκος  
Ἰουουεντιανὸς ἀρχιερεὺς διὰ  
βίου ὕ τὰς καταλύσεις τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς  
6 οἰκουμένης ἐπὶ τὰ Ἰσθμία παραγεινο-  
μένοις ἀθληταῖς ὕ κατεσκεύασεν *vac.*  
ὁ αὐτὸς ὕ καὶ τὸ Παλαιμόνιον σὺν τοῖς  
9 προσκοσμήμασιν ὕ καὶ τὸ ἐναγιστήριον  
καὶ τὴν ἱερὰν εἴσοδον ὕ καὶ τοὺς τῶν  
πατρίων θεῶν βωμοὺς σὺν τῷ περι-  
12 βόλῳ καὶ προνάῳ ὕ καὶ τοὺς ἐγκριτηρί-  
ους οἴκους <sup>υυ</sup> καὶ τοῦ Ἥλιου τὸν ναὸν καὶ τὸ  
ἐν αὐτῷ ἄγαλμα καὶ τὸν περίβολον ὕ τὸν τε  
15 περίβολον τῆς ἱερᾶς νάπης καὶ τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ  
ναοὺς ὕ Δήμητρος ὕ καὶ Κόρης καὶ Διονύσου  
καὶ Ἀρτέμιδος σὺν τοῖς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀγάλ-  
18 μασιν καὶ προσκοσμήμασιν καὶ προνάοις  
ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων ἐποίησεν ὕ καὶ τοὺς ναοὺς  
τῆς Εὐετηρίας καὶ τῆς Κόρης ὕ καὶ τὸ Πλου-  
21 τώνειον καὶ τὰς ἀναβάσεις καὶ τὰ ἀναλήμ-  
ματα ὑπὸ σεισμῶν καὶ παλαιότητος δια-  
λελυμένα ἐπεσκεύασεν <sup>υυυ</sup> ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ  
24 τὴν στοὰν τὴν πρὸς τῷ σταδίῳ σὺν  
τοῖς κεκαμαρωμένοις οἴκοις ὕ καὶ προσ-  
κοσμήμασιν <sup>υυ</sup> ὑπὲρ ἀγορανομίας  
27 ἀνέθηκεν

Ἑπόσχεσις Π(οπλίου) Λικινίου Πρείσκου  
 ἔάν μοι πωλήσητε τῆς λεγ[ομ]ένης ῥηγλια-  
 30 [νῆς στοᾶς τὰ – ]πο[-----]

## Stele B (Isthmia I 261 + Corinth I 2194)

H. 1.17; W. 0.65; Th. 0.28; L.H. 0.028 m.

Edd.: Broneer, 1939 with photographs of the Corinthian fragment (p. 181) and of the Verona fragment (p. 187); Robert, 1940, pp. 43–53; Kent, pp. 119–121, no. 306; Institut Fernand-Courby, *Nouveau choix d'inscriptions grecques*, Paris 1971, no. 17, pp. 99–102. See also Robert, 1966, pp. 754–755.

[-----]  
 [-----traces of two lines -----]  
 3 -----]α[.]ο[.]νεπια[-----]  
 [... ]του[.]ο[.]σ[.]τος ἀνθύπατος [-----]  
 -----]ανο[-----]  
 6 -----]α[.....]τανευ[-----]  
 -----]ς τῆς σ[τοᾶ]ς [-----]  
 -----]Ν[. . .]ΝΩ ὑετη[-----]  
 9 [...<sup>5-6</sup>...] ἀπ[ο]δέχεσθαι ὁ Λικίνιον Π[ρ]είσ[κ]ον ἄνδρα  
 [πε]πολειτευμένον φιλοτειμότατα καὶ τὰ [μὲν κα]-  
 [τ]ὰ στάδιον ὑπὸ σεισμῶν ἐσκυλμένα τὰ δὲ [ὑπὸ πα]-  
 12 [λ]α[ι]ότητος δ[ε] δαπανημένα ἀποκαθεστ[ότα ---]  
 [... ]θα ὑπὸ το[ῦ] δήμου [... ]τε φημ[-----]  
 [... ] τοῖς χρίοσι ἀθλητ[άς] -----]ωΙ[.]ΙΙμ[---]  
 15 [-----]ος [συ]νᾶραι ἐρείπια στοᾶς  
 τῆς Ῥήγλ[ο]υ [... ]α[.]μᾶρας οὕτως ὥστε ποιῆ[σ]αι οἴκους  
 πεντήκ[ο]ντα ὅτι οὖν καὶ ἐν τούτῳ φι[λ]οτείμως  
 18 ὁ Πρεῖσ[κ]ος ἀναστρέφεται ὥστε ὑπὲρ τῆς τιμῆς  
 τοῦ προδηλουμένου τόπου δοῦναι τοῖς πολέταις  
 ἑκάστῳ δηνᾶριον ἔν ὃν μόνον συνκατατίθεμαι  
 21 τῇ τε τῆς [β]ουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δήμου γνώμῃ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀ-  
 ποδέχομαι τὸν ἄνδρα οὕτως ἐν ἅπασιν ἀναστρε-  
 φόμενον φιλοτείμως καὶ ἐπιτρέπω τὸν προ-  
 24 δηλούμενον τόπον ταύτῃ τῇ αἵρέσει αὐτῷ πρα-  
 θῆναι ὅπως μέντοι ὥστε τοὺς γεινομένους  
 οἴκους τοῖς ἀθληταῖς προῖκα τῷ καιρῷ τῶν ἀγώ-  
 27 νων σχολάζειν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς ἔχοντος τοῦ κα-  
 τὰ καιρὸν ἀγνωσθέντος ἐξουσίαν διανέμειν  
 τὰς ξενίας αὐτοῖς ὅτι μέντοι τις πρὸς τοῦτο ἀν-  
 30 τιλέγει δυνήσεται διδάξαι με ἐντὸς Καλανδῶν  
 Ἰανουαρίων τῶν ἐνγιστα ὅτι ἔρρωσθαι ὑμᾶς εὖχομαι  
 [data – ]IIIIK · Decembr ὅτι et · pro rostris lecta  
 pr. \* Decembr'

The surface of the stones bears a great deal of pocking, and sometimes it is possible to read letter shapes which are not actually present. The stone from Isthmia is very worn, particularly at the top, with the result that letters are evanescent, and readings which appeared secure one day often could not be recovered the next. Lunate forms are used for sigma and epsilon; central bars of epsilon and theta frequently are little more than dots, which are often indistinguishable from pock marks. Pocking and wear also make triangular letters difficult to distinguish one from another. Therefore sublinear dots have not been placed beneath circular, lunate, or triangular letters in this edition because any reading is suspect.

*Line 10.* Upsilon: only the two upper arms; mu: the final vertical.

*Line 11.* Sigma: a crude shape beneath corrosion; delta: the top of the rising leg where it overruns the peak; the remainder of the letter is lost.

*Line 13.* Theta and alpha: a circular and a triangular shape; mu: the tops of two vertical lines.

*Line 14.* Only the lower portions of the letters toward the end of the line.

*Line 15.* Omicron and sigma: the base portions only.

*Line 16.* In the first half of the line, only the lower portions of the letters.

*Line 17.* Nu: the final vertical.

*Line 18.* Rho: the lower portion of the vertical.

Lines 15–32: Broneer, followed by Kent, unless otherwise noted. Modern punctuation is suppressed in this edition, but the vacant half or full spaces left by the stone cutter are indicated.

Line 15: Broneer and Kent—]ναρ[.]ι. Line 16:..ε.ηρια, possibly [Εὐ]ε[τ]ηρι[α] Broneer; [τῆ]ς [‘P]ηγλ[ιανῆς] Robert (1940, p. 52) “avec grande reserve”; [τῆ]ς [‘P]ηγλ[ο]υ Kent. [κα]μάρας Broneer, [μαρ]μάρας Kent, but rejected, because it is not an adjectival form, by Robert (1966), who would prefer a participial construction meaning “ayant traité (utilisé) les ruines”. Line 19: πολήταις (*sic*) Broneer, πο[λ]ίταις Kent. Line 21: τῆσδε τῆς βουλῆς Kent. Line 22: ὅπως ἐν Broneer, corrected by Robert (1940, p. 44). Line 24: αἰρέσι Kent. Line 32: Broneer and Kent were able to read several additional mid-line dots used as punctuation between words.

The new fragment from Isthmia supplies some phrases which echo passages both in the rescript which follows and in the text of the stele now in Verona. The text as preserved on the two steles accounts for four documents:

- A. A catalogue of Priscus’ generosity (Stele A, lines 1–27).
- B. The text of Priscus’ promise (Stele A, lines 28–30), which is only partially preserved.
- C. A *gnome* of the *senatus populusque* of the Corinthians, which, if it is not preserved verbatim (Stele B, lines 1–17), is at least cited and echoed in the reply of the proconsul.
- D. The proconsul’s rescript (Stele B, lines 17–32).

A. The first document is a catalogue of all Priscus’ gifts to the sanctuary. The following translation is given in a schematic form with the punctuation from the stone indicated:

P(ublius) Licinius, P(ublius’) s(on), (of the) Aem(ilian tribe), Priscus  
Juventianus, lifelong high priest<sup>v</sup>

1. He furnished <sup>vvv</sup>

the quarters for the athletes from the *oikoumene* who were present for  
the Isthmia <sup>v</sup>

2. The same man <sup>v</sup>  
 with his own funds constructed <sup>vv</sup>
  - a. also the Palaimonion with its ornaments <sup>vv</sup>
  - b. and the *enagisterion* and the sacred portal <sup>vv</sup>
  - c. and the altars of the ancestral gods with the peribolos and the pronaos <sup>vv</sup>
  - d. and the examining chambers <sup>vv</sup>
  - e. and the naos of Helios and the statue in it and the peribolos <sup>vv</sup>
  - f. and the peribolos of the sacred grove and the temples in it <sup>v</sup>  
 of Demeter <sup>v</sup>  
 and of Kore and of Dionysos and of Artemis and the statues in them and the ornaments and pronaoi
3. he restored <sup>vvv</sup>
  - g. also the naoi of Eueteria and of Kore <sup>v</sup>
  - h. and the Plutoneion <sup>v</sup>
  - i. and the ramps and foundations undermined by earthquakes and age
4. The same man also  
 set up when he was *agoranomos*
  - j. the stoa next to the stadium with its vaulted rooms <sup>v</sup>
  - k. and furnishings <sup>vv</sup>

Three methods of “punctuation” were used in document A to divide the text. The sections designated by arabic numbers indicate single sentences, each ending with a verb. For the sake of English style the verbs in the translation have been brought forward to the beginning of each sentence. The composer of the document sought variety in his choice of verbs: *κατασκεύασεν* (1), *ἐποίησεν* (2), *ἐπεσκεύασεν* (3), and *ἀνέθηκεν* (4). The first in its most literal sense means “he furnished”, but it can also include the actual construction. The second must mean that he “built” the sacred places listed. The third refers to restorations, and the final is usually reserved for dedications (“he set up”).

A second system of “punctuation” partially reinforces the division by verbs, for the second and fourth sections are both introduced by the phrase *ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ*. This distinction is reinforced in the second section by the phrase *ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων* and in the fourth by the phrase *ὑπὲρ ἀγορανομίας*.

The mason’s punctuation with vacant letter spaces reinforces the divisions by verbs and introduces subdivisions into each of the major sections. These subdivisions are indicated in the schematized translation by lower-case letters of the Roman alphabet.

B. The last two lines of Stele A and the complete text of Stele B appear to be concerned with specific items from the catalogue which dominates Stele A. Item 4 and possibly item 1 of the catalogue are the actual subject matter of the remaining preserved lines, as Broneer recognized. Item 3.i is also cited but appears mostly for the sake of precedent.

The two final surviving lines of Stele A consist of a heading: "The promise of P. Licinius Priscus" and the initial words of that promise in the form of a condition, "If you will sell to me (---) of the so-called Regalian. . . ." Robert (1940, p. 52) recognized the reference to the Stoa of Regulus (Stele B, lines 15–16). The apodosis of the condition which is framed in the promise is supplied by lines 16–17 of Stele B: "so as to make fifty *oikoi*." The text of Stele B continues and yields the price which Priscus proposed to pay for the remains of the Stoa of Regulus: one denarius to each Corinthian citizen.

The Regalian Stoa, apparently in ruins, was restored to provide fifty *oikoi*; apparently it is identical with the "Stoa next to the stadium with its vaulted rooms and furnishings" (Stele A, lines 24–26: item 4). L. Castricius Regulus, who was a major benefactor of the sanctuary,<sup>2</sup> presumably built this stoa in the 1st century after Christ. He was *agonothetes* of games honoring the emperor Tiberius. After the reconstruction of the Stoa, it would certainly dishonor Regulus to replace his name with that of Priscus even in the unofficial (Stele A, line 29; cf. the more circumspect language of the proconsul, Stele B, line 16) title of the building; there may even have been interests which would object to the replacement of Regulus' name. A different descriptive phrase had to be substituted in the catalogue of Priscus' benefits. The neutral phrasing of lines 24–26 (4.j) would have avoided conflict. The text of lines 15–17 of Stele B seem to indicate that Priscus' contribution may have been more in the line of a reconstruction than a completely new undertaking. The documentation forwarded to the proconsul stressed the fifty *oikoi*, while the catalogue allows reference to the reconstruction of the stoa also.

One other benefaction from the catalogue on Stele A is cited also on Stele B. Item 3.i indicates that Priscus restored "the ramps and foundations undermined by earthquakes and age." In lines 10–12 of Stele B reference is made in more florid terms to his having restored both "what has been stripped away beneath the stadium by earthquakes as well as what has been plundered by age."<sup>3</sup> The cryptic phrase τὰ κατὰ στάδιον masks the ramps (*ἀναβάσεις*) and foundations (*ἀναλήμματα*) of the catalogue. Quite clearly in the context of Stele B these are past services, presumably cited as evidence of Priscus' *bona fides*.

Priscus undertook item 4 of the catalogue ὑπὲρ ἀγορανομίας. The *agoranomia* of the Isthmia is not to be confused with the office of aedile of the Colonia Laus Julia Corinthiensis.<sup>4</sup> When he sought the office he promised a *summa honoraria*, as Louis Robert recognized.<sup>5</sup>

D. The significant document of Stele B is a rescript from a Roman official. Broneer (1939, p. 183) recognized the possibility that he would be the governor of Achaia, an official normally of proconsular rank. The new fragment would seem to support this conclusion, for the single word which can be read clearly in the first six lines, ἀνθύπατος, translates as "proconsul" in the nominative case. The word is preserved because its letters were inscribed more deeply than any of the others on the surface, and they have survived the wear which

<sup>2</sup> Kent, no. 153, pp. 70–73.

<sup>3</sup> For a Latin equivalent of ὑπὸ παλαιότητος δεδαπανημένα see *AEpigr* 1979, no. 302.

<sup>4</sup> Geagan, 1968, pp. 75–76.

<sup>5</sup> Robert, 1940, pp. 49–51.

has polished so much of the surface smooth. Why it was inscribed more deeply is not clear, but it is possible to surmise a reinscribing within an erasure. Surface wear, however, does not permit verification. A nominative ending comes immediately before the title and may represent the remains of the proconsul's name. Space for one letter is preserved between the word ἀνθύπατος and the break at the end of the stone, but it is too badly worn to permit any attempt to read the lost letter. Possibly the proconsul's reply to the Corinthians begins with his name, or a petition to the proconsul is foreseen in the text of another document.

The significant reply of the proconsul begins in line 17. It might be translated as follows:

Therefore since Priscus comports himself generously also in this so as to give to the citizens each a denarius as a price<sup>6</sup> for the aforementioned locale, not only do I assent to the proposal of the senate and *populus*, but also I congratulate the man so generously comporting himself in all matters. And I permit the aforesaid locale to be made over to him under the following conditions, that in perpetuity the resulting *oikoi* be available to the athletes free of charge on the occasion of the games and that the *agonothetes* on each occasion have the authority to allot guest chambers to them. If perchance anyone should object to this he shall be free to instruct me before the Kalends of January next. It is my prayer that you prosper. Given four days before the Kalends of December and read from the rostra the day before the Kalends of December.

After he acknowledges Priscus' generosity for paying the citizens each a denarius for "the aforementioned locale", that is the Stoa of Regulus, he lists three decisions. First he accedes to the proposed decree<sup>7</sup> of the senate and *populus*. Under such a form Priscus' proposal reached the proconsul. Second, he congratulates Priscus because he comports himself so generously in all things. The phrasing picks up that of lines 9–12, but a few changes are made. The citation of a specific generosity is replaced by the more general phrase ἐν ᾧ πασιν; where Priscus was praised as a man "who has served his *polis* in a most generous fashion" ([πε]πολειτευμένον φιλοτειμότατα), a more sober expression has been substituted,<sup>8</sup> but the verb ἀποδέχομαι is a clear echo of line 9 and reflects language characteristic of letters from emperors and administrators.<sup>9</sup>

The third decision, however, is the most substantial, for significant additional provisions are given. The *oikoi* are to remain available free of charge for athletes at the festival in perpetuity. Both the function of the *oikoi* is specified and the prohibition against charging

<sup>6</sup> For this translation see Robert, 1966, p. 755.

<sup>7</sup> *Gnome* appears to have been used as a technical term for a decree which could not be enacted without approval of an authority outside the normal political organs. See D. J. Geagan, *Hesperia*, Suppl. XII, *The Athenian Constitution After Sulla*, Princeton 1967, pp. 161–162. In Greek constitutional usage it refers to a motion before it is enacted.

<sup>8</sup> The adverb of line 10 is echoed twice (φι[λ]οτείμως ἀναστρέφεται in lines 17–18 and ἀναστρεφόμενον φιλοτείμως in lines 22–23), although a different verb is substituted.

<sup>9</sup> See Robert, 1940, pp. 44–45.

fees is guaranteed. Further, the authority for assigning *xenia* is to remain in the hands of each of the successive *agonothetai* who manage the celebration of the games. Robert (1940, p. 48) interprets *xenia* to mean housing and suggests parallels for the use of such units as housing for athletes during festivals and as shops in the intervening periods. This is the first reference to the proposed use of the *oikoi*. One other phrase might possibly be connected with the function of the *oikoi*, τοῖς χρίοσι ἀθλητ[άς—in line 14. This phrase occurs within the portion of the text presumed to reflect the *gnome* of the Corinthian senate and *populus*, and it may have been one of the proposed uses for the stoa. If this is so, the proconsul seems to have made a significant alteration in the plans of the Corinthians. What was the relationship of the “oilers” to the athletes? Presumably the former were engaged in economic activity and expected reimbursement from the latter. Were rentals charged for their business premises? To whom would such rentals have been paid?<sup>10</sup> Line 24 of Stele A has already been cited to indicate that the Stoa was near the stadium. In the catalogue of Priscus’ benefactions the provision of lodging (1) is treated quite separately from the reconstruction of the Stoa (4).

As *agoranomos* of the Isthmian festival Priscus would certainly have had control of commercial transactions within the sanctuary, including the allotment of space for them.<sup>11</sup> Not only is the proconsul careful to specify that during the time of the games Priscus’ shops are to be reserved for hospitality, but he also takes control of the use of the shops out of the hands of the *agoranomos*. The *agonothetes*, to whom the power was transferred, appears to have been the most prestigious official during the games at Isthmia according to the preserved documentation.<sup>12</sup> If Priscus, however, were *archiereus* or imperial high priest (see below) at the same time that he was *agoranomos*, he would have accumulated a very powerful combination of offices.

In addition to the major portion of Priscus’ promise, the text of one other document is missing from our records, the draft decree (*gnome*) of the Corinthian *senatus populusque*. Lines 1–17 of Stele B, however, would appear to quote extensively from it, even if they are not the closing lines of that document. Such a decree could have included provision for an embassy to the provincial governor seeking his approval and his congratulations for Priscus (lines 9–10), especially when the specific grounds for those congratulations include repairs to the stadium (lines 10–12), which might be seen as closely related to the proposed project and which provide evidence of Priscus’ *bona fides*. Additional grounds for congratulations might be found in the pending offer to construct the fifty *oikoi* with the remains of the Stoa of Regulus (lines 15–17).

The documents exhibit a careful balance between a tendency toward hyperbolic glorification of Priscus on the part of the Corinthians and possibly a degree of scepticism from the governor. Some examples of contrast between phrasings on Stele B have been cited above. Is

<sup>10</sup> The prevalence of venality among Roman officials has been surveyed recently by R. MacMullen, *Corruption and the Decline of Rome*, New Haven 1988, pp. 122–137.

<sup>11</sup> The examples of the recent Los Angeles Olympics and the Calgary Winter Olympics have demonstrated clearly the ties which bind commercial interests with the provision of facilities and services in a modern context.

<sup>12</sup> Geagan, 1968, pp. 70–71.



it possible that the catalogue of Stele A overstates Priscus' contributions? Robert (1940, p. 49) recognized that items 1 and 4 in the catalogue may be a doublet. The first reference to hospitality for visiting athletes is contained in the third of the proconsular decisions. Although the text of the Corinthian *gnome* is not certainly preserved, there are points at which this hospitality might have been cited but seems not to have been. It is particularly notable that hospitality is separated from the construction in the catalogue of Priscus' benefactions to the shrine.

Various reasons have been advanced for the involvement of the proconsul. According to Broneer, the property did not belong to the city but was part of the sacred domains of the Isthmian sanctuary. But Priscus apparently believed that the lands were available for purchase from the Corinthians, and the Corinthian senate and *populus* were indeed ready to sell them. Robert (1940, pp. 45–48) offers two reasons: first, the question is one of public finance, which the Imperial administration supervised very closely; and second, the locale in question is part of the *ager publicus* of the Corinthians. Either the land was *ager publicus* located in the vicinity of the sanctuary, and the city was free to dispose of it, although subject to approval, or the land belonged to the sanctuary. In the latter case the Corinthian polity appears to have had full control of the Isthmian festival and its site. Despite the alienation of the property, the conditions added by the proconsul require the continued public use of the locale as a condition of the transaction, at least during the period of the games. Was he protecting public land from being diverted to private uses? In his response he specifically refers to and approves the financial arrangements for the transfer of the land.

Publius Licinius Priscus Juventianus the *archiereus* is known from a Latin dedication on a statue base found at Ancient Corinth.<sup>13</sup> The agnomen Juventianus links him with the man named in Greek on a base discovered at Isthmia.<sup>14</sup> The title of *archiereus* and the cognomen (the agnomen, if it were present, has been worn off) are restored by West in a Greek text from Ancient Corinth originally edited by Meritt,<sup>15</sup> and a fragmentary Greek text from Ancient Corinth includes neither the agnomen nor priestly office among the preserved letters.<sup>16</sup> Finally, two monuments cite a man of this name merely as *hiereus*. Neither was found at the ancient sites of Isthmia or Corinth, but both may be presumed to have come from Isthmia. The first is a base for a statue which identifies the subject as Juventianus the priest.<sup>17</sup> The other is a marble statue of Poseidon with his dolphin supporting the left leg; the name of P. Licinnius Priscus, *hiereus* is inscribed in Greek in the mouth of the dolphin. This statue was transported ultimately to Madrid (*IG XIV*, 2543), where its presence escaped the notice of subsequent scholars (*IG IV*, 202).

West (p. 55) points out that the Licinii were a prominent family at Corinth. The high priesthood of the imperial cult for the province (*archiereia*) must have marked a high point in its social attainments. West suggests that the *archiereus* "Lucanius" who entertained

<sup>13</sup> He dedicated a statue of the priestess of Victoria, Kent, no. 199, p. 89.

<sup>14</sup> *SEG XXVI*, no. 410. The grammatical case of the name is not preserved, and it is not clear whether he was dedicator or subject of a statue.

<sup>15</sup> Meritt, no. 105, p. 73, as restored by West, p. 55.

<sup>16</sup> Kent, no. 200, p. 89, which might be restored equally well in the nominative, dative, or accusative case.

<sup>17</sup> Kent, no. 201, p. 89.

Plutarch (*quaest. conviv.* v.3.1) could be the same man.<sup>18</sup> West further suggests that the agnomen Juventianus is derived through Priscus' mother from the family of the *agonothetes* of A.D. 41(?), Juventius Proclus.<sup>19</sup> The *hellenodikēs* Juventius<sup>20</sup> may be a descendant. Because so few individual Corinthians are known, specific identifications must remain tentative.

The date of the Isthmian dossier is not certain. West (p. 54) sought to associate line 11 of Face B (3.i of Face A) with the known earthquake of Vespasian's reign. Kent (p. 121), however, judges that the letter forms of the various documents associated with Juventianus belong about a century later. The dossier of Priscus' gifts to the sanctuary he thinks falls in the latter half of the 2nd century after Christ, probably "within ten years of A.D. 170." The later date is consonant with Athenian orthography. Neither stele from this dossier shows the strong influence of Latin epigraphic style which characterizes much of the Greek lettering at Corinth itself.

Priscus' undertakings affected numerous cult sites at Isthmia. Aside from his undertakings in the stadium, the catalogue gives him credit for constructing the Palaimonion with its adornments (2.a) and the *enagisterion* (2.b). These are the first two in a list of cult sites which Priscus constructed "gratuitously" (*ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων*). Pausanias' agenda<sup>21</sup> has led Brooner to identify the Palaimonion with a precinct immediately south of the precinct of Poseidon's temple, at the western end, although there is evidence for a cult site of Palaimon also near the seashore.<sup>22</sup> Ultimately the area identified as the Palaimonion was divided into two distinct enclosed areas. The one on the east surrounded a pit filled with the remains of burnt offerings, while the one on the west enclosed the concrete foundation on which the Temple of Palaimon presumably was built, although few architectural remains of this temple have been identified. The foundation itself was centered over and included a reservoir originally belonging to the Archaic Stadium, and this was refurbished for use in the Roman cult. Between the two enclosed areas a corridor runs on a north-south axis. Its northern boundary is the convex face of a semicircular portal leading into the sanctuary of Poseidon.

The *enagisterion* must have been the site of the *enagismos* or offering to the dead. A parallel for such an offering is now available from the cult of the hero Aristomenes at Messene,<sup>23</sup> where a bull was offered as an *enagismos*. The principal features of the eastern part of Palaimon's precinct are three sacrificial pits. Each contained burnt animal bones, "all cattle, in some cases at least young bulls, which had been burned whole."<sup>24</sup> Each of the later two pits was larger than the previous one, each was the focus of an enclosure larger than the previous one, and each was displaced farther toward the southeast from the southeast corner of the

<sup>18</sup> Puech (1983, p. 26), however, questions this conclusion.

<sup>19</sup> West, p. 55.

<sup>20</sup> Meritt, no. 15, line 13, pp. 18-21.

<sup>21</sup> II.2.1. See *Isthmia* II, pp. 99-112.

<sup>22</sup> Pausanias, II.1.3. Possibly this precinct is illustrated on a number of coins of the Roman Imperial period: *BMC, Corinth*, nos. 594 (Hadrian), 610-613 (Marcus), 622, 623 (Lucius), 634, 635 (Commodus), 648, and 649 (Septimius).

<sup>23</sup> A. Orlandos, *Πρακτικά* 1959, pp. 162-173, lines 12-14. See J. and L. Robert, *Bulletin épigraphique* 1966, no. 200.

<sup>24</sup> *Isthmia* II, p. 102, note 8. The bones have been studied more recently by David Reese.

Temple of Poseidon. The scale of each of these changes was especially significant in the case of the last pit, and, while the periods of use of the first two seem to have been continuous, the last represents an abrupt break. Pottery and lamps<sup>25</sup> found among the bones and ash of each pit suggest the chronology. Pit A, the earliest, was used from the middle of the 1st century until around A.D. 80,<sup>26</sup> pit B for the remainder of the 1st century and possibly into the 2nd.<sup>27</sup> Pit C, the largest and latest, included debris from two levels of use. The earlier level represents “a pretty complete break with what goes before.” Its materials belong around the middle of the 2nd century “and maybe earlier.” The later level represents use in the second half, probably late, of the 2nd century, possibly continuing into the 3rd.<sup>28</sup> These three pits represent Broneer’s first three periods of use in the shrine of Palaimon, and the associated remains seem to have reflected an important part of the cultic activity. Closely associated with these pits were large numbers of lamps, especially Palaimonion Types and Type XVI, which were locally manufactured particularly for the cult.<sup>29</sup>

The catalogue on Stele A distinguishes the *enagisterion* from the Palaimonion. The precinct associated with the cult of Palaimon consists of the two enclosed areas and the corridor between them. The enclosure to the east with Sacrificial Pit C must correspond with the *enagisterion*. The enclosed foundation with its temple on the west must be the Palaimonion proper. Associated with the *enagisterion* in the catalogue of Priscus’ donations was the “sacred portal” (2.b). This presumably was the portal to the precinct of Poseidon at which the northern end of the corridor terminated. Broneer’s chronology associates Sacrificial Pit C with the third period of construction, the gateway with the fourth, and the Temple with its precinct, as well as the stoa which serves as the southern boundary of the temenos of Poseidon, with the fifth. The archaeology thus defines the stages of Priscus’ generosity more clearly than the catalogue.

Coins as early as Hadrian picture within an architectural setting a statue of the dead child Melikertes carried by the dolphin.<sup>30</sup> More elaborated versions appear on coins of later emperors, including Marcus (*BMC, Corinth*, nos. 614, 615), Lucius (*BMC, Corinth*, no. 624), Geta (*BMC, Corinth*, no. 676), and Caracalla. The first archaeological evidence of a temple occurs in Broneer’s fifth period. This must be the temple represented on the later coins. A temple was certainly present by the time of the visit of Pausanias (A.D. 155–170).<sup>31</sup> There is no evidence for a Temple of Palaimon before the fifth period of construction, whether this be identified with the Hadrianic or with the later coins. It is possible, however, that an earlier structure has been lost to the archaeological record.

<sup>25</sup> Dr. John Hayes of the Royal Ontario Museum has communicated by letter recent revisions to his earlier chronological observations. The earlier dates were used by Broneer (*Isthmia* II).

<sup>26</sup> *Isthmia* II, p. 100, note 6, revised by Hayes.

<sup>27</sup> *Isthmia* II, p. 101, note 7, revised by Hayes.

<sup>28</sup> *Isthmia* II, p. 102, note 8, revised by Hayes. The quotations come from Hayes’s letter. The large lamp by Se[koundos], type XXVII E, was found in this pit: *Isthmia* III, pp. 70 and 71, no. 2843.

<sup>29</sup> *Isthmia* III, pp. 2–3, 26–54, and 92.

<sup>30</sup> *Isthmia* II, p. 110, note 14. Citations in the text below are supplementary to the materials cited by Broneer.

<sup>31</sup> And presumably before the death of Regilla, wife of Herodes: Puech, 1983, pp. 37–38.

Recent careful stratigraphic excavations at Ancient Corinth itself have shown evidence of two major earthquakes, that of A.D. 77 and the "devastating" one which is the terminal point for Phase 3 of the stratigraphy of the area east and south of the Theater. An important restoration of the Odeon by Herodes Atticus *ca.* A.D. 175 can be located "within the middle of Phase 4."<sup>32</sup> Priscus' repairs to "the ramps and foundations undermined by earthquakes and age" (3.i) find a tantalizing parallel in the benefactions of another man.<sup>33</sup> An earthquake of notable intensity causing significant damage at both sites may have occurred in the third quarter of the 2nd century, possibly compounding damage from earlier occasions. Priscus' repairs to the stadium (Stele B, lines 10–12) could have followed this event.<sup>34</sup>

Priscus constructed the *peribolos*, or enclosure, for the sacred grove. Presumably the grove was filled with the pine trees for which Isthmia was famous. A pine tree was one of the sacred symbols of the cult of Palaïmon/Melikertes.<sup>35</sup> The pine crowns of Isthmian victors probably were provided by this grove. The only clues to its location are two surviving votive offerings, neither of which was found *in situ*.<sup>36</sup> Priscus was responsible for numerous cult sites within the grove, but none of these have been located.

Unfortunately for our knowledge of the inscription and for a definitive chronology, the evidence from the stadium and from the stoa associated with it remains unexcavated.<sup>37</sup>

Juventianus' construction program occurred in the latter half of the 2nd century after Christ. As the archaeological evidence suggests, it must have been spread over an extended period of time, as one project followed another. The inscription would have been set up upon the completion of the restoration of the Stoa of Regulus as fifty *oikoi*. The evidence for that part of the project must await the excavation of the stadium.

DANIEL J. GEAGAN

McMASTER UNIVERSITY  
Department of History  
Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4LD  
Canada

<sup>32</sup> C. K. Williams, II and Orestes H. Zervos, "Corinth, 1986: Temple E and East of the Theater," *Hesperia* 56, 1987 (pp. 1–46), pp. 4, 23, 25.

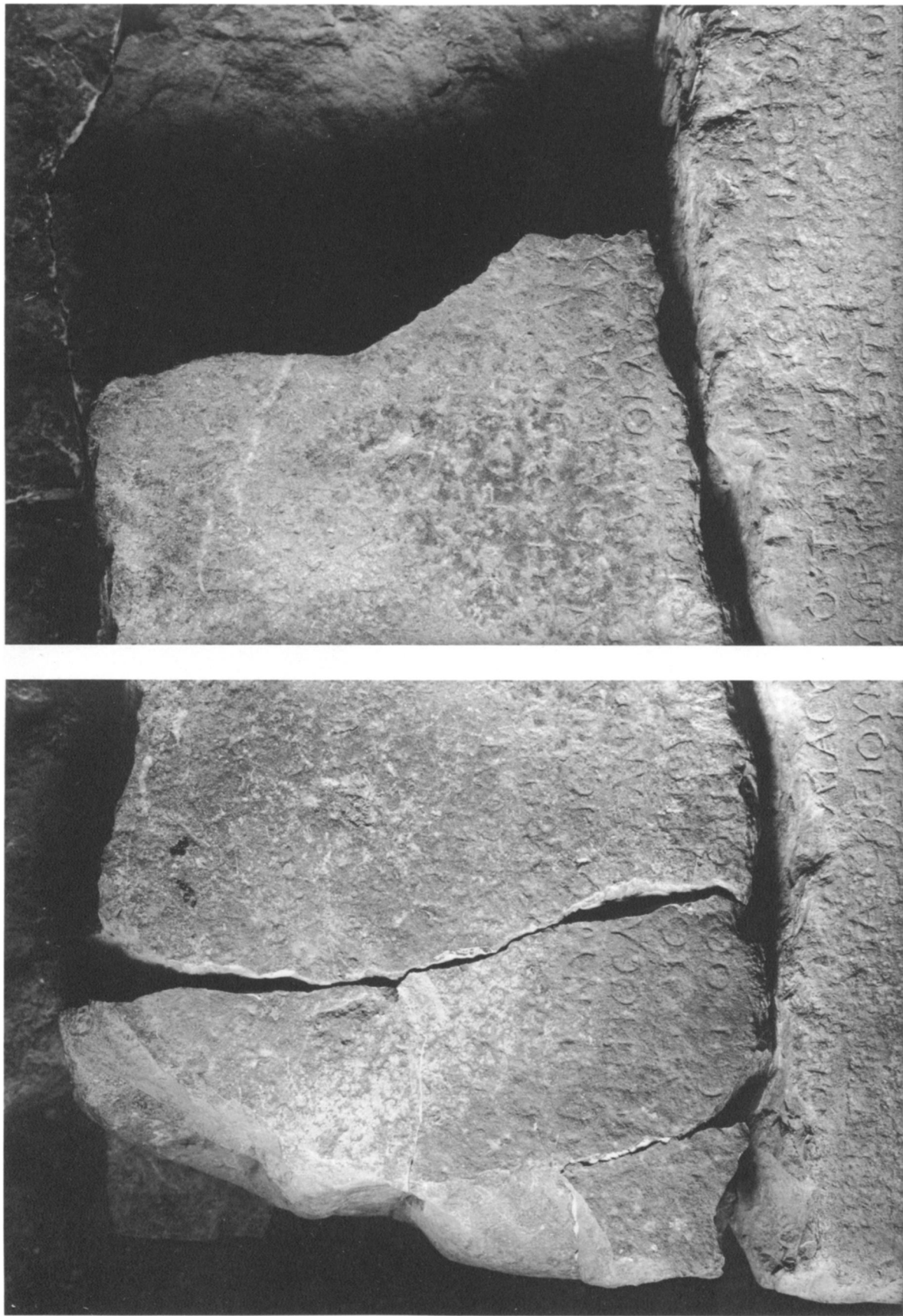
<sup>33</sup> For Herodes' gifts to Corinth and to Isthmia see now W. Ameling, *Herodes Atticus I (Subsidia Epigraphica XI)*, Hildesheim 1983, pp. 86–90.

<sup>34</sup> The argument of Puech (1983, pp. 35–39) presumes that Juventianus undertook a "programme de constructions" during his tenure as high priest. The evidence permits only the conclusion that these projects had been completed at a point during his tenure when the inscription was set up. That point could have occurred equally well after as before the period when the high priest normally was also helladarch, that is, after the tenure of the last high priest and helladarch in the third quarter of the 2nd century (pp. 29–30) or before the tenure of the first man to combine the offices (pp. 17–21).

<sup>35</sup> *Isthmia* II, pp. 1 and 110, note 14. G. Roux, *Pausanias en Corinthie*, Paris 1958, p. 87, note to 1.3.

<sup>36</sup> *Isthmia* II, pp. 113–122.

<sup>37</sup> For trial trenches in the later stadium see *Isthmia* II, pp. 55–64, 66.



a, b. Isthmia I 261 (Stele B, lines 1-14)

DANIEL S. GEAGAN: THE ISTHMIAN DOSSIER OF P. LICINIUS PRISCUS JUVENTIANUS