

A MACEDONIAN BOUNDARY INSCRIPTION OF A. D. 114

(PLATE 58)

IN the course of several months' travelling in western Macedonia in the summers of 1960 and 1961, I found the following inscription serving as a step in the ruined monastery church of Agios Kharalambos, above the lignite mines near Akhladha (Kroushograd).¹ It is to be moved to the collection of antiquities at Florina.

The text is inscribed on a roughly finished slab of the local schist, which must have originally been almost two meters long. The grain of the stone runs generally parallel to the longest dimension, but dips inward gradually from the inscribed surface towards the bottom. Several wedge-shaped chips have been broken out of the face of the stone along this grain, and one large crack runs up in a long loop from the left across most lines of the inscription and starts back down on the right. The edges, which, owing to the nature of the stone, could never have been squared off, tend to break away in long narrow chips. The right edge was originally left somewhat rougher than the rest, and several letters are cut into the natural irregularities of the stone. This edge was exposed to the greatest wear as a step, and at least 0.10 m., perhaps as much as 0.20 m., has been lost from the end of some lines of text. The letters are not chiseled, but traced out, with a point which must have been drawn rather than pushed across the loose grain of the stone. At several points the tool has been caught and deflected into a flaw or a previously inscribed line. In the xi of line 18, for instance, the central cross stroke has been deformed by following the slanting stroke. In the xi of line 19, it is the slanting stroke that has gone awry. The second mu of *Μαξίμου* in line 18 is badly distorted and contains at least two false strokes.

Letter forms belong to none of the monumental alphabets of the period, but are closely related to those of papyrus hands for the late first and early second centuries after Christ. The small one-sided upsilon in lines 2 and 17 and the broad curvilinear mu are among the most striking points of similarity.²

The characteristic syllabic division of this inscription, which was brought to my attention by Professor Charles Edson, suggests the restoration *θε-* or *vi-* to precede

¹ Grid reference on the British Staff Map, Sheet D5, Florina; N-794762. A. D. Keramopoulos, in a survey of this region, reported "sites of ancient habitation, such as that below the monastery of Ag. Kharalambos," *Ἀρχ. Ἐφ.*, 1932, p. 49. My travels were made possible by the courtesy of the Greek Army and the Greek Police. For their friendly welcome and their ready generosity, I owe to them and to the people of Macedonia an immeasurable debt of gratitude.

² Cf. E. M. Thompson, *An Introduction to Greek and Latin Palaeography*, Oxford, 1912, Table 3, p. 146, for comparable letter forms.

ΔΑΚΙΚΩΝ ΠΑΤ
 ΤΟ ΕΚΤΟΝ ΔΗ
 ΡΧΙΚΗΣ ΖΟΥ
 ΔΣΤΩ
 ΔΕΚΑΤΟΙ ΚΙ
 ΕΡΕΙΜΕΓΙ ΙΙ
 ΠΑΤΡΙΠ ΙΙ
 ΔΟΚ ΝΙΝΝΙ
 ΨΑΣΤΑ Π Μ
 ΝΕΙΝΙΩΟΥΟΠ Ι
 (ΚΨΥΠΑΤΟΙΚ Λ
 Ρ ΝΙΟΣ ΠΡΕ ΙΚ
 ΖΟ ΠΡΕ (ΡΕ Υ ΤΗ
 ΚΑΙ ΔΑΝΤΙΣ ΤΡΑ Τ
 ΓΟΣ ΔΟΘΕΙΣ ΚΡ
 ΤΗΣ ΥΠΟΚΑΙΝΗΝ
 ΔΕΙΜΟ ΥΑΝΙ
 ΤΟΥ ΜΕΤ ΔΞ Ι
 ΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΔΕΒ
 ΙΩΝ ΡΡΟΥΣ
 Υ ΚΑ

[- - - Τραιανῶ - - -]
 ψ [Γερ]μ[αν]ικ[ῶ]
 Δακικῶ ὑπάτ[ψ]
 τὸ ἕκτον δημ[α-]
 ρχικῆς [ἐ]ξου[σί-]
 5 ας τὸ ὄ[γδοον] κα[ῖ]
 δέκατον [ἄ]ρχ[ι-]
 ερεῖ μεγί[σ]τῃ
 πατρὶ πα[τ]ρί-
 δος Κ. Νινν[ί-]
 10 ψ Ἄστα Π. Μα-
 νειλίφ Ουοπί-
 σκῃ ὑπάτοις Γ. Ι[.]
 ρ[.?.]νιος Πρεῖσ-
 κος πρεσβευτῆ[ς]
 15 καὶ ἀντιστράτ[η-]
 γος δοθεῖς κρ[ι-]
 τῆς ὑπὸ Κ. Ἄνν[ίου]
 Μαξίμου ἀνθ[υ-]
 [π]άτου μεταξὺ [?.]
 20 [.]αίων καὶ Δεβ[.?.]
 [.]αίων ὄρους [ξ-]
 [θ]ῆκα. (vacat.)

(vacat 0.45 m.)

Height, 1.75 m.; width, 0.65 m.; thickness, 0.16 m.
 Height of letters irregular, 0.025 to 0.060 m., omicron from 0.025 to 0.040 m.

the first preserved omega of line 1. There are many possible arrangements of the remaining elements of the imperial name which occupied the initial lines of the inscription, and it would be profitless to experiment among them.

Line 12: The legate's name cannot be restored with certainty. The gamma is virtually certain, although it is somewhat unlike two others in the text. In lines 7 and 16, the crossbar of gamma forms an oblique angle with the hasta, while the letter in line 12 forms an acute angle. Γ(άιος) is, however, a convincing restoration in this place. The only certain trace of the next letter is the lower half of a hasta; other markings which I originally read as parts of pi seem to follow cracks in the stone. The pattern of syllabic division of the lines, which is broken only in a minor way in lines 13-14, demands a vowel at the end of line 12, but there is very little room for an additional letter, which would in any case be well to the right of the end of most lines, whether preserved or restored. The only common name that easily fits the requirements of space is *Τυρράνιος* and a part of the flaw that passes under the left hasta of the nu in line 13 may lie coincident with the line of the right hand slanting stroke of an alpha. I originally read an omega in this space, but I am now convinced that I was misled by a flaw in the stone.

Line 13: *Πρέσ|κος* is divided between consonants instead of before the group as in the beginning of line 12.

Lines 19-20: Syllabic division requires that there be at least one more letter after the beta in line 20, and line 19 may be equally extended. The nature of the stone precludes the restoration of more than three additional letters at the end of either line.

Despite its extraordinarily crude appearance, this stone contains the record of the settlement of a border dispute by an imperial legate during the reign of Trajan. It is dated to A.D. 114 by the mention of the consuls Q. Ninnius Hasta and P. Manilius Vopiscus, as well as by the imperial titles. These insofar as they are preserved are given in uncommonly scrupulous detail, and their occurrence is peculiar in other respects as well. The use of the ordinal number fully spelled out for the year of the tribunician power and the consulate is, by the time of Trajan, relatively uncommon, and the order of titles, with *ἀρχιερεὺς μέγιστος* coming almost as an afterthought, is certainly exceptional. Perhaps the most singular detail in the entire text is the use of the concluding verb in the first person.³

Q. Annius Maximus, named in lines 17-18, is the earliest known proconsul of Macedonia after its restoration to the Senate in A.D. 44. Neither he nor the judge

³ In the indexes of *I.G.R.R.*, for example, for Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian, the ordinals are spelled out only four times in forty-four instances. *Ἀρχιερεὺς μέγιστος* almost invariably follows directly after the emperor's cognomina. The use of the first person is to the best of my knowledge unique. Professor Edson also suggests to me that the appearance of the consuls *ordinarii* together with the emperor is extremely uncommon on such a document.

he appointed is known from other sources. The names of the disputing parties are lost as a result of the damage to lines 19-20, but it is worth noting that no possible restorations correspond to any of the names we would expect in the immediate region. The places were important enough to occupy the time of an imperial legate, but they are unknown from other sources, and we may suspect that there are many such sites in Macedonia.

There is probably no special significance in the choice of an imperial official as arbitrator, but it would certainly tend to protect the proconsul from a complaint against his ruling. The legate, a properly disinterested party *ex officio* in a senatorial province, could probably handle the case in two or three days while on his way to his assigned duties.

The singularities in the wording of the text and the letter forms suggest that this inscription was never properly recast into monumental character from its original form. The preamble is abnormally verbose and the body of information almost comically succinct. Moreover there is the remarkable use of the first person in the concluding verb. I would therefore suggest that what we have on this stone is not, as would normally be expected, a special text prepared for carving on stone, but a slavish literal copy, even to the letter forms, of the papyrus or parchment document as written or dictated by the legate himself, and deposited in the archives of the victorious party in the dispute. This document would begin exactly as it appears on the stone, and proceed from there to enumerate the landmarks in order along the line established by the legate. The stone was probably set later at one of the landmarks, and the intention seems to have been that it should stand upright with the uninscribed portion buried, though there is no indication that it ever stood so.

If I am correct in believing that the inscription is a direct copy of a papyrus document, then it is doubtful that the datives in the preamble can be taken, as they often are in similar monuments, to represent a dedication of the monument to the emperor and the consuls. In this case the datives must rather carry the sense "in the name of," or "on behalf of" the emperor and the consuls.

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