

# RANSOM OF THE ATHENIANS BY EPIKERDES

(PLATE 31)

**F**RAGMENT from the right side of a stele of Pentelic marble, found in the excavations of the Athenian Agora on September 19, 1969, built into the wall of the cut for the Electric Railway just north of the tracks (J 5). The roughpicked back is preserved.

Height, 0.258 m.; width, 0.216 m.; thickness, 0.128 m.

Height of letters, 0.011 m.

Inv. No. I 7065.

The new fragment belongs with, but does not join, two other pieces from the same inscription published as *I.G.*, II<sup>2</sup>, 174.<sup>1</sup> It is now possible to recover a continuous text, with the gap between the upper and lower fragments bridged by the Agora stone. The new evidence is of exceptional interest for the history of Athens in the late fifth century B.C.

## NEW TEXT OF *I.G.*, II<sup>2</sup>, 174

a. 405/4 a.

ΣΤΟΙΧ. 29

Ἐ π ι κ έ ρ [δ η ς Κ υ ρ η ν α ἰ ο ς]

Ε ὐ ε ρ [γ έ τ η ς]

[ἔδο]ξεν τῆι [βολῆι καὶ τῶι δῆμῳ· Ἐρεχ]

[θηῖς ἐπ]ρυτ[άνευε, . . . . .<sup>9</sup> . . . . . ἐργ]αμ[μ]

5 [άτευε, . . . . .<sup>9</sup> . . . . . ἐπεστάτ]ε, Ἄλεξίας 405/4

[ἦρχε, . . . . .<sup>10</sup> . . . . . εἶπε ἐπ]αινέσαι Ἐπ

[ικέρδῃ τῶι Κυρηναί]ωι ὡς ὄντι ἀνδρ

[ὶ ἀγαθῶι καὶ μάλα αἰτ]ίωι γεγενημέν

[ωι τὸς ἀλόντας πολίτ]ας τὸς ἐξ Σικελ

10 [ίας τὸ μὴ ἀποθανῆν ἐν] τῶι πολέμῳ· αὐ

[τὸς γὰρ μνᾶς ἑκατὸν] ἐθελουτῆς ἐς σω

[τηρίαν ἦνεγκεν ἀνά]λωσιν Ἀθηναίοι

[ς, ἀνθ' ὧν ἀτελείας δε]δομένης ὑπὸ τῷ δ

[ἦμο νῦν ἐπέδωκε τάλ]αντον ἀργυρίῳ Ἀ

<sup>1</sup> Studied most recently by Ian Pečírka, *The Formula for the Grant of Enktesis in Attic Inscriptions*, Prague, 1966, pp. 39-41, with photographs on pl. 8. Pečírka has a bibliography on the sculpture as well as a small but important correction in the text and, discarding some accepted restorations, he shows that the inscription is not concerned with a grant of enktesis. I am indebted to the director of the Agora excavations, T. Leslie Shear Jr., for permission to make this preliminary publication of the new piece.

- 15 [θηναίοις καὶ ἄλλα] εὖ πεποίηκεν Ἄθη  
 [ναίων τὸν δῆμον κα]ὶ ἂ νῦν ἐπαγγελιά  
 [μενος ποιεί, στεφ]ανώσαι τε αὐτ[ὸν πά]  
 [λιν θαλλὸ στεφάνωι] κα[ὶ] ἐ[παυνέσαι κ]  
 [αὶ πάλιν] ἀν[δραγαθίας ἔνεκα καὶ εὖν]  
 20 [οίας] τῆς ἐς Ἄθη[ναίος ἐμ παντὶ καιρῶ]  
 [ι κα]ὶ εἶναι καὶ [αὐτῶι τυχέν ἄλλων ἀγ]  
 [αθ]ῶν Ἀθήγησιν κ[αθάπερ ἂν αἰτῆται Ἄ]  
 θηναίος· ἀνειπέ[ν δὲ καὶ τὸν κήρυκα π]  
 [ρ]οσκηρύξαντα ἐ[ν τῶι ἀγῶνι τῶι αὐτῶι]  
 25 κα μάλα ἐν ἄστει [ὅτι πρότερον Ἐπικέ]  
 ρδης ὁ Κυρηναῖο[ς μνᾶς ἑκατὸν ἐσήνε]  
 γκεν Ἀθηναίο[ις ἐς σωτηρίαν ἀνθ' ὧν κ]  
 αὶ αὐτὸν ἐστε[φάνωσαν ἀνδραγαθίας]  
 [ἔ]νεκα καὶ εὖν[οίας τῆς ἐς Ἀθηναίος· τ]  
 30 [ὸ] δὲ ψήφισμα τ[ὸδε ἀναγράψαι τὸν γρα]  
 [μ]ματέα τῆς βολ[ῆς ἐμ πόλει ἐν στήλῃ]  
 [λι]θίνῃ ὃ Ἄρχε[ . . . εἶπε· τὰ μὲν ἄλλα]  
 [καθάπερ τῆ]ι βο[λήι - - - - -]
- lacuna*

Epikerdes the Kyrenaian had given one hundred minas to help ransom the Athenian captives from Syracuse after the disastrous defeat of 413 B.C. His benefactions have found reference in a speech of Demosthenes (XX) *πρὸς Λεπτίνην*, in which Demosthenes argues against a proposed law which would deny the granting of ἀτέλεια to benefactors. He cites Epikerdes as a notable example of a benefactor in past days who had received such a grant, quoting the decree once passed honoring him and saying in part (XX, 42): οὗτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ, ὡς τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο δηλοῖ τὸ τότε αὐτῷ γραφέν, τοῖς ἀλοῦσι τότε ἐν Σικελίᾳ τῶν πολιτῶν, ἐν τοιαύτῃ συμφορᾷ καθεστηκόσιν, ἔδωκε μνᾶς ἑκατὸν καὶ τοῦ μὴ τῷ λιμῷ πάντα αὐτοὺς ἀποθανεῖν αἰτιώτατος ἐγένετο.

The decree which Demosthenes quotes has been partially preserved in this new fragment of *I.G.*, II<sup>2</sup>, 174 found in the Athenian Agora. His quotation is remarkably close: [μάλα αἰτ]ίωι of line 8 corresponds to αἰτιωτάτω in Demosthenes; [τὸς ἀλόντας πολίτ]ας τὸς ἐξ Σικελ[ίας] of lines 9-10 corresponds to τοῖς ἀλοῦσι τότε ἐν Σικελίᾳ τῶν πολιτῶν in Demosthenes; and [τὸ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν ἐν] τῶι πολέμῳι of line 10 corresponds to τοῦ μὴ - - - ἀποθανεῖν of Demosthenes. Even the Demosthenic verb ἐγένετο reflects the participle γεγενημέν[ωι] of lines 8-9 of the inscription. The text of the inscription can be restored with confidence on the basis of Demosthenes' quotation of it.

In a measure, the parallelism between the text of the inscription and the text of Demosthenes continues. The Demosthenic text runs as follows (XX, 42): καὶ

μετὰ ταῦτα, δοθείσης ἀτελείας αὐτῷ διὰ ταῦτα παρ' ὑμῶν, ὄρων ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ πρὸ τῶν τριάκοντα μικρὸν σπανίζοντα τὸν δῆμον χρημάτων, τάλαντον ἔδωκεν αὐτὸς ἐπαγγειλάμενος.

The decree, in line 11, mentions the hundred minas (restored) and goes on to mention also the grant of ἀτέλεια which followed this benefaction. There must now have come a lapse in time between the granting of ἀτέλεια (which implies an honorary decree) and the later grant of a talent of silver from Epikerdes to the Athenian people. The new epigraphical fragment from the Agora is dated in 405/4 by the name of the archon Alexias. It was not long before the time of the Thirty, and the clause in the text of Demosthenes which states this fact, πρὸ τῶν τριάκοντα μικρὸν, should not be athetized.<sup>2</sup> The ransom of the prisoners came earlier; the granting of ἀτέλεια and the consequent gift of a talent came later. This last, with other unspecified benefactions, was the occasion for the present decree of 405/4.

The restoration of the inscription, from line 11 to line 20, is made difficult by a certain grammatical *non sequitur*. The case changes in lines 9-11 from dative to nominative, but clearly the donation of the hundred minas was part of the first benefaction and quite distinct from the later gift of a talent of silver, both in time and purpose. Since the herald was to proclaim the new honor, he might well not have rehearsed the old honor if he had not been ordered specifically to do so. This is the purport of lines 23-29. When making the proclamation (ἀνειπέ[ν]) the herald was to make an additional preliminary proclamation ([πρ]οσκηρύξαντα) repeating the earlier announcement and recounting the reason for the first honors. The language of lines 26-29 helps in the restoration of lines 11-12. The occasion for the first honor was the ransom grant of a hundred minas. These words are to be restored in both line 11 and line 26 on the authority of Demosthenes (*loc. cit.*). This money was for the safe return of the prisoners to their native Athens (ἐς σω[τηρίαν] in lines 11-12 and [ἐς σωτηρίαν] in line 27. The fact that Ἀθηναῖοι[ς] is dative in line 27 favors the restoration of the dative in lines 12-13. By granting a hundred minas, Epikerdes had made a significant outlay ([ἀνά]λωσιν) for the Athenians.<sup>3</sup>

This is the end of the first benefaction. The grant of ἀτέλεια followed, but there is no mention of this in the summation of lines 24-29 except to say that the benefaction was rewarded with an olive crown. The second benefaction (a talent of silver, etc.) was also to be rewarded, and this was the main business of the present decree and its

<sup>2</sup> The text of Demosthenes at this point is notoriously difficult. For a comprehensive discussion see G. H. Schaefer, *Apparatus Criticus et Exegeticus ad Demosthenem*, III, 1826, pp. 129-130. I follow the text as given by Henri Weil, *Les Plaidoyers politiques de Démosthène*, I, 1877, p. 35. The Oxford text attributes to Weil the suggestion that the words πρὸ τῶν τριάκοντα μικρὸν be athetized, and this supposed improvement was indeed introduced into the second edition of 1883.

<sup>3</sup> Epigraphically, the doubtful letter here could be either alpha, or delta, or lambda. The restoration is problematical and may well not be correct. Among suggestions for the restoration of line 12 are the following: (1) [ἐσήμεγκε ἴν]α ὄσιν Ἀθηναῖοι[ς], (2) [ἦγε ἴνα λύτρ]α ὄσιν Ἀθηναῖοι[ς], and (3) [ἦγεν ἴνα ἀπο]δῶσιν Ἀθηναῖοι.

supplement, the latter now lost except for the introductory formula (lines 32-33). An olive crown was to be given again (πάλιw); the Athenians in 405/4 had no gold, and the previous benefactions were to be remembered.

I find the current restoration of *I.G.*, II<sup>2</sup>, 174 for lines 24-26 awkward: Ἐ[πικέ-ρδη ἐν τῶι αὐτί]κα μάλα ἐν ἄστει [ἀγῶνι ὅτι ὄδε Ἐπικέ]ρδης, and prefer the text as given above, which I owe to a suggestion of David Lewis. The phyle in prytany had eight letters. Kekropis is excluded by the length of the name of its secretary (*I.G.*, I<sup>2</sup>, 126), but either Erechtheis or Antiochis is possible. If the prytany was Antiochis, and if A. M. Woodward is right that Antiochis held the seventh prytany,<sup>4</sup> this brings the decree close to the time of the Dionysia. But since 405/4 was probably an intercalary year,<sup>5</sup> the first day of the seventh prytany would be the 233rd day of the year, while the first day of Elaphebolion would be the 267th day of the year. It is thus evident that the Dionysiac festival (lines 24-25) would fall well within the eighth, not the seventh, prytany. With both Kekropis and Antiochis eliminated, therefore, as possible restorations for lines 3-4 the choice devolves upon Erechtheis, and this name may be there restored. The language of lines 24-25 implies the imminence of the Dionysiac festival. It is instructive to compare the phraseology of lines 13 ff., beginning with ἀνθ' ὧν (restored), with lines 11-12 of *I.G.*, II<sup>2</sup>, 1, of the same year, καὶ ἀντὶ ὧν εἶ πεποιήκασιν Ἀθηναῖος καὶ νῦν περὶ πολλῶ ποιῶνται καὶ ἐσηγόνται ἀγαθὰ, where the Samians were recognized as having performed valuable services and as still, at the time of the decree, continuing to do so.<sup>6</sup>

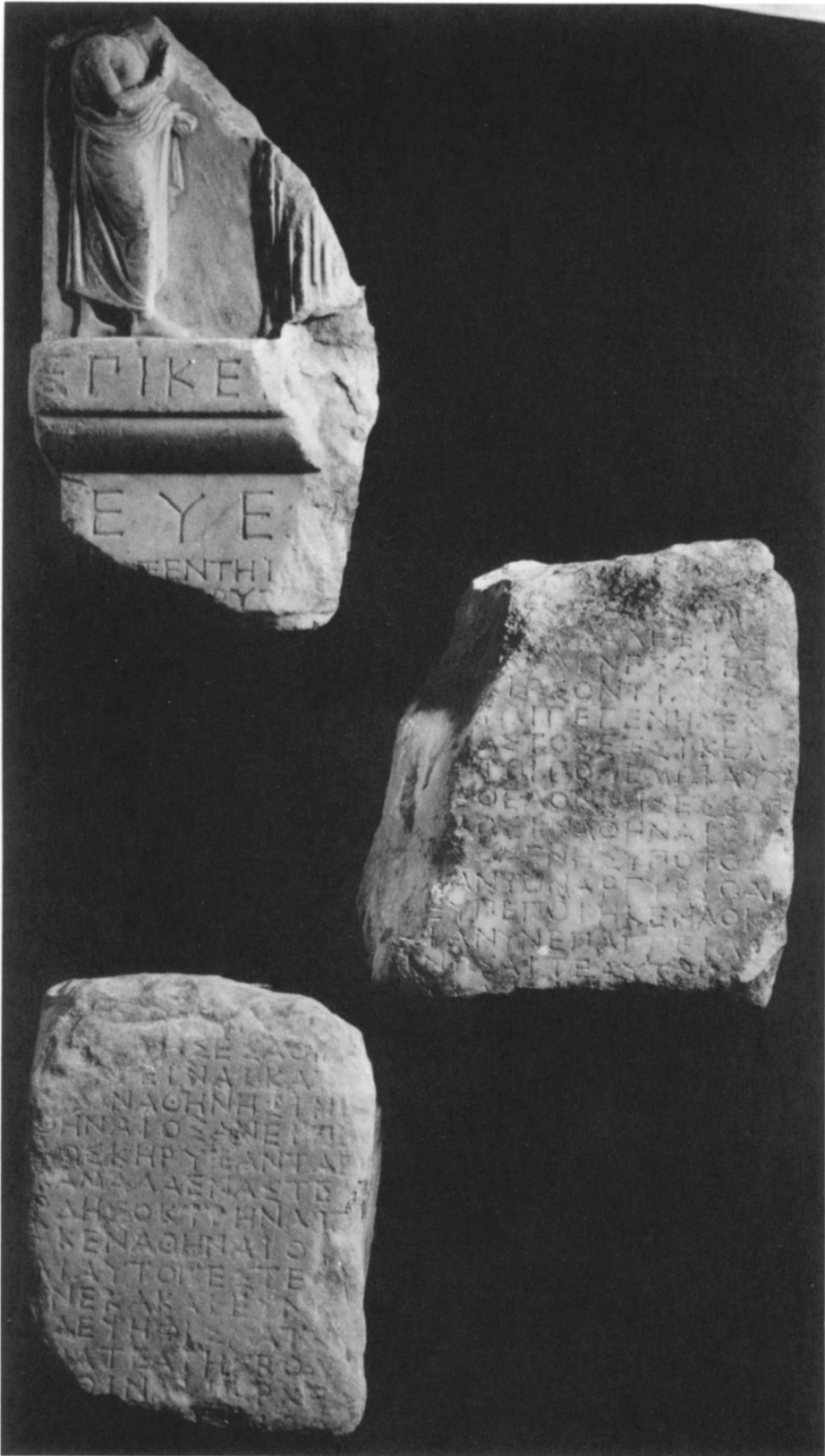
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<sup>4</sup> *Hesperia*, XXV, 1956, pp. 111, 115.

<sup>5</sup> See B. D. Meritt, *T.A.P.A.*, XCV, 1964, p. 210. The computation of dates is here approximate.

<sup>6</sup> The restoration in line 13 I owe to A. G. Woodhead. Both to him and to David Lewis I am indebted for sympathetic counsel during the preparation of this report.



I.G., II<sup>2</sup>, 174 + AGORA INV. NO. I 7065

BENJAMIN D. MERITT: RANSOM OF THE ATHENIANS BY EPIKERDES