

AN ATHENIAN ARCHON LIST OF THE LATE SECOND CENTURY AFTER CHRIST

(PLATE 89)

IN 1972 a fragment of an inscription bearing the names of prominent men of Roman Athens was found in the Athenian Agora, face up on the floor of a Byzantine building, about 30 meters west of the Royal Stoa (Agora grid G 4).¹

The stone is the lower right-hand corner of an architectural block, with the bottom and right edges preserved. The bottom has been finished with a claw chisel except for a relieving edge *ca.* 0.03 m. wide. The face has been treated similarly. However, the surface to be inscribed was cut down and smoothed, leaving a rough band 0.09 m. wide at the bottom. The right edge preserves fine anathyrosis.² Possibly the block was re-used as a stele, but it seems more likely that the inscription was carved on the wall of a standing building or monument.

Preserved height, 0.257 m.; preserved width, 0.338 m.; preserved thickness, 0.107 m.

Height of letters, 0.012-0.014 m. (lines 2-5), 0.011-0.013 m. (line 6), 0.016-0.019 m. (line 7).

Athenian Agora Inventory No. I 7390.

a. 182/3-187/8 *p.*

[...^{ca. 9}...]ς
[Οὐ]οπείσκος
Ἀρισταῖος
Σωσιγένης
5 Φιλότειμος
Θισβιανός
Κλ. Ἀττικός
vacat

The name in line 2 can be restored as Οὐοπείσκος. Above the final sigma of this name is a long horizontal stroke, probably the lowest stroke of a sigma, the final letter of a name in line 1. Its placement suggests a name *ca.* 10 letters long.

Lines 2-5 are in the same hand. The sixth and seventh lines may be in different hands; the

¹ I am indebted to T. L. Shear, Jr., Director of the Agora Excavations, for his assistance and for permission to study and publish the inscription. I would further like to thank B. D. Meritt, J. H. Oliver, J. S. Traill, D. J. Geagan and J. McK. Camp II for their valuable suggestions and encouragement.

² W. B. Dinsmoor, Jr. has examined the stone, and the workmanship appears to him Classical.

size of the letters in these two lines varies considerably, those in line 6 being somewhat smaller, those in line 7 somewhat larger than the norm. The beginning of the last line is placed slightly to the left of the margin.

The stone gives a list of six names in the nominative, without patronymic or demotic. Of these, two occur only once in the annals of Athens; Thisbianus and Vopiscus are well documented as prominent Athenians active in the last quarter of the 2nd century after Christ. We may assume that the other men were their contemporaries, and probably equally prominent.

Line 2: Μ. Μουνάτιος Μαξιμιανὸς Ουόπισκος Ἄζηγιεύς served as herald of the Boule and the Demos in the archonship of Demostratos in 180/1 (*I.G.*, II², 1795).³ He is known to us as an archon from a prytany catalogue, and dated to 187/8 by Oliver and Traill, to 174/5 by Notopoulos (*I.G.*, II², 1788 + *Hesperia*, XI, 1942, no. 21, pp. 55-56).⁴ He served as hoplite general probably between A.D. 215 and 220 (*I.G.*, II², 1801).⁵ His name also appears on a list of donors of ca. 170-190 (*Hesperia*, XXIX, 1960, no. 37, pp. 29-32).

Line 3: The only Athenian of this name attested in the later 2nd century is Δομίτιος Ἀρισταῖος Παιονίδης. He is known from a single inscription, a prytany catalogue of Oeneis (*I.G.*, II², 1812 + *Hesperia*, XI, 1942, no. 30, pp. 64-65), where he appears as eponymous archon. The stone has been dated to the late 2nd or early 3rd century.⁶ Oliver suggests that he was a foreigner, the same Domitius Aristaetus who received Caracalla's rescripts and was legate in Asia between A.D. 208 and 217.⁷

Line 4: This man is probably to be identified as Τίτος Φλάβιος Σωσιγένης Παλληνεύς, an epebe in the third year of the paidotribeia of Loukos and Markos, around A.D. 173/4 (*I.G.*, II², 2103).⁸ His name appears as archon on two epebeic lists

³ For the date of Demostratos, see J. S. Traill, "Some Revisions in the Late Roman Archon List," *Φόρος, Tribute to Benjamin Dean Meritt*, Locust Valley, New York, 1974, pp. 150-153. J. A. Notopoulos had dated Demostratos to 184/5 (*Hesperia*, XVIII, 1949, pp. 16, 20), and J. H. Oliver had dated him to ca. 181 (*Harv. Th. Rev.*, XLIII, 1950, p. 234).

⁴ Oliver, *loc. cit.*; Notopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 29; J. S. Traill, *Hesperia*, XI, 1971, pp. 322-323, note 30, points out that the later date shortens Vopiscus' implausibly long career. See also *I.G.*, II², 1831 and *Hesperia*, III, 1934, no. 44, p. 57, which Traill suggests date to the archonship of Vopiscus.

⁵ This inscription, formerly assigned to the archonship of Claudius Atticus and dated to 190/1 by Notopoulos (*op. cit.* [above, note 3], p. 22), has been redated to the years 215 to 220 by A. E. Raubitschek (Γέρας Ἀντωνίου Κεραμοπούλλου, Athens, 1953, p. 250, note 3). Oliver restored the name of Vopiscus as hoplite general in *Hesperia*, XI, 1942, no. 26, pp. 61-62, but Raubitschek prefers the restoration Apollonios (*Hesperia*, Suppl. VIII, 1949, p. 283).

⁶ P. Graindor (*B.C.H.*, XXXVIII, 1914, pp. 374-375), followed by Oliver (*Hesperia*, XI, 1942, p. 88), suggested this date on the basis of the letter forms of the prescript. Notopoulos places Aristaetos within the limits 200/1-201/2, 203/4-204/5 (*op. cit.* [above, note 3], pp. 35-36).

⁷ Oliver, *Class. Phil.*, XLIV, 1949, p. 202.

⁸ This was the archonship of Biesios Peison, which Notopoulos dates to 173/4 (*op. cit.* [above, note 3], p. 27); Oliver to 172/3 or a little later (*Hesperia*, XI, 1942, p. 87); and Graindor to the

(*I.G.*, II², 2128, 2129) and one ephobic decree (*I.G.*, II², 2291a), and his archonship is dated, on the basis of the prosopography of the inscriptions and the date when he himself was an ephobe, to the last decade of the 2nd century by Oliver and Graindor, to the period 197/8-199/200 by Notopoulos.⁹ He probably served as herald of the Boule and the Demos in *ca.* A.D. 200 (*Hesperia*, XI, 1942, no. 6, pp. 35-37),¹⁰ and set up the herm *I.G.*, II², 3806 at the end of the 2nd century. The name of Sosigenes has been restored as eponym in a prytany decree of Antiochus of *ca.* 195/6 (*I.G.*, II², 1805).

Line 5: This is probably Φιλότημος Ἄρκεσιδήμου Ἐλεούσιος, an ephobe in the anarchy after Tineios Pontikos in A.D. 169/170 (*I.G.*, II², 2097).¹¹ About 10 years later, in the archonship of Athenodoros, he was herald of the Boule and the Demos (*I.G.*, II², 1794).¹² We learn from an ephobic list that he was archon in the 19th year of the paidotribeia of Epiktetos, probably in A.D. 185/6 (*I.G.*, II², 2111/2112).¹³ Philotimos is mentioned as a general in an inscription of *ca.* A.D. 185 (*Hesperia*, XVI, 1947, no. 86, pp. 181-182), and is listed in a catalogue of the *genos* of Kerykes of *ca.* A.D. 200 (*I.G.*, II², 2340).

Line 6: Γαῖος Φάβιος¹⁴ Θισβιανὸς Μαραθῶνιος is known as an archon from the period 176/7-177/8 (*Chronologie des archontes Athéniens sous l'empire*, 1922, pp. 180-182). The only other Sosigenes attested in the 2nd century after Christ, Σωσιγένης (Φιλάδης), the father of a councillor of 171/2 (*Hesperia*, IV, 1935, p. 48, no. 11, line 34), is too early for our purposes.

⁹ Graindor, *Chronologie*, pp. 200-201; Notopoulos, *op. cit.* (above, note 3), p. 31; Oliver, *Hesperia*, XI, 1942, p. 88.

¹⁰ Notopoulos deduces this and dates the inscription to 190/1 on the basis of a new reading (*op. cit.* [above, note 3], p. 18). I have examined the stone and a short commentary on his reading is in order. As Oliver noted, there is definitely an unscribed space at the end of line 2, after the title ἱερ<ο>κῆρυξ. And even if there were not, there is not enough room for Notopoulos' restoration of δαδοῦχος, much less for the name of the official as well. There seems also to be an unscribed space before the name Ἐρέν., which would support Notopoulos' restoration of the text in two columns. In line 5, Notopoulos has omitted the abbreviation Ϻ, which is clearly visible. As for the date, Oliver's restoration of ἀντικῆρυξ as the office of Ἄφροδείσιος seems perfectly sound, and there is no reason to suppose, as Notopoulos does, that he was prytany secretary.

¹¹ Notopoulos, *op. cit.* (above, note 3), p. 14; W. Kolbe, *Ath. Mitt.*, XLVI, 1921, pp. 138-139, 149. The inscription is dated by the mention of the 34th year of the paidotribeia of Abaskantos. The only other Philotimos of the 2nd century after Christ is Φλάβιος Φιλότειμος Μαραθῶνιος, a councillor of Aiantis of 130-140 (*I.G.*, II², 1073, line 10; *Hesperia*, XLI, 1972, p. 70, line 69). He is too early for our list.

¹² This inscription is dated by Notopoulos to 180/1 (*op. cit.* [above, note 3], pp. 15, 19-20); by Oliver to *ca.* 180 (*Harv. Th. Rev.*, XLIII, 1950, p. 234).

¹³ Oliver (*Hesperia*, XI, 1942, p. 87) dates Philotimos in the interval 182/3-190/1. Graindor (*Chronologie*, pp. 182-183) places the beginning of Epiktetos' career as paidotribes between 176/7 and 178/9, giving a date of 185/6-187/8 for Philotimos. Notopoulos (*op. cit.* [above, note 3], p. 21), accepting Raubitschek's suggestion that Julius the Hierophant was archon in 187/8 (Raubitschek, *Hesperia*, Suppl. VIII, 1949, p. 284), dates Philotimos to 185/6.

¹⁴ For the nomen of Thisbianus see J. H. Oliver, "Fabius Thisbianus and Munatia Sabina at Sparta," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, XIV, 1974, p. 137, note 2.

prytany catalogue *I.G.*, II², 1796 + 1800 + EM 3152. His date is limited by the mention of Commodus to the reign of that emperor, and has been fixed in 186/7 on the basis of tribal rotation of the prytany secretary.¹⁵ He is honored as herald of the Boule and the Demos on a herm dated before 186/7, and is to be identified with the Thisbianus honored on an inscription at Sparta (*I.G.*, V, 521).¹⁶ He may be the same as the dadouch Thisbianus of *I.G.*, II², 3715.

Line 7: Though other men of this famous family also bore the name Claudius, the late 2nd century date suggests that this is Τ. Κλαύδιος Βραδύας Ἀττικὸς Μαραθῶνιος, eldest son of Herodes Atticus.¹⁷ He is known as archon from two ephobic lists dated to 190/1-191/2 by Notopoulos, 183/4-191/2 by Oliver, 186/7-191/2 by Graindor (*I.G.*, II², 2113, 2114).¹⁸ He served as herald of the Boule and the Demos in the archonship of Diogenes Marathonios in A.D. 209/10 (*I.G.*, II², 1077).¹⁹ He was also honored for an unknown benefaction by the citizens of Peiraius (*I.G.*, II², 3978).

The most striking thing that these men have in common is the archonship. The format of the inscription, a simple list of names in the nominative, is that known from archon lists of an earlier era.²⁰ This suggests that we may well be dealing with a chronological list of the eponymous officials of Athens. If so, some revision of the hitherto accepted chronology of archons of the late 2nd century will be necessary.

The prytany secretary who served under Thisbianus was Κλώδιος Ἀντίοχος Λαμπιρεύς who belonged to the tribe Erechtheis, first in the official tribal order. This fixes his date in 186/7, and our list must therefore cover the years 182/3 to 187/8. Re-examination of the evidence indicates that the archons presently placed in this period have been misdated.

As John Traill has pointed out in his recent study, the years 181/2 to 183/4 have been wrongly assigned to Memmius Flaccus, the anarchy after him, and to Lucius Gellius Xenagoras.²¹ The secretary who served in the anarchy after Memmius

¹⁵ Raubitschek, *Hesperia*, Suppl. VIII, 1949, pp. 279-280.

¹⁶ For both the herm and the Lacedaemonian inscription see Oliver, *op. cit.* (above, note 14), pp. 137-138, and the bibliography cited there.

¹⁷ *P.I.R.*, II², no. 785, pp. 168-169.

¹⁸ Oliver, *Hesperia*, XI, 1942, p. 87; Notopoulos, *op. cit.* (above, note 3), p. 22; Graindor, *Chronologie*, pp. 201-202. The name of the emperor Commodus and the festival of the Commodeia have been erased from *I.G.*, II², 2113. The *ὑπο* of the title *ὑποπαιδοτρίβης* of Nikostratos, the successor of Epiktetos, has also been erased, from which we can infer that the inscription was carved in the last year that Epiktetos held office.

¹⁹ Notopoulos, *op. cit.* (above, note 3), p. 3.

²⁰ Compare *Hesperia*, VIII, 1939, no. 21, pp. 59-65, carved ca. 425 B.C., listing archons of 528/7-522/1; and *I.G.*, II², 1713, covering, with gaps, the period 129/8 B.C. to A.D. 30/1.

²¹ Φόρος, pp. 153-154. For the earlier dating see Notopoulos, *op. cit.* (above, note 3), p. 20 and table 1.

was *Μυστικός Μυστικοῦ Ἐροιάδης* (*Hesperia*, IV, 1935, no. 11, pp. 48-49). The deme *Ἐροιάδαι* belonged in this period to the tribe Antiochis, not, as Notopoulos states, to Hippothontis.²² Antiochis is twelfth in the tribal order. The prosopography of the Aisitai limits the date of *Hesperia*, IV, 1935, no. 11 to the period of ca. 170-190, so we may date the anarchy after Memmius to either 171/2 or 184/5.²³ If we choose the earlier date, there is room in the 180's for the men of I 7390. I therefore suggest that the archonship of Memmius, the anarchy that followed it, and the archonship of Xenagoras be assigned to the years 170/1, 171/2 and 172/3 respectively.²⁴

Notopoulos has assigned the years 170/1 and 171/2 to Flavius Harpalianos and Claudius Herakleides. Of the former we know that he served within the reign of Marcus Aurelius and earlier than Epaphroditos; an inscription dated to the term of Epaphroditos was carved on the side of a herm whose front was inscribed in the archonship of Harpalianos (*I.G.*, II², 1786-1787). If Vopiscus is moved from 174/5 to 182/3, we can place Harpalianos immediately before Epaphroditos. The front and sides of the herm would then have been inscribed in consecutive years.

Claudius Herakleides was dated by Graindor on prosopographical grounds to ca. 173/4 (*I.G.*, II², 2104).²⁵ However, we may date him in the years after Epaphroditos, especially if we redate to 192/3 the archonship of Julius the Hierophant, as Oliver suggests,²⁶ when Ailius Leukios, an epebe in the archonship of Herakleides, served as eponymous.

Traill has recently demonstrated that Demostratos is to be dated to 180/1.²⁷ *I.G.*, II², 1795 preserves the name of the prytany secretary who served under Demostratos, one *Ὀνήσιμος Εὐτυχίδου*, probably the same as *Ὀνήσιμος . . . χιδ[]*, a councillor of the tribe Oineis (*I.G.*, II², 1784). Oineis is the eighth tribe in the official order, and since Demostratos, by a plausible restoration of *I.G.*, II², 1795, served

²² This same *Μυστικός* appears in *I.G.*, II², 2067 as an epebe of Antiochis, and in *I.G.*, II², 1805 as prytanis of Antiochis. See also *I.G.*, II², 1781 and 2123, where *Ἐροιάδαι* is attested as a deme of Antiochis.

²³ Traill opted for the later date in his recent study. However, upon consideration of I 7390, the text of which I sent to him in 1972, he agreed that the earlier date may be preferable (*Φόρος*, p. 155).

²⁴ See Oliver's commentary on *Hesperia*, IV, 1935, no. 11, pp. 48-49. The greatest objection to an early date for this inscription is the appearance of two men who were epebes in ca. 166/7 and 163/4. As a rule, a man did not serve as councillor before the age of 30; the usual strictures must have been relaxed, as they were in the case of Flavius Alkiabiades (*I.G.*, II², 1772) and probably P. Ailius Phaidros (*I.G.*, II², 1794).

²⁵ Graindor, *Chronologie*, pp. 174-175.

²⁶ Oliver, *A.J.P.*, LXXI, 1950, pp. 174-177, in reply to Raubitschek, *Hesperia*, Suppl. VIII, 1949, p. 284. We might also suggest that he served sometime between 189/90 and 191/2, since the removal of Claudius Atticus to 187/8 has made room for him there.

²⁷ Traill, *Φόρος*, pp. 150-153.

during the reign of Commodus, the date of his archonship has been determined as 180/1.

The following table summarizes the changes made in the dates of the archons of the 170's and 180's.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Former List</i> ²⁸	<i>Revised List</i>	<i>Position of Tribe of Secretary (where known)</i>
166/7	Mamertinos	Mamertinos	
167/8	anarchy	anarchy	VIII
168/9	T. Pontikos	T. Pontikos	IX
169/70	anarchy	anarchy	X
170/1	Fl. Harpalianos	Memmius Flaccus	
171/2	Cl. Herakleides	anarchy	XII
172/3		L. Gellius Xenagoras	
173/4	Biesios Peison	Biesios Peison	
174/5	Vopiscus	Fl. Harpalianos	
175/6	Ar. Epaphroditos	Ar. Epaphroditos	
176/7		Claudius Herakleides	
177/8	Aischines? (or 176/7 or 178/9)	Aischines? (or 178/9) ²⁹	
178/9	Hegias? (or 179/80)	Hegias? (or 177/8 or 179/80)	
179/80	Athenodoros? (or 181/2 or 182/3)	Athenodoros? (or 181/2)	
180/1	Demostratos	Demostratos	VIII
181/2			
182/3		Vopiscus	
183/4	Memmius	Aristaios	
184/5	anarchy	Sosigenes	
185/6	L. Gellius Xenagoras	Philotimos	
186/7	Thisbianus	Thisbianus	I
187/8	Philotimos	Claudius Atticus	
188/9	Commodus	Commodus	

²⁸ This list is a combination of that presented in A. E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, I, 7, Munich, 1972, pp. 233-234 and that in Traill, *Φόρος*, p. 154, fig. 1.

²⁹ The *terminus ante quem* for Aischines depends on the date of the archonship of Helvidius, which saw the 14th year of service of the secretary Straton (*I.G.*, II², 2130). If we redate Helvidius to 193/4, as Oliver suggests (*A.J.P.*, LXXI, 1950, p. 176, note 12), Straton took office not in 179/80, but in 180/1. Since Philemon was still secretary during the archonship of Aischines (*I.G.*, II², 2105), Aischines may date no later than 179/80.

This scheme places Sosigenes and Aristaios somewhat earlier than one would have expected. However, it is not impossible for Sosigenes to have served at the age of thirty. And although Aristaios' activity under Caracalla is attested, a career of public service spanning three decades is not unheard of.

If I 7390 is a chronological list of archons, the different hands of lines 6 and 7 may be explained in two ways. Either the list was carved in the archonship of Philotimos (185/6), and the last two names were added in succeeding years; or the list was carved in 187/8, with the name of Claudius Atticus larger because it was cut during his term and/or because it is at the end of the column. Possibly the name of Thisbianus had been omitted by mistake, and was inserted in slightly smaller letters in the space between Philotimos and Claudius Atticus.

Tribal rotation of the secretary in Roman times has been only tentatively established, though it is widely accepted. The fact that the men of I 7390 can be inserted without difficulty into the framework of archons dated by their prytany secretaries, while not conclusive, gives tacit support for the continuation of tribal rotation in the Roman period.

The adjustment of the archon list may have one further historical implication. A glance at the revised list shows that there were three anarchies in the 5 year period 167/8 to 171/2, presumably because no wealthy man could be found to fill the office. This was apparently an unusual situation; only four other anarchies are known from the first two centuries of our era.³⁰ These three anarchies are roughly contemporary with the great plague brought to Athens—and the rest of the empire—by soldiers returning from the Parthian War, and which reached Rome in A.D. 166. Our only piece of evidence for the plague at Athens is in Philostratus; at the trial of Herodes Atticus at Sirmium in *ca.* 173 or 174, the Athenians complain that those who died in the plague were lucky.³¹ The concentration of anarchies from 167/8 to 171/2 may well be a symptom of the plague in Athens.

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³⁰ D. Geagan, *Hesperia*, Suppl. XII, 1967, p. 2, note 11.

³¹ *Vit. Soph.*, 561: Μακάριοι οἱ ἐν τῇ λοιμῷ ἀποθνήσκοντες. J. Day, *An Economic History of Athens under Roman Domination*, New York, 1942, p. 196; J. F. Gilliam, "The Plague under Marcus Aurelius," *A.J.P.*, LXXXII, 1961, pp. 227, 231.

