

THE ATHENIAN ARCHON HOPLON

IN 1971 EUGENE VANDERPOOL¹ showed that line 1 of the horos originally published by Themelis² contained the name of a previously unknown Athenian archon of the 3rd century B.C., “Οπλων. Vanderpool identified Hoplon with the “Οπλων Φαληρεύς who was an Areopagite member of the Asklepieion commission in 215/4 B.C. (*IG II*², 1539, line 7) and assigned his archonship to 217/6 B.C.; he also noted that a further consequence of this date requires that Hoplon’s name be restored in the ephebic decree of 216/5 B.C., *IG II*², 794, line 8.³ In 1977 Meritt accepted Vanderpool’s date and suggested that Hoplon’s name be restored in the didaskalia catalogue *IG II*², 2323, line 99.⁴

Neither Vanderpool nor Meritt seems to have noticed that *IG II*², 1706, lines 129–130⁵ preserve the names of the last two *thesmothetai* listed for the year 217/6. The name of the last *thesmothetes* can be read [. . .⁷. . .]ης Ἐναφ(λύστιος) (XIII), that of the next to last as [---⁷⁻⁸---]ων Φ[---]. Possible restorations for this demotic are as follows: Φυλά(σιος) (II), Φηγού(σιος) (III), Φηγαι(εύς) (IV), Φιλαίδ(ης) (IV), Φρεάρ(ριος) (VI), Φλυεύ(ς) (VII), and Φαληρ(εύς) (XII).

Orthographically, any of these restorations is possible; constitutionally, however, most of these possibilities can be eliminated because the Athenians did not allow double representation on the board of *archontes* and because they had the habit of listing the *thesmothetai* for the year in official tribal order. On the basis of this procedure, which is known as “Beloch’s Law”, both Kirchner and Dow opted for Φ[αληρ](εύς). But, if Hoplon’s archonship is assigned to 217/6, that restoration becomes unlikely, if not impossible, because of the improbability of double representation among the *archontes* of a given year.⁶ Conversely, acceptance of this restoration and of the existence of a *thesmothetes* from Phaleron in 217/6 requires that Hoplon’s archonship be assigned to a different date.

There are a number of possible solutions to this conundrum. Perhaps the *thesmothetai* for 217/6 were not listed in tribal order, and line 129 should be restored with one of the suggested demotics other than Φαληρ(εύς). Perhaps the list was in tribal order, but another demotic should nevertheless be restored. Perhaps Phaleron was represented by two men among the *archontes* of that year. Let us examine each of these possibilities in turn.

¹ E. Vanderpool, “Hoplon, an Athenian Archon of the Third Century B.C.,” *Hesperia* 40, 1971, pp. 109–111.

The following special abbreviation will be used:
Agora XV = B. D. Meritt and J. S. Traill, *The Athenian Agora*, XV, *Inscriptions. The Councillors*, Princeton 1974

² P. G. Themelis, *Δελτ* 24, 1969, *Χρονικά*, pp. 89–90, republished, together with Vanderpool’s new readings and restorations and those of A. N. Oikonomides (*The Ancient World* 2, 1979, p. 21), as *SEG XXIX*, no. 158.

³ As reconstructed by S. Dow, “Athenian Decrees of 216–212 B.C.,” *HSCP* 48, 1937 (pp. 105–126), pp. 108–109.

⁴ B. D. Meritt, “Athenian Archons 347/6–48/7 B.C.,” *Historia* 26, 1977 (pp. 161–191), p. 178.

⁵ For an improved text of this inscription, see S. Dow, “The List of *Archontes*, *I.G.*² II 1706,” *Hesperia* 2, 1933, pp. 418–446, with foldout text, pl. XIV.

⁶ Cf. Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.*, 22.5, 55.1, 59.7, 63.1.

The first possibility, that the *thesmothetai* for 217/6 were not listed in tribal order, is possible but not likely. Dow examined instances of *thesmothetai* listed out of tribal order, not only in *IG II²*, 1706 but also in other surviving lists of *archontes*.⁷ He found three examples, of which one appears in *IG II²*, 1706, lines 56–58, where the tribal order is III, IX, VI. To this should probably be added lines 95–97 (Dow), where the tribal order is apparently I, XI, IV. Dow concluded that “Beloch’s Law is thus upheld, and exceptions are probably clerical errors.” It would, however, seem methodologically unsafe to assume that a list only partially preserved contains such an error and therefore appears to be out of order.

As for the second possibility, if the list did appear in tribal order, but the next-to-last *thesmothetes* came from a deme other than Phaleron, the most likely candidate for his demotic would seem to be Φ[λευύ](ς), tribally the last in sequence before Φαληρεύς. Phlya belonged, after 224/3, to the tribe Ptolemais (VII). Because the *thesmothetai* were listed in tribal order, a direct consequence of assigning the fifth *thesmothetes* in our list to Ptolemais is that the first four *thesmothetai* of that year must have come from the first six tribes in the official order; further, Tribes VIII–XII must have furnished no *thesmothetai* at all. This situation is statistically possible but not likely. A year in which the first four *thesmothetai* came from Tribes I–VI is known from *IG II²*, 1706, the year of Theophilos (227/6, lines 25–28). No year is known in which there were no *thesmothetai* from Tribes VIII–XII or which meets both of these criteria. Although such a year is possible, to assume that it fell in 217/6 pushes coincidence beyond the point of credibility.

The third choice is, it seems, impossible. If the deme Phaleron furnished both the *archon eponymos* and one of the *thesmothetai* in 217/6, that conjunction would be unparalleled in our knowledge of Athenian civic administration. Tribal duplication in the panels of *archontes* is not unknown and is relatively frequent in the period after 91 B.C. The duplication previously assumed for the year of Diokles (215/4) and believed to be clearly attested in *IG II²*, 1706, lines 143–145, when both the *polemarch* and the first *thesmothetes* were thought to be from Aigeis (IV), has now been removed by Pritchett’s reading of the latter’s demotic as Φυλά(στος).⁸ Other cases of possible tribal duplication are discussed in detail by Dow⁹ and by Tracy;¹⁰ no certain instance of duplication of this type is attested by any of the lists of *archontes*. In no case has true deme duplication (as opposed to two representatives from two halves of a deme split between two tribes) been seriously suggested.

The possibility of restoring Hoplon’s name in *IG II²*, 2323, line 99 cannot carry much weight. The succeeding rubric in this inscription (in line 100) has been assigned to the archonship of Hagnias¹¹ because it seems to require the restoration of a very short name for the archon. This assignment is obviously very speculative, and, as Ruck has noted, the

⁷ S. Dow, “The Lists of Athenian *Archontes*,” *Hesperia* 3, 1934 (pp. 140–190), pp. 179–180.

⁸ W. K. Pritchett, “The Composition of the Tribes Antigonis and Demetrias,” *AJP* 61, 1940 (pp. 186–193), pp. 192–193.

⁹ Dow (footnote 7 above), p. 181.

¹⁰ S. V. Tracy, “Athens in 100 B.C.,” *HSCP* 83, 1979 (pp. 211–235), pp. 221–222.

¹¹ Whose archonship is dated to 216/5 on the basis of *IG II²*, 1706, line 131: Ἄρχ[ι] [‘Α]γ[υ]νία[ς] Ἐρχε.

vertical placement of *IG II*², 2323, fragment F (on which these lines appear) within the first column cannot be determined.¹²

The archonship of Hoplon should, therefore, be assigned to some date other than 217/6. On the basis of our present inadequate knowledge of the archon list for the last half of the 3rd century B.C., the precise year cannot be determined. Vanderpool's choice of 217/6 was conditioned by his desire to find a vacant year with as short a gap as possible before Hoplon's service on the Asklepieion commission in 215/4. Now that 217/6 has been shown to be improbable, the next vacant year is 223/2. Two prytany decrees have been assigned to this year.¹³ For the first of these no portion of the dating formulae has been preserved. For the second, the archon's name should occupy 6 to 8 spaces in the genitive;¹⁴ Hoplon's name fits neatly.

One further, somewhat speculative note may be added to our record about this rather elusive Athenian archon. It is probable that he is to be identified with the "Οπλ[ων] who made a dedication to Asklepios in or before the year 245/4 B.C. of a body, presumably of silver, whose weight has been lost (*IG II*², 1534B, line 294, where examination of the stone reveals a quarter of the left diagonal of lambda at the end of the line after the certain pi read by Koehler and Kirchner). The name "Οπλων is rare; the archon-commissioner is the only known person of that name at Athens. Assigning his archonship to 223/2 allows a more realistic reconstruction of his activities in the Boule of the Areiopagos than does Vanderpool's chronology, which gives only one year between his joining that body and his service as commissioner at the Asklepieion. Thus it would seem that he made a dedication for continued health as a relatively young man, perhaps in his twenties, served as archon when somewhat older, probably in his forties or fifties, and, a few years later, helped supervise the melting and re-casting of dedications from the same sanctuary where he had made a dedication as a younger man.¹⁵

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¹² C. A. P. Ruck, *IG II*² 2323: *The List of the Victors in Comedies at the Dionysia*, Leiden 1967, p. 7.

¹³ *Agora XV*, no. 127 and *IG II*², 917+ (= *Agora XV*, no. 128).

¹⁴ Meritt and Traill (*Agora XV*, no. 128) estimate the archon's name at 9–10 letters. Examination of the text, however, reveals a strong taper, and the *Agora XV* restorations of the first decree on this stone require a significantly shorter line (ca. 44–45 spaces, counting iota as a half space) than the ca. 48 spaces given as the line length by the editors.

¹⁵ I would like to thank J. S. Ryshpan, M. W. Eisenbraun, S. V. Tracy, and especially R. S. Stroud for their encouragement in the preparation of this article. Any errors which remain are, of course, the responsibility of the author.