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Source: *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (July-September 2010), pp. 417-422

Published by: [The American School of Classical Studies at Athens](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40981056)

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A PRYTANY DEDICATION FROM ATHENS FOUND AT CORINTH

ABSTRACT

A fragmentary inscription found at Corinth during the 1965 excavation season (I 2649) refers to the ὑπογραμματεὺς (undersecretary) Eisidotos and an ἀντιγραφεὺς (copy clerk). The inscription is here identified as a prytany dedication from Athens dating between ca. A.D. 164 and 168/9.

Presented below is the *editio princeps* of a fragmentary Greek inscription that was found during excavations at Corinth in 1965, but which is undoubtedly a prytany dedication of Athenian provenance.¹ While the Athenian origin of this stone will be disappointing for students of Corinthian politics, history, and epigraphy, nevertheless it is important to note that this fragment offers no evidence for the office of ὑπογραμματεὺς (undersecretary) at Corinth, as had previously been thought.² On the positive side, it does provide more evidence for the ὑπογραμματεὺς Eisidotos at Athens, whose career ran between ca. A.D. 164 and 168/9.

I 2649: FRAGMENT OF A PRYTANY DEDICATION

Corinth I 2649

Fig. 1

P.H. 0.125 (preserved surface 0.115), p.W. 0.200 (preserved surface 0.145); Th. 0.049 m

L.H. 0.008–0.011 m; interspace 0.013–0.018 m

A very pale brown (Munsell 10YR 8/2) marble fragment with gray (10YR 5/1) and brown (10YR 5/3) veins, probably of a stele, that is broken to the right, to the left, and below, but appears to be preserved at the top.³ The back, which has been picked, also appears to be original. A determined chiseler has extensively and deeply scarred the inscribed surface in a diagonal

1. I examined this stone in the Old Museum at Corinth on July 14, 2009. I would like to thank Guy Sanders, Director of the Corinth Excavations, for giving me permission to publish it, and the anonymous *Hesperia* reviewers

for their helpful comments. I would also like to thank John Traill for taking a look at an early version of this article and making many good suggestions. For more on prytany dedications at Athens, see Dow 1937;

Geagan 1967, pp. 92–116; *Agora* XV.

2. See Stroud 1972, p. 199, n. 4.

3. It is possible that the stone was recut before it was reused, and consequently the upper edge may not be the original edge.



Figure 1. Corinth I 2649. Scale 1:2.
Photo courtesy Corinth Excavations

pattern from lower right to upper left, probably for plastering and reuse, making the text difficult to read. The stone was found at Corinth on July 26, 1965, outside a large house of the Early Roman period that was excavated at the northwest corner of Temple E. The inventory card in the Corinth Museum notes that the fill of this wall was “uninformative.”⁴

Corinth notebook 312, p. 59. See Anderson 1967, p. 11; Stroud 1972, p. 199, n. 4.

A.D. 165/6 (or slightly earlier)–168/9		Non-stoich.
Lost Left Column(s)	Right Column	
[<i>nonnulli versus perditū</i>]	ὑπογραμμ[ατεὺς]	1
[-----]	Εἰσίδοτος Ὡ Μ[α(θώνιος)]	
[-----]	ἀντιγραφεὺς Ν[-----]	
[-----]	Μ[.]ΙΝ[-----]	4
[-----]	[-----]	

APPARATUS CRITICUS

LOST LEFT COLUMN(S)

Other Athenian prytany dedications of this time period begin with a heading that contains the archon-dating formula, followed by columns inscribed with the names of the prytaneis (under tribal rubrics), and finally

4. The museum card reports that the fragment was found “outside the house, while cleaning Wall 5, fill uninformative, Basket 5.” See Anderson 1967, pp. 7–8, for a brief description and drawing of wall 5. The narrative of Anderson (1967, p. 11) might imply that the stone was found in the Late Roman “hard fill” of wall 3 along with Corinth I 2647 and I 2648, but the

information on the museum card for I 2649 argues against this view. Someone sketched the following diplomatic text on the back of the museum card:

Υ Π Ο Γ Ρ Α Μ Μ [Α Τ Ε Ω Σ]
 ↙ line appears to stop here
 Ε Σ Ι Δ Ο Τ Ο Ν
 Α Ν Τ Ι Π Ρ Ω Υ Σ Ν
 Μ Ι Ν Δ Ο

the names of the ἀΐστοι such as the undersecretary and copy clerk.⁵ If this is the original upper edge, as it appears to be, the decree and the names of the prytaneis and the other ἀΐστοι should have appeared to the left in one or more columns that are now lost.

RIGHT COLUMN

Line 2: A chisel has obliterated all but the upper tip of the first iota's hasta. In the tenth letter-space we have the homonymous patronym sign, \mathcal{O} , followed by an empty space. The entire left vertical and the upper third and lower foot of the M's right vertical are extant, while the central part has been scraped away.

Line 3: Only a small part of the gamma's vertical at the foot is preserved along with the right tip of the horizontal; since the stone is damaged to the right, in theory it could also be a Π . The left side and upper right corner of the Φ 's broad oval are visible and there is a piece of the vertical hasta at the bottom in the center, thus precluding any other letter. The twelfth letter at the end of the line preserves the lower half and upper tip of a vertical hasta along with a small piece of the diagonal starting downward of what I think is most consistent with a N; it could also be a M. For more on the implications of this reading for the date of the inscription, see below.

Line 4: The M at the beginning of the line is followed by a damaged area and then the upper tip of a vertical hasta (this could be the right hasta of a wide letter such as H or N), then a complete vertical hasta that looks as if it could only be an I, and then the N. After the N, the stone is so abraded that it is difficult to say whether the traces belong to letters or are the result of stray damage similar to that on the rest of the stone, and thus my hesitancy to indicate text here. If they are the traces of letters, after the N there is a damaged letter space followed by a slightly rounded diagonal. It appears this was read as Δ on the back of the museum card (see n. 4), but the angle and slightly roundish shape do not match the profile of the Δ in line 2, nor could I see any of the three corners or any of the right or lower sides. The roundish shape also does not match that of the Os or Φ found elsewhere on the stone. Perhaps it is a very oblong Ω —there may even be the beginning of a left foot at the bottom of the visible stroke. The other possibility is that it is the vertical and beginning of the right branch of an Y. After this there appears to be the upper quarter of a vertical hasta. Following this are two damaged letter spaces (the museum card appears to have an \mathcal{O} in this space, and in Figure 1 there is a shadow of what may be the right side of a loop, but I could not see it on the stone and it is too faint in the photograph to be certain). Finally, there is a diagonal whose steep character is most suited to a X. In sum, if all the traces belong to letter strokes, read: M[.]IIN[.] Ω ! [.]X[- -].

Given that the lost end of line 3 provided room for only three or four letters (if consistent with the lines above), line 4 probably continued with the rest of the name or the demotic of the ἀντιγραφεύς in line 3. However, the reading of line 4 is further complicated by the fact that in this period many abbreviations are employed for names (especially Roman), offices, and demotics.

5. For examples of this layout in contemporary dedications, see *Agora XV*, nos. 359, 360, 363, 364, 368, 369, 371, and 373. The fragment from Corinth cannot belong to the missing right edge of *Agora XV*, no. 359, since the thicknesses of these stones vary, unless both the upper edge and the back of the Corinthian example were cut for reuse, which appears unlikely.

TRANSLATION

Undersecretary,
Eisidotos (son of Eisidotos) of M[arathon].
Copy clerk, N(?)[- -]

DATE

It has previously been assumed that this document was of Corinthian origin,⁶ but it is all but certain that the stone comes from Athens. The name Eisidotos is not attested at Corinth or in the Peloponnese,⁷ while it is ubiquitous in Attica.⁸ In addition, the offices of ὑπογραμματεὺς and ἀντιγραφεὺς are also not otherwise attested at Corinth; in fact, they appear on the same stone in close proximity to each other only on Athenian examples. Finally, Eisidotos the son of Eisidotos from the deme of Marathon appears as the ὑπογραμματεὺς along with various ἀντιγραφεῖς on a series of prytany dedications from Athens—even the homonymous patronym sign Δ is employed with his name in three examples.⁹ Thus, it is altogether likely that this stone is of Athenian origin and that we are dealing with the same Eisidotos who served as undersecretary of the prytaneis from A.D. 165/6 (or a little earlier) to 168/9.¹⁰

Further refinements to this span of years can be made on the basis of names of other copy clerks (ἀντιγραφεῖς) with whom Eisidotos served. These names, or parts of names, appear in five other inscriptions: *Agora XV*, no. 367 (A.D. 165/6 or a little earlier),¹¹ when Eisidotos served as undersecretary with a copy clerk whose name in line 4 began with Λα[- -]; *Agora XV*, no. 369 (A.D. 166/7), when he was undersecretary with a copy clerk whose name in line 63 ended in -της (restored as [Πολι(?)]της); *Agora XV*, no. 371 (A.D. 167/8), when he served with the copy clerk Δημοσθένης Δ Σουνιεύς (lines 73–74); finally, *Agora XV*, nos. 372 and 373 (A.D. 168/9), when he served his last year of office with the copy clerk Ὠρά(ριος) Ἀλκίμαχος Λαμπτρέυς (lines 33 and 45, respectively).¹²

If our reading of Ν[- -] is correct for the beginning of the name of the copy clerk in line 3, and if the readings, supplements, and dates of all the *Agora XV* examples of copy clerks who served with Eisidotos are correct, then the Corinth specimen requires a new year in which to fit, either A.D. 165/6 or shortly before that year, depending on the year occupied by *Agora XV*, no. 367. On the other hand, if the uncertain reading of Ν[- -] in line 3 of our example and the uncertain reading of ΛΑ[- -] in line 4 of

6. See Anderson 1967, p. 11; Stroud 1972, p. 199, n. 4.

7. See *LGPN IIIA* and the Packard Humanities Institute website at <http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions/main>. The alternate form Ἰσίδοτος is also not attested at Corinth or in the Peloponnese.

8. See *LGPN II*, pp. 239–240, s.v. Ἰσίδοτος, where 173 examples are given as coming from Athens.

9. *Agora XV*, no. 367, line 9; no. 372, lines 36–37; no. 373, line 48.

10. *LGPN II*, p. 240, s.v. Ἰσίδοτος, no. 59.

11. In his *editio princeps*, Raubitschek (1943, pp. 76–78, no. 23) dated this inscription to 165/6 or a little earlier. Markellos Mitsos's examination of the stone allowed Notopoulos (1949, p. 13) to fix the date to the year 165/6. Clinton (1974, pp. 121–122),

however, reexamined the stone and questioned Mitsos's reading and thus Notopoulos's date, and so the date reverted back to Raubitschek's 165/6 or a little before.

12. For a convenient list of the dates of these inscriptions, see *Agora XV*, p. 20; Clinton 1974, pp. 121–122; Traill 1974, p. 154; Follet 1976, pp. 494–495.

Agora XV, no. 367, are actually the damaged beginning of the same man's name, we cannot rule out a date coterminous with *Agora XV*, no. 367. Nor can we even rule out a date equal to *Agora XV*, no. 369 (A.D. 166/7), if the Ν[- -] in line 3 of our example and the [- -]της in line 63 of *Agora XV*, no. 369, are the damaged remnants of one and the same man's name.

COMMENTARY

While the office of ὑπογραμματεὺς appears immediately before the ἀντιγραφεὺς on this stone, in other examples of prytany dedications it appears at some point shortly after the ἀντιγραφεὺς; an exception is *Agora XV*, no. 311, where the ὑπογραμματεὺς appears first, followed by a λειτουργός, the γραμματεὺς, and then the ἀντιγραφεὺς. Thus, the arrangement of these two offices on the newly identified example is unique. This arrangement is probably insignificant, however, since the other customary offices listed in this time period show no absolute fixed order—even among the other preserved examples naming Eisidotos (*Agora XV*, nos. 367, 369, 371, 372, and 373), the offices listed and their arrangement vary.

Finally, it is worth noting that the only other two prytany dedications found outside of Attica were also found at Corinth: *Agora XV*, no. 282 (ca. 45–30 B.C.), last seen on Acrocorinth in 1833; and *Agora XV*, no. 342 (= *IG II² 1779*), which was last seen by Milchhöfer in 1878, reused as a well curb in the eastern part of New Corinth.¹³ Given the relatively close proximity of Corinth to Athens, the sheer number of Athenian prytany dedications, and the lack of other evidence for a tradition of erecting Athenian prytany dedications outside of Attica,¹⁴ it is more plausible to presume that all three are *pierres errantes* rather than Athenian dedications at Corinth.

In sum, while our hopes of learning something new about Corinthian political institutions and history from an epigraphical source are once again frustrated,¹⁵ Corinth I 2649 is an interesting example of a *pierre errante* that offers new evidence concerning the career of the undersecretary Eisidotos at Athens.

13. Milchhöfer 1879, p. 160. One of the anonymous *Hesperia* reviewers pointed out that I 2649 and *Agora XV*, no. 342, are of roughly the same date and may belong together. Unfortunately, *Agora XV*, no. 342, appears to be lost so there is no way to be certain. In addition to these Athenian prytany dedications found at Corinth, Dow (1942, pp. 110–111, no. 5) identified the inscriber of *Corinth VIII.1*, no. 5, a proxy decree, as the same Athenian mason who inscribed *IG II² 910* (confirmed as the “I 247 Cutter” of 194/3–148/7 B.C. by Tracy [1990, pp. 103, 108]). However, *Corinth VIII.1*, no. 5, is not a *pierre errante* since the inscription specifies that it is to be set up by the Peirene spring in Corinth.

14. Several prytany dedications have been found in Attica on the outskirts of Athens, including *Agora XV*, no. 5, found in Magoula (22 km northwest of Athens); *Agora XV*, no. 45, found in the village of Pikermi (19 km east of Athens); *Agora XV*, no. 312, found in the village of Ambelaki on the island of Salamis (16 km west of Athens) but now in the Musée du Louvre; *Agora XV*, nos. 333, 334, from the Monastery of Daphni (11 km northwest of Athens); *Agora XV*, no. 402, in Marousi (11 km northeast of Athens); *Agora XV*, no. 423, at Eleusis (20 km northwest of Athens); *Agora XV*, no. 443, set into the court of the Church of St. Andreas in the town of Koulouri on the island of Salamis; *Agora XV*, no. 479, inscribed

on a cliff at the foot of Mount Arapis on Salamis. There are others that were found in Athens but are now housed elsewhere: *Agora XV*, no. 16, was copied by Perdrizet in Athens, but is now in the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; *Agora XV*, no. 251, was in the collection of D. M. Robinson, from which it was transferred to the Fogg Museum at Harvard University; *Agora XV*, no. 303, was found on the south slope of the Acropolis, but is now in the Historical Museum of Kherson, Ukraine.

15. For the legendary paucity of Corinthian inscriptions, see Dow 1942, pp. 89–90; Pouilloux 1966, p. 366; Stroud 1972, p. 198.

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