

Attic Text Reflecting the Influence of Cleopatra

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A COLUMN with two inscriptions was discovered in the Attic deme of Teithras and published by J. J. Politt, who on the basis of the lettering dated the first inscription, the one in which we are here interested, to the second half of the first century B.C.¹ The second inscription, two or three generations later perhaps, records a dedication to Isis,² who is presumably “the goddess” mentioned in the last line of the first inscription. Taken together, the two inscriptions attest a hitherto unknown sanctuary of Isis.

The importance of our text, the first on the column, lies primarily in the evidence it provides for the acceptance of the cult of Isis. The cult is not simply tolerated but protected like one of the Athenian state itself. Violation of this protection becomes a basis for legal action as *asebeia* in the Council. The date would surely fall before the Battle of Actium and probably in or soon after 37 B.C., when Antony married Cleopatra, the New Isis, who fostered the image by appearing on state occasions in the garb of Isis.³ Many like Vergil were to see the coming struggle with Antony as one between the gods of Rome and the gods of Egypt. Political hopes and fears received a religious expression. The

¹ J. J. Politt, “The Egyptian Gods in Attica: Some Epigraphical Evidence,” *Hesperia* 34 (1965) 125–130 with photographs. The letters, he says, are “very similar to those in an Attic ephobic inscription dating from the year 38/37 B.C.”

² The unrelated second inscription on the column reads as follows:

Δημόφιλος	βαστάζων τὸν
Διονυσίου	6 ἡγεμόνα τοὺς
3 Σουμειὺς	κανκέλλους
ὁ καὶ Δάφνος	Ἴσιδι ἀνέθηκ[ε]

Is the phrase in lines 5–6 a reference to the lifting of the head of the first ox, τὸν ἡγεμόνα (βοῦν), to be sacrificed? Compare SIG³ 717, lines 10–11, ἤραστο δὲ καὶ τοῖς μυστηρίοις τοὺς βοῦς ἐν Ἐλευσίῃ τῇ θυσίαι.

³ E. Bevan, *A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* (London 1927) 370–377.

Athenians who publicized their devotion to Isis were committed also to the New Isis and her consort.

Secondly, the inscription raises questions concerning the position of the Council of the Six Hundred. Politt did not dare restore βου] | λήν at the end of line 13, but the restoration is certain as comparison with SIG³ 147, line 35, and 204, line 83, and with ATL 2, D 7, lines 35–39, shows (in all these the adjective κυρία refers to the Council). The Demos had left the entire regulation of the sanctuary to the discretion of the Council, and what we have is the *dogma* of the Council after the latter was empowered to make all arrangements. How often did the Council assume control of a sanctuary and have to be asked for permission to set up a dedication?⁴

Though he usually has found the meaning, Politt has made two errors which should be corrected. First, he has recognized the right procedure but restored the wrong word in line 9 for the initiation of legal action. The term was *endeixis*, not *phasis*, when an Athenian spoke of a denunciation before the basileus. Prosecution for *asebeia* on the basis of an *endeixis* to the basileus is actually attested in an Athenian inscription of the first century,⁵ as well as in Classical literature.

Secondly, Politt has restored the *ὅπως* clause in lines 18–19 without a verb. Surely a verb is indispensable.

The following text corrects some flaws and includes new readings by D. J. Geagan (*per epistulas*) in lines 1, 2 and 12 and new restorations by the author:

[-----]
 [----- *I]σιδι [κ]α[ι] μῆ [-----]
 [-----]ας προσιδρυσάτω[σαν -----]
 [-----]ετω τὸ παρὰ ταῦτα [-----]
 [-----]οίως δὲ μῆτ' ἐν τ[-----]
 5 [-----]ενα· εἰ δὲ μῆ, ὀφιλέτωσαν κα[.....]
 [-----]καὶ ἔνοχοι ἔστωσαν τῇ ἀσεβήα [.....]
 [-----]ων, μῆ ἐξέστω δὲ ζακορεύν δ[ἰς τῷ αὐ]
 [τῷ· ἐὰν δέ τι]ς παρὰ ταῦτα πράξη ἢ βιάσηται, ἔστω κ[ατ' αὐτοῦ]
 [ἐνδειξι]ς πρὸς τὴν βουλήν καὶ τὸν βασιλέα Ἀθή[νησιν]

⁴ For a survey of the evidence, see Daniel J. Geagan, *The Athenian Constitution after Sulla* (forthcoming as *Hesperia Supplement*).

⁵ F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1962) no. 15, first published by J. H. Oliver, *Hesperia* 10 (1941) 65–72.

- 10 [τῷ βουλομέ]νω οἷς ἔξεστιν· κωλυέτωσαν δὲ καὶ τ[ῶν ταῦ]
 [τα παρε]ληλυθότων ὅσους ἂν ἐπιγνώσιν ν εἰσ[ιέναι ἰς]
 [τὰ εὐσε]βῆ τῶν θεῶν ν ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἀνατιθ[έντας]
 [ἰδρύμ]α[τα] χωρὶς τοῦ αἰτήσασθαι τὴν πάντων κυρί[αν βου]
 λήν· ἀναγραφάτωσαν δὲ οἱ εἰσενέγκαντες τόδε [τὸ δόγ]
 15 μα ἐν τῇ παραστάδι τῆ<ς> στοᾶς ἢ οὐδ' ἂν <αὐ>τοῖς φαί[νηται]
 ἐπιτήδηον εἶναι πρὸς τὸ μένιν εἰς τὸν πάν[τα χρόνον]
 τὰ δόξαντα τῇ βουλή· τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐν σανίδι λε[λευκω]
 μένη καὶ παραδότω<σ>αν τῷ ἱερὶ ὅπως ἐκκείμενον [ἔχῃ]
 τῆς ἡμέρας πρὸ τοῦ ναοῦ, ἵνα τούτων συντελου[μέ]
 20 νων φαίνεται ἢ βουλή πλίστην πρόνοιαν ποιουμέν[η]
 τῆς πρὸς τὴν θεὸν εὐσεβείας

RESTORATIONS: 1 *Ι]σιδι Σαρ[άπι]δι Politt, [κ]α[ι] μῆ Oliver. 2 Oliver. 4 Politt. 5 μῆ Oliver, μῆ Politt. 6 Politt. 7 Oliver. 8 αὐτῷ et κ[ατ'] αὐτοῦ Oliver; ἐὰν δέ τι]ς et κ[ατὰ αὐ]τοῦ Politt. 9 ἐνδειξι]ς Oliver, φάσι]ς Politt; Ἄθῃ[νησιν] Politt. 10 initio Politt. 10/11 τ[ῶν ταῦ]τα Oliver, τ[ούτους | τῶν παρε]ληλυθότων Politt. 11 fine εἰσ[ιέναι ἰς] Oliver, εἰσ[ελθεῖν] Politt. 12 [τὰ εὐσε]βῆ Oliver, [τὸ ἱερ]όν et ἀνατιθ[έντας] Politt. 13 [ἰδρύμ]α[τα] et βου]|λήν Oliver; κυρί[αν] Politt. 14 Politt. 15 ΤΗΣΤΟΑΣ lapis; ἂν <αὐ>τοῖς Oliver, ἂν τοῖς Politt. 16–17 Politt. 18 παραδότω<σ>αν Politt, ΠΑΡΑΔΟΤΩΞΑΝ lapis; [ἔχῃ] Oliver, [δι' ἕκασ] Politt. 19–20 Politt.

Line 1: Geagan considers the restoration Σαρ[άπι]δι highly unlikely and reads *MH*.

Line 7: The *zakoros* at Athens is well known in the cult of Asclepius,⁶ where tenure may have been limited to one term. On Delos the *zakoros* is prominent in the cult of the Egyptian Gods,⁷ and the office could be held repeatedly.⁸

Line 12: Geagan's reading,]βῆ, eliminates Politt's restoration [τὸ ἱερ]όν and concomitantly the identification of the sanctuary as legally that of the Egyptian Gods rather than of Isis alone. With the prohibition εἰσ[ιέναι ἰς τὰ εὐσε]βῆ τῶν θεῶν for those guilty of sacrilege, compare the Pergamene text, SIG³ 1219 = Sokolowski,

⁶ TAPA 71 (1940) 388; IG II² 3798–99, 3804, 3962–64, 4466, 4477, 4481, 4486–87, 4514, 4521a, 4821, perhaps also 5158. For the less known Athenian ζάκορος τῶν φείων εἰκόνων see L. Robert, "Recherches épigraphiques," REA 62 (1960) 316–324.

⁷ Inscriptions de Délos 2080–81, 2087–88, 2094, 2104, 2153–56, 2160, 2204–05, 2209–10, 2212–13, 2218.

⁸ Inscriptions de Délos 2205, dated after 88/7 B.C.: ζακορέοντος Εὐόδου τὸ ὀκτῶ καὶ δέκατον.

Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure no. 16, lines 25–27: *καὶ μὴ ὄσιον αὐταῖς εἶναι, ὡς ἀσεβοῦσαις, θύειν μῆθενι θεῶν ἐπὶ δέκα ἔτη.*

Lines 18–19: The text on a whitened board⁹ is to be given to the priest¹⁰ “so that he may have it on view daily in front of the temple.”

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⁹ For the use of a whitened board see the examples cited by Adolf Wilhelm, *Beiträge zur griechischen Inschriftenkunde* (= *Sonderschriften des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien* 7 [1909]) 249–257, and by editors of the *Tabula Hebana* (*AJP* 75 [1954] 225–249), which in line 20–21 reads: *tabulas dealbatas in quib(us) nomina candidatorum scripta sint, quo loco commo[dissime legi] possint, ponendas curet*. See also *ATL* 2, D 7, line 44, and D 8, line 14. My wife adds the material on Delos cited by J. H. Kent, *Hesperia* 17 (1948) 243f.

¹⁰ This priesthood may well be that of the *ἱερεὺς στολιστῆς Ἰσιδος καὶ Σεράπιδος* known from *IG II²* 12318. On the other hand, the dedication to Isis, *IG II²* 4702, dated by priest and *zakoros*, may have come originally from Delos; in any case it was in modern times discovered at Athens and does not pertain to the sanctuary at Teithras.