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## INDEX

Antti Arjava	Jerome and Women	5
Jaakko Aronen	Il culto arcaico nel <i>Tarentum</i> a Roma e la <i>gens Valeria</i>	19
Christer Bruun	The Name and Possessions of Nero's Freedman Phaon	41
Björn Forsén - Erkki Sironen	Zur Symbolik von dargestellten Händen	55
Siegfried Jäkel	Thukydides als Historiker und Literat	67
Iiro Kajanto	A Humanist Credo	91
Mika Kajava	Cornelia Africana f. Gracchorum	119
Bengt Löfstedt	Notizen eines Latinisten zum Leviathan von Thomas Hobbes	133
Leena Pietilä-Castrén	Scenes of Ancient Rome in a 19th Century Souvenir	145
Olli Salomies	Zu Konsuln der Jahre 115, 135, 195 n. Chr.	165
Erkki Sironen	New Readings on Four Athenian Inscriptions of the Imperial Period	179
Timo Sironen	Una rilettura e un'integrazione di due epigrafi osche di Ercolano (Po 124 e 126)	185
Heikki Solin	Analecta epigraphica CXXVI-CXXXII	195
Antero Tammisto	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i> and <i>Phasianus colchicus</i> in Romano-Campanian Wall Paintings and Mosaics	223
W.S. Watt	Six Notes on Q. Curtius	249
De novis libris iudicia		253
Index librorum in hoc volumine recensorum		309
Libri nobis missi		313
Index		

# New Readings on Four Athenian Inscriptions of the Imperial Period

Erkki Sironen

In the following a short series of new readings is presented on four Athenian inscriptions, which will not be included in my forthcoming collection of Late Roman inscriptions from Attica.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. IG II<sup>2</sup> 5210 (Fig. 1)

This piece of an epistyle of white Pentelic marble in the National Garden in Athens lies less than 100 yards north of the Zappeion entrance,<sup>2</sup> together with additional architectural members belonging to it. The epistyle itself has been broken on the left side, while the right side has been smoothly cut, possibly for reuse. The bottom is broken, the upper part has suffered partial damage, but the back seems to be original, roughly tooled. On top, four asymmetrical sockets for joining are visible.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The revised edition of some 100 pagan inscriptions dating between ca. A.D. 267-529 will be part of a series published by the Finnish Institute at Athens.

<sup>2</sup> It bears the inventory number 13 in the archives of the Third Ephory. I wish to thank the Ephory for their aid, and for granting me permission to republish the inscription.

<sup>3</sup> Preserved width 147 cm, preserved height 54 cm, original thickness 53 cm. Letter height in l. 1 varies between 8-8,8 cm, whereas in l. 2 (only E preserves the full height of a letter) letter height is 7,4 cm. L. 1 has been

The text of this inscription has been edited at least three times,<sup>4</sup> with the identical reading δημαρχικῆς ἐξουσίας τὸ θ'. Dittenberger maintained it belonged to an imperial inscription and to a building rather than to a mere honorary type of inscription or to a prescript of an imperial letter, based on the fallacious presumption of its being executed on one single line.

The archaeological members, including columns and entablature, are referred to in a study by C.C. Vermeule as belonging to a tiny building, perhaps a small stoa or portico, constructed by the Emperor Antoninus Pius.<sup>5</sup> The reading, however, has not been revised. I propose to read the two lines as follows:

δημαρχικῆς ἐξουσίας τὸ θ'  
] καὶ Φαυστείνης θεᾶς

Faustina could refer to the consort of either Antoninus Pius or Marcus Aurelius. Until the present, reference to Marcus Aurelius has been considered improbable as Aurelius was only a Caesar under Antoninus Pius at the time of his ninth term as tribune in A.D. 154/155. Antoninus Pius' ninth term coincides with A.D. 145/146, when Faustina the Elder had been dead for six years, for which we would expect a titulature καὶ θεᾶς

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carved in the upper part of the inscribed surface, with a *vacat* of 6,3-6,5 cm above the letters and 9 cm below the letters. L. 2 is even nearer to its top with only 4,8 cm left free above the letters, except for Φ, which runs up all the way to the top of the lower (and presumably smaller) inscribed surface. Note the downwards slipping of the last two letters on l. 1, in an imperial inscription of otherwise high workmanship.

<sup>4</sup> Arch. Anz. Nr. 148 (April 1861, 179\*) in Arch. Zeitung 1861, by Ad. Michaelis; IG III 391 (1878) by Dittenberger on the basis of Velsen's copy; IG II<sup>2</sup> 5210 by J. Kirchner.

<sup>5</sup> C.C. Vermeule, Roman Imperial Art in Greece and Asia Minor, Cambridge 1968, 268, 431.

Φαυστείνῃ rather than καὶ Φαυστείνῃ [θεᾶ. So I would prefer to say that we have here Faustina the Younger, the daughter of Antoninus and newly wedded wife of Marcus Aurelius.<sup>6</sup> I would also regard this inscription as an honorary one, dedicated to the Emperor Antoninus Pius and his family members. A close parallel for this is IG X 2,1,36. There are also several other buildings in Athens associated with Antoninus Pius.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. Peek, Attische Versinschriften 126 (Figs. 2 and 3)

The three fragments of two separate sepulchral inscriptions of white Pentelic marble kept in the Epigraphical Museum<sup>8</sup> were edited by W. Peek as belonging to a single gravestone. EM 3671 (=Epigraphical Museum) and EM 2251 were joined by Peek, to which M. Mitsos had added another fragment, EM 3325. They do not, however, belong to the same tombstone, because the back of EM 3325 is roughly tooled, unlike EM 3671+2251, which is smooth and has marble which is less flakey in quality. The

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<sup>6</sup> I wish to thank Mr. M. Kajava for elucidating imperial women's titlature. The end of l. 2 could have either θεᾶ or Σεβαστῆ or θεᾶ Σεβαστῆ. (Note that the title Σεβαστή is documented for Faustina the Younger before her official elevation as *Augusta* on 1 December 147, cf. L. Vidman, *Fasti Ost.*<sup>2</sup> Pb 147,15 [+ p. 128]). Most probably Marcus Aurelius was mentioned in the beginning of l. 2.

<sup>7</sup> See C.C. Vermeule, *op. cit.* 266-268 and 431 (CIL III 549, IG II<sup>2</sup> 3183 and 3391).

<sup>8</sup> I wish to thank Dr. Peppa-Delmuzu and her assistant Dr. Charapa-Molisani of the Epigraphical Museum, along with the staff of the Museum for granting me permission to republish the inscriptions on the stones in the Museum, and for finding the (previously uninventoried) fragment EM 3325.

thickness also differs, being 3,5 cm and 4,2 cm respectively.<sup>9</sup> I propose a new reading as follows:

-----  
 [x] ΑCΠΙ[-] με, τῆ[δε]  
 κείμεν[ο]ν μάθε[]  
 ἄλλο  
 ἄνθρωπε π[α]ῦσαι τοῦ λέγειν  
 5 [x]Η [-] Α  
 [x - - - x - -]ΩC  
 -----

It is theoretically possible to keep Peek's τῆ[δ' ὑπό-] as the prefix of the verb, but to me τῆ[δε] with the basic κείμεν[ο]ν sounds better and makes better sense than ὑπό | κειμε· π[ᾶ]ν μάθες. As to the form μάθε without C that Peek reads, it appears to me that the stone was damaged just after E at some time in the distant past. All the restorations done by Peek must remain as mere *exempli gratia* restorations, although there is no doubt that we have here the end of one epitaph and the beginning of another on the same tombstone. The date is hard to establish with any certainty, but I would guess it could be anything between the second and fourth century A.D.

EM 3325 does not entirely match the paleography of the preceding inscription: A, not considered by Peek, has a straight

<sup>9</sup> The additional dimensions for EM 3671+2251 are: height 12 cm, width 31,2 cm (only right edge original, slightly damaged). Letter height varies between 1,1-1,7 cm, the space between ll. varies between 0,6-0,9 cm. The end of the iambic trimeter seems to be inserted in l. 2 (probably also in line 5) by at least 4,5 cm to the right. This is also reflected in the right end of ll. 2 and 5, which end ca. 10 and 15 cm from the right edge, whereas ll. 4 and 6 are only 2-2,5 cm from the edge, representing the middle of the verse. For the dimensions of EM 3325, see n. 10 below.

right leg; N and Ω also differ slightly. The letter height of this minute fragment varies between 1,2-1,3 cm.<sup>10</sup>

— — — —  
 ]A[  
 ]NEN ζωοι[ or ]N ἐν ζωοῖ[σι]

This inscription is possibly metrical, as it seems to be an epitaph, datable to the second to fourth century A.D.

### 3. Peek, *Attische Versinschriften* 48 (Fig. 4)

Three adjoining fragments of white Pentelic marble<sup>11</sup> show the beginning of an at least 9-line poem, an honorary or dedicatory inscription in three fragmentary distichs. The left edge of the slab seems to be original, though battered. The upper edge is partially preserved, but the other edges of the stone have been broken. Shallow guide lines are visible. The most remarkable new reading concerns the dubious restoration of [Κρ]ῆ[τα (sic!) by Peek in the first line. I read as follows:

<sup>10</sup> Other dimensions: height 7,7 cm, width 11 cm, space between ll. 1 cm. The fragment is broken all around and has a space of 3,8 cm of unscribed face below the second line, suggesting that this was the last line on the stone. Further proof of this is the trace of an ornamental figure on the bottom left corner of the fragment.

<sup>11</sup> EM 2387+5469+5470. Height 20,2 cm, width 21,2 cm, thickness 5,2 cm. Letter height varies between 1-1,8 cm, and space between lines from 0,2 to 0,8 cm (no letters surviving in the beginning of l. 8). Top margin of 1,8 cm. The endings of the longer verses (hexameters) in ll. 2, 5 and 8 have an unscribed insertion area of 11,6 cm, more than 12 cm and 12,5 cm to their left.

τηλόσε ΦΡΗ[~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Κέκρο-]  
           πος ἄσ[τυ]  
 Μουκιανὸν κρα[τερὸν ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ x]  
 εἶσε τ[ὸ]ν εὐρίζον[~ ~ ~ ~ ~]  
 5          [...].EINH[?]  
   ἄνθος ἀκή[ρατον] ὄν[τ' ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ x]  
 πρεσβυτ[ατ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~]  
           [- ~]  
 [...]. ΙΑΙ ὦ[~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ x]  
 -----

The beginning of the last line remains obscure, since the exceptionally low letters are fragmentary and may indicate two punctuation marks.<sup>12</sup> When studying the traces of these letters on the actual stone, Peek's [μυ]ρίαι ὦ[ seems untenable. I would presume the date of this inscription to be either the second or the third century A.D.

<sup>12</sup> The groove above the first surviving letters could be stone damage, not an accent, but the mark above Ω definitely denotes spiritus asper.





Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.