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NOTES ON INSCRIPTIONS


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Notes on Inscriptions

Honors at Didyma

I. Didyma 176 records honors for a victor, name now lost, in the boy’s pankration at the Didymeia:

.. Κοίν[το]υ . . . .
oυ Αὐρʹ Πριλ. . . .
νικήσαντα Διδύμεια

4 μειον παιδίον
παγκράτιον
τος Μάρκου

8 Ἀντονίου
Πολέμονος.

These honorary inscriptions are formulaic: ἡ βουλή καὶ ὁ δήμος ἐτίμησεν, name of honorand in the accusative, patronym in the genitive, νικήσαντα τὰ Μεγάλα Διδύμεια, event in the accusative. What appears before νικήσαντα is either the honorand in the accusative or his patronym in the genitive, occasionally a papponym, or in rare instances some other distinction. For the name Πρ- Rehm suggested, quite reasonably, Πρ[ι]ου, Πρ[η]ου, or Πρ[η]σκου. This must be a patronym; were it a papponym we would expect a preceding τοῦ. Reasoning further, we can conclude that Αὐρʹ cannot be the honorand, since the preceding -ου precludes an accusative Αὐρήλιον. Three genitives in a row, then: -ου Αὐρήλιου Πρ[ι]ου, a good Roman name. “The council and people honored Name son of -os Aurelios Pr[...].” Thus, the genitive, Κοίν[το]υ, cannot be right; this person must be the victor, the honorand, and in the accusative. And, we do not expect a bare praenomen, Κοίν[το], here. A problem, then. We also do not expect him to have won the boy’s pankration at the Didymeia. Rather, the Great Didymeia. Another problem.

While the text has drawn scant scholarly attention since its publication, being entirely absent from the indices of both Bulletin épigraphique and SEG, tourists know it. A visitor to Didyma on 22 August 2010 took an excellent photograph of the stone (along with I. Didyma 178, and 504) and posted it to Flickr. The image is helpful in a number of places. In line 1 the kappa of Κοίν[το]υ can be read only with considerable faith; the omicron is perhaps plausible, but if the trace of a hasta after, and close to, the omicron is an iota, then traces of two descendons following it may be spaced too far apart to be the remains of a ni. Whatever Rehm was able to see, ΚΟΙΝ seems a stretch, not impossible but not compelling either; if he saw more than we can, then perhaps something like ΚΟΙ[το]υ.

The start of line 2 might have held one letter, now missing. At the end of line 2 the pi is plausible enough, but the rho seems to me dubious, and Rehm’s four illegible characters are in fact altogether missing.

More important, line 3 very clearly does not read ΝΙΚΗΣΑΝΤΑΔΙΔ, but rather ΝΙΚΗΣΑΝΤΑ[ – – ]. It is also clear that the fourth of the extant lines has been omitted altogether; it reads ΜΕΓΑΛΑΔΙΔ[ – – ]. Perhaps the visual similarity ΜΕΓΑΛΑΔ and ΜΕΙΑΠΑΙΔ, the one atop the other, tripped up the editor, or the typesetter.

1 PHI Greek Inscriptions, in line 2, expands to Αὐρήλιον, represents the unconstrued letter fragment after Πρ as simply illegible, and brackets Rehm’s four illegible letters at the end of line: Πρ[...]: http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions/or?key=247246&bookid=489&region=8&subregion=29.

2 E.g. I. Didyma 1672–6: ἐτίμησεν Αὐρήλιον (Ζωπυριανόν | Διονυσίου τοῦ | Ζωπυριανοῦ νικήσατα; or 169.1–3: ἐτίμησεν Αὐρήλιον Συνεδήμου Β’ νικήσαντα.


Thus, lines 1–5 should read:

[..]ο[..][......]

[?]ον Αὐρ(ηλίου) Π[..]ου]

γικήσαντα τά]

4 Μεγάλα Διδ[ή]-

μεια παιδ[δ][ν]

παγκράτιο[ν]

The identity of our victor in the boy’s pankration is lost, but his father may have had a good Roman name and that was something to boast.5

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Honors at Olympia

IvO 464 records honors awarded to T. Flavius Phylax, son of T. Flavius Alexander, a Thessalian from Hypata and, according to Philostratos, among those better called “laughing-stocks” than sophists worthy of note.6 His brother Phoinix, rated little better, deserving neither admiration nor total contempt, rhythmless, and suited to teaching young, ignorant beginners, prominently entombed at Athens though he was.7 Philostratos does not even mention their father, T. Flavius Alexander, who apparently plied the same trade: the two brothers honored him with a statue at Delphi (now gone), calling him in the inscribed base their father and teacher, and a συνεδρος of the Thessalians.8

Whatever the cause of Philostratos’ disdain, and however clear the prosopography may be,9 the epigraphic footprint of this little family of sophists is muddy. The composition of the text on their father’s Delphic statue base was a mess. CID IV 158 gives:

5 Or, if a space is missing at the start of line two then [?]ον Αὐρ(ηλίου) Π[..]ου could be [τ]ου Αὐρ(ηλίου) Π[..]ου and possibly a papponym.

6 Phil. VS II 604: ἔχει με ο λόγος ἐπ’ ἄνδρα ἐλλογιμώτατον Δαμακίνων τῶν ἐκ τῆς Ἐφέσου, ἔθεν εξομήθησθαι Σάμποιτα τε καὶ Σάμπος καὶ Νικανόρ τοῦ Κύροι τε καὶ Φάλακτος, ἀθυρματα γὰρ τῶν Ἑλλήνων μάλλον οὗτοι προσριφθὲντες ἂν ἡ σοφιστα λόγον ἄξιον. Ἀθυρμα is an ugly word in Philostratus. The sophist Favorinus kept an ἀθυρμα called Autolekythos, an Indian whose faltering and barbarous tongue was a source of (obviously derisive) enjoyment to him and Herodes: ἦν δὲ οὗτος Ἰνδὸς μὲν καὶ ισδανὸς μέλας, ἀθυρμα δὲ Ἴρώδου τε καὶ Φαβορίνου, ἐξωντοικόν τάς ἀυτοῦ διήν γνοκεματιμῆς Ἰνδοῖκος Ἀττικὰ καὶ πεπλανημένη τῇ γλῶσσῃ Βαρβαρίζων (Phil. VS I 490). Perhaps other enjoyments as well; on the sexual connotations of οὐτοκληθῆς see A. Steiner, Private and Public: Links Between Symposium and Syssition in Fifth-Century Athens, ClAnt 21 (2002) 347–390, 367–368; L. Holford-Stevens, Aulus Gallius: An Antoinine Scholar and his Achievement (Oxford 2003) 438; E. K. Borthwick, Autolekythos and Lekythion in Demosthenes and Aristophanes, LCM 18 (1993) 34–37; G. Anderson, ΑΗΚΥΘΙΟΝ and ΑΥΤΟΛΗΚΥΘΟΣ, JHS 101 (1981) 130–132. The claim at VS II 557, that Herodes Atticus called off mourning for Regilla, whom he was alleged to have murdered, after hearing a joke aimed at himself and involving radishes, lest he become a laughing-stock of decent (σπουδαιοί) men, is harder to unpack. For possible sexual undertones see S. B. Pomeroy, The Murder of Regilla: A Case of Domestic Violence in Antiquity (Cambridge, MA 2007) 131; but see L. Holford-Stevens, BMCR 2008.01.44 n. 8, for doubts.

7 Phil. VS II 604: Φαινοί δέ ο θετταλος οὐδέ θυσιμάσαι άξιος, οὐδέ αὐ διαβαλεῖν πάντα, ἦν μὲν γάρ τῶν Φιλάγρω περιστρούτων, γνώναι δέ αμείνων ἢ ἐρμηνεῦσά τε, τάξιν τε γάρ τὸ νοσθὲν εἶχε καὶ οὐθὲν ἐξοι καύρου ἐνοεῖτο, ἤ δὲ ἐρμηνεῖα διεπάσχει μὲν τὸ εἴδοκε καὶ ρηθίμον ἄφεστηκέναι. ἐδοκεὶ δὲ ἔπιπθετος τοις ἄρχομενοις τῶν νέων ἢ τοῖς ἐξ ἤνη κεκτημένους, τά γάρ πρόγεμα γυμνὰ ἐξέκειτο καὶ οὐ περιημπήσαντο αὐτὰ ἢ λέξεις ἐξομήθησαντούτως δὲ ἀποθανον ἀθηνηστὴν ἐκάρση ὡς ἀφανῆς, κεῖται γάρ πρὸς τοῖς ἐκ τῶν πολέμων ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς Ακαδημίανδε καθόδου.

8 CID IV 158 = FD III.4 474 = B. Puech, Orateurs et sophistes grecs dans les inscriptions d’époque impériale (Paris 2002) no. 3.

9 C. P. Jones, Two Friends of Plutarch, BCH 96 (1972) 263–267, 265–267, well argues that this was not the Epicurean Alexander who was friends with Plutarch; J. Pouilloux, Une famille de sophistes thessaliens à Delphes au IIe siècle ap. J.-C., REG 80 (1967) 379–384, and FD III.4 474 p. 157, that he almost certainly was. B. Puech, Prosopographie des amis de Plutarque, ANRW 33.6 (1992) 4831–4893, 4834–4835, and ead., Orateurs et sophistes no. 3 p. 45, is uncommitted, emphasizing, however, Jones’ observation (p. 267) that an Epicurean is not likely to have thought much of sophists. S. Follet, Bull.épigr. (1988) 110, has identified the eponymous the Philistai of the Thessalian koimon, attested in a manumission from Thessalian Echinos dated to 133/4–ca.150 AD, as T. Flavius Alexander: SEG XXXVI 545. Even if he was as old as 60 when he held this position, and if his magistracy fell at the earliest end of the spectrum, he would have been a full 30 years younger than Plutarch. The later his magistracy and birth, the less likely the relationship with Plutarch. Thus, chronology seems to weigh heavily in favor of Jones’
Ἀμφικτυόνων
dόγματι
Τίτ- Φλάβιον Ἀλέ-
4 ξανδρον τὸν σο-
φιστὴν Φλά-
και Φύλαξ τὸν πατέ-
ρα καὶ διδάσκαλον,
8 σύνεδρον Θεσ-
σαλών, Ὑπαταῖ-
ον.

But this representation does not reflect the full complexity of the text. At 4–6 Homolle had read COΦΙΣΤΗΝΦΙΛΑ ΦΟΙΝΙΚΗ, on which Bourguet clearly improved by suggesting, “Les traces que l’on voit après la fin de COΦΙΣΤΗΝ sont celles de deux lettres qui ont été effacées: Τίτ(τος). Ensuite venait le nom de ΦΛΑΒΙΟϹ écrit en entier, puis à la ligne suivante ΦΥΛΑΞ … On a effacé, outre ΤΙ, ΒΙΟϹ de Φλάβιος et ajouté en surcharge Φοίνιξ καὶ. Le Φ occupe la place de l’I de ΒΙΟϹ.” But Pouilloux observed, and the photographs published by Bousquet and at FD III.4 pl.26A support, “On avait effectivement gravé Τίτ mais ensuite la pierre n’a jamais porté que Φλα; les traces de martelage affectent seulement l’emplacement de Τί et l’interligne au-dessous de Φλα”, and that at 5–6 Φοίνιξ καὶ was inscribed after the fact, smaller, faster, and squeezed into the margins.

But of the hundreds of epigraphic witnesses to an abbreviated instance of the name Τίτος, the overwhelming majority show Τίτ(τος), and while Τίτ(τος) is not terribly common – perhaps a few dozen instances – Τίτ(ος) is extremely rare. And so, to inscribe TIT3 for Τίτ(ον), and that he, or another correcting hand, subsequently changed this to TIT for Τίτ(ον):

To this we may add that the plate also shows quite clearly that in line 3, the TI of Τίτ(ον) stands out in the left margin, and awkwardly distant from the second T; the balance of the text, by contrast, shows for the most part a tidy respect for the left margin. Autopsy might tell for sure, but it appears that the mason inscribed ΤΙΤ for Τίτ(ον), and that he, or another correcting hand, subsequently changed this to TIT3 for Τίτ(ον):

The philosophical inclination of Plutarch’s friend is perhaps slightly less probative: some Epicureans showed civic and religious engagements beyond what we might have expected; e.g. R. Koch-Piettre, Des Épicuriens entre la vie retirée et les honneurs publics, in V. Dasen and M. Piérart (eds.), Ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ: les cadres «privés» et «publics» de la religion grecque antique: Actes du IXe colloque du Centre international d’étude de la religion grecque antique (CIERGA), tenu à Fribourg du 8 au 10 septembre 2003 (Liège 2005) [= Kernos suppl. 15] 259–272; M. F. Smith, An Epicurean Priest from Apamea in Syria, ZPE 112 (1996) 120–130.

10 T. Homolle, BCH 21 (1897) 154–155 (diplomatic only and based on a copy of G. Colin); E. Bourguet, BCH 21 (1897) 475.
12 IG Bulg III.2 1555.8; I.Lindos II 465.c.4; G. Cousin and Ch. Diehl, BCH 14 (1890) 103–106 no. 7; I.Ephesos 1137.1, 2943.3; TAM II 459.7; I.Anazarbos 491.1; IG XIV 929.2. Rare in the papyri as well: P.Berl.Leihg. I 1.r.4.13, 6.14; P.Col. II 1.r.8.17; P.Mich. XV 695.1 (although here it must be said that Τίτ(ον) could also be a plausible reading; see image linked from http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.mich;15;695). So also in Latin Titus is, again by overwhelming margin, the most common abbreviation, as searches for ‘Titus’, ‘TitI’, and ‘Titit’ in EDH show (http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de).
to such from the most common abbreviation smells of incompetence. Perhaps the intervention is related to
the erasure of the same abbreviated praenomen in line 5. Whatever the cause, some confusion clearly arose
over a common abbreviation.

To surface the compositional peculiarities of this little text we might render:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ἀμφικτυόνων} & \quad \text{δόγματι} \\
\text{Tίτ} & \quad \text{Φλάβιον Αλέ-} \\
4 & \quad \text{ξανδρον τὸν σο-} \\
& \quad \text{φιστὴν} \quad [---] \quad \text{Φλά}^2 \quad \text{Φοῖνιξ} \\
& \quad [-----] \\
\text{kai} & \quad \text{Φύλαξ} \quad \text{τὸν πατέ-} \\
8 & \quad \text{συνέδρον θεσ-} \\
& \quad \text{σαλών, Ὑπαταί-} \\
& \quad \text{ον}.
\end{align*}
\]

The disarray at lines 5–6 is considerable, the historical circumstances leading to which are agreeable only
to speculation. The cause may have been no more sinister than a simple scribe’s omission (would that he
had not abbreviated Φλά in 5; for then we should know). Or mere timing: Puech suggests that the sloppi-
ness of the correction just might indicate that Phoinix’s name was inserted after significant delay (i.e. not
corrected immediately); that Phylax may have been the elder of the two and the only one of them, at the
time of dedication, yet to have studied with their father.\(^\text{13}\) To this we may add that Phoinix could, just as
easily, have been of age but absent for some other reason. In any case, a later addition would have been an
act of historical revision. This was not a private matter. The implied verb, ἐτίμησε/σαν is connected in
both grammar and formal procedure to δόγματι. The Amphictyons granted the request of either one man
or two. If Phoinix was present then both brothers honored their father with an embarrassingly sloppy text.
If the Amphictyons approved a request from Phylax alone, as Puech well suggests, then the text as amended
is not only sloppy and vain, but also – and worse – deceiving: it implies participation in a legal act of which
Phoinix had no part.

In the light of Puech’s good and plausible speculation, we might add that in the history of brothers
disagreements are known; and that the omission and insertion could be an artifact of rivalry. Phoinix
himself was honored by his own students at Delphi,\(^\text{14}\) but whether Phylax ever was, or even had students,
we do not know; was the lesser brother — a ‘joke’ in Philostratos’ view — especially drawn to the public
gesture? In this period at Delphi, Hypatian elites were quite active\(^\text{15}\) and honoring intellectuals was very
much in fashion,\(^\text{16}\) and this too may have affected Phylax’s desire to shine the light of honor on father and,
in so doing, self. But if Phylax moved first, Phoinix wanted in. The erasure between lines 5 and 6 must be
part of the ‘correction’ that added his name. It has drawn little attention but is interesting, for it suggests
two stages of intervention: someone added something between the lines and then someone (else?) erased
it. Could it be that Phoinix added (or had added) his name between the lines (there is room enough in the
space covered by the erasure); that Phylax then erased it (or had it erased); and that Phoinix then added his
name again, in the margin? If so, what he or anyone else meant to accomplish by erasing the praenomen in
line 5 and converting a perfectly normal ΤΙΤ\(^3\) to an unusual and awkward ΤΙΤ\(^3\) is anyone’s guess. Whatever
happened with the praenomina, the little text shows a complicated and multi-stepped mess, an awkward-
ness both social and epigraphic.

\(^{13}\) Puech, Orateus et sophistes 45 n. 5; see also 384 n. 2.

\(^{14}\) Puech, Orateus et sophistes 204: Τίτον Φλάβιον Αλέ-


Moreover, inasmuch as Philostratos notes that Phoinix was a student of Philagros, it is all the more interesting that he does not mention the brothers’ father at all. Did Philostratos not know him as a sophist? Or did he regard him as so unimportant as to be undeserving even of the scornful mention he offers the man’s two sons? Was he so motivated to stress the brothers’ affiliation with competing minds that to have mentioned the father as their teacher would have run contrary to Philostratos’ purpose? Philostratos’ silence invites speculation whether Flavius Alexander was a sophist and διδάσκαλος only inasmuch as his progeny honored him so; perhaps Phylax honored his father not as a sophist, but as his sophist, just as he was his father and teacher, a nod to the tradition by which one’s teacher was διδάσκαλος και πατήρ, and a playful boast that his natural father was his true doctor-father. If so, then as “slippery” as the word ‘sophist’ was, T. Flavius Alexander may have been such in his son’s estimation but not in a more conventional sense.

In the epigraphic universe omissions and corrections are not rare and this one might not demand our attention, except that something similar seems to have happened on the statue base honoring the same Phylax at Olympia (IvO 464 = Puech, Orateurs et sophistes 205):

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ἀγαθὴν τύχην.
ἐδοξε τῇ βουλῇ
τῇ Ὀλυμπικῇ.
4 Φύλαξ Φύλαξ
Ἀλεξάνδρου Θεσσαλὸς
σοφιστής,
Θεσσαλῶν
8 σύνεδρος,
Ἀθηναίων
Ἀρεοπαγεῖτης.
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The text itself appears never to have been edited from autopsy; Dittenberger apparently only had access to a copy and description of Purgold. But autopsy or not, the Greek is disturbing. This is the only inscribed utterance to indicate resolution of the council with the phrase ἐδοξε τῇ βουλῇ τῇ Ὀλυμπικῇ. Now, one could note that the similar δόγματι τῆς Ὀλυμπικῆς βουλῆς is attested but once, as are the comparable ψηφίσματι Ὀλυμπικῆς βουλῆς and ψηφίσματι τῆς Ὀλυμπικῆς βουλῆς. But the attributive with article repeated, ἢ βουλὴ ἢ Ὀλυμπικὴ, appears to be an epigraphic hapax. A red flag.

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18 C. P. Jones, BCH 96 (1972) 265 n. 20.
20 On understandings of the term see K. Eshleman, De
24 Beyond Olympia too. Querying the more than 200,000 inscriptions in the PHI Epigraphy database for “ἐδοξε τῇ βουλῇ τῇ” (and the same with all possible combinations of iota adscript and with Doric το/τοι) returns this text alone: http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions. Search of the same in TLG returns no results. In the nominative the phrase is limited to references to the council of the Areopagos: ἡ βουλὴ ἢ Ἑραίου πάγου. In the Hellenistic period ἐδοξε τῇ πόλις τῇ + genitive is attested in Thessaly, whence Phylax and family came, and especially at Gomoni: IG IX.2 2197; AE (1910) 344, 3.11–12, (1916) 18, 272.1, (1917) 10, 304.34; I.Gomoni 41.9, 48.11–12, 74.8–9, 81.9, 86.6–7, 89.3–4, 106.9, 109.1, 110.1–2; Nouveau Choix 12.1–2.
The syntax is worse. The text purports to advertise the council’s decision to honor Phylax with a statue. He, the honorand, ought to be in the accusative, as countless parallels from across the time and space of epigraphic Greek tell, and not in the nominative.25 Not, “By consent of the council (sc. I am/this is) Flavius Phylax”, a meaningless assertion and an impossible decree, but “By consent of the council (some subject) (sc. dedicated a statue of) Flavius Phylax”. The elliptical utterance was normative. In the formal sense of grammar, logic, and the mechanics of honor, Phylax’s monument is nonsense.

Thus, Puech suggested that the council must not have awarded the statue, for it would have gotten the Greek right; instead, it must have authorized Phylax to pay for and erect a statue of himself as he liked.26 If so, then the orator’s own monument was a second-class honor, clumsily implemented. On the other hand, if the council did award the statue and inscription then it was shockingly incapable of producing the most standard of sentences, and so was Phylax, who accepted and erected the thing. And if the council did not decree anything of the sort – that is, if it neither voted the honors nor approved Phylax’s self-congratulatory gesture – then the inscription simply lies. Whatever the case, for an ancient reader of a statue base whose text begins “ἀγαθῆ τύχῃ. ἔδωκε τῇ βουλῇ”, the expectation will almost invariably have been state award. This inscription too, then, depicts a professional speaker who was either inept, deceitful, or both.

A photograph taken by a tourist on 30 June 2011 and posted to Flickr intensifies that impression.27 It shows quite clearly that lines 7–10 were added after the fact, in a hastier, less adept hand. The upper text, which covers roughly the top half of the inscrivable surface, features four-bar sigma, whereas the lower has squared lunate sigma. This, at least, has always been inferable from the drawing published at IvO 464 (see drawing below), but the lower section is also, in places, undular, awkward, and poorly kerned, which the drawing does not reveal (see Θεσσαλῶν in photo below).

Thus, what has been universally received as a single utterance is in fact two. Again, the epigraphic fact only hints at historical circumstances that are beyond recovery. Perhaps at the time of the dedication Phylax was not yet σύνεδρος or Areopagite; and so on a later visit to Olympia he, as it were, updated his


26 Puech, Orateurs et sophistes 386: “Le décret du Conseil Olympique n’avait probablement pas décerné la statue: un hommage public aurait été présenté de manière moins désinvolte. Il a dû accorder l’autorisation de l’éleve, l’initiative en incombant à particulier. Des lors, puisque personne d’autre n’est mentionné, le dédicant était sans doute Phylax lui-même. Il avait dû choisir d’assurer sa publicité par un monument plus durable que le souvenir de sa prestation: cette initiative, qui expliquerait le caractère insolite du texte, pourrait ne pas avoir été exceptionnelle.” So, faced with Greek dedicatory convention that could not tolerate ἔκακον Φλάβιος Φιλόστερπον Θεσσαλὸς σοφιστής or some other such embarrassment, Phylax had only the subject inscribed, the object being visible in the form of the statue? Paying for one’s own honors was surely exceptional, but doing such while implying state sponsorship was not. Compare SEG XXV 211, in which the honorand’s home city paid for a monument honoring him at Athens, for his services to Athens: τὸ κοινὸν τῶν Θεσσαλῶν, Τιττὸν Φλάβιον Τύκλα Αρέακλητον Πανελλήνιον καὶ ἐγκαθιδεδώτας τῶν τῶν μετάλοις Πανελλήνιων, ἄρτης ἐνεκές καὶ εὐνοίας τῆς τε ἐς τοῦ Πανελλήνιου καὶ τῆς Θησείου πόλεος. On Kyllos, a fellow Hypatian and rough contemporary of Flavius and Phylax, see N. V. Sekunda, ZPE 118 (1997) 218–220.

curriculum vitae, on a text that masqueraded as civic honor but was in fact self-indulgence. Or perhaps Olympia did grant the honors, but with less grandeur, Phylax may have learned on delivery, than he had wished; and so he offered a private amendment to the public document, adding accomplishments to his name. Now, sophists, with whom Phylax self-identified, ‘often considered their unadorned name sufficient for recognition. Thus Antonius Polemo is merely ‘Polemo’ when honoring Demosthenes at Pergamon, and Aelius Aristides is always ‘Aristides’ in the various dedications that he makes at home or on his travels.’

This laconism was a boast, a claim that in a world in which multiple names were required to identify all but the most exalted individuals as such, one was enough — a claim to be a Homer or a Plato, a Mommsen or a Robert, and not Fred son of George, city councillor and Esteemed Loyal Knight of the Elks Lodge, from Dubuque. Phylax’s inclusion of the patronym and — after the fact, no less — extra-professional political

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28 The Areopagos honored plenty of men of learning and culture, e.g.: TAM II 910 (Heracliteus of Rhodiapolis), SEG XIX 208 (Theodoros of Gadara), XLIII 864 (Polybios of Sardis; see C. P. Jones, Polybios of Sardis, CP 91 [1996] 247–253), Claudius Anteros (I.Labraunda 66); M. Ulpius Eurykles (OGIS 505); IG II² 3945 (Euphrates of Tyre; see C. P. Jones, Epigraphica VI–VII, ZPE 144 [2003] 157–163, 160–162); IG II² 3812 = Puech, Orateurs et Sophistes 25 (Apollonios). But I know no other example of Areopagite status listed as an honorand’s accomplishment; the appearance of such as a textual addition after the fact could be cause for worry, but neither do I know grounds for doubting Phylax’s claim. Precisely how the Areopagos was populated in this era remains a thorny question; see J. M. Rainer, Bürgerrechtsprobleme im 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr.: Flavius Phylax, in G. Wesener (ed.), Festschrift für Arnold Kränzlein: Beiträge zur antiken Rechtsgeschichte (Graz 1986) 83–93, 86–88. On multiple citizenship, see Rainer; also now C. P. Jones, Joys and Sorrows of Multiple Citizenship: The Case of Dio Chrysostom, in A. Heller and A.-V. Pont (eds.), Patrie d’origine et patries électives: les citoyennetés multiples dans le monde grec d’époque romaine (Bordeaux 2012) 213–219.


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IvO 464 (p. 553) © James Irish Photography

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and honorary attainments rings of the small time, underscores the need for such precision and qualification. Even in a culture that did not value humility quite so much as some others, this updating is not only a sad bid for recognition, but it is also reminiscent of the clumsy corrections made to Phylax’s Delphic dedication.

The importance antiquity placed on honor is such that the coincidence of two epigraphic insertions of the same sort, on the same kind of text, from similar sites, in texts concerning sibling honorands, might be explained away as honest and appropriate attempts to set the record straight: Phoinix wanted all to know that he too honored his father and Phylax had to insist that, whether at the time of dedication or later, he was more than a sophist. But this seems too much for coincidence and it is hard not to interpret the inscriptions and Philostratos’ comments in the light of each other. Philostratos was not impartial or immune to faction; who in his intellectual milieu was? And so it is certainly tempting to think that his apparent contempt for these Flavii arose from conflicting professional, intellectual, and social allegiances, or from authorial design.30

But among Second Sophistic intellectuals vying for prominence, not everyone was the best, 31 a fact which underscores the intellectual ferment of the age, much as the abundance of ‘bad Greek’ in the documentary papyri can be an indication of quickening literacy rather than the opposite. In all domains of elite competition, second place often seems to be a mile away from first. But Phylax does not appear even to have made the team. The inattention to proper form at Olympia and the clumsy vanity of the insertions there and at Delphi too do not urge us to think Philostratos—who may even have seen the Olympian inscription32—unjustified, unfair, or biased. He may have been, but on the other hand these brothers may simply have been the also-rans that he made them out to be.

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30 As K. Eshleman, CP 103 (2008) 408–410, well suggests. S. Swain, CLAnt 10 (1991) 158, 162, suggests that Philostratos’ roster of laughing-stock sophists may have come from his source, but that his contempt for Phylax was his own.

31 It is tempting to see errors in two well known Pompeian graffiti: C(aium) Cuspium Pansam | aed(ilem) d(ignum) r(ei) p(ublicae) o(ro) v(os) f(aciat(is)) Saturninus | cum disc(entes) ro(gat) (CIL IV 275); Sabinum et Rufum | aedil(ices) d(ignos) r(ei) p(ublicae) Valentinus | cum disc(entes) su(os) ro(gat) (CIL IV 698). Of course, other examples of cum + accusative are known; see e.g. CIL IV 221: M(arcum) Cerrinium Vatiam | aed(ilem) dignum rei p(ublicae) Tyrannus cupiens | fecit cum sodales. Prepositions came increasingly and overwhelmingly to govern the accusative: see e.g. J. Herman [R. Wright transl.], Vulgar Latin (University Park 2000) 53–54. But in the ‘street Latin’ of the Pompeian graffiti, cum almost always takes the ablative: e.g. CIL IV 103: M(arcum) Holconium Priscum | C(aium) Gavium Rufum I(ovis) | Phoebus cum emptoribus | suis rogat; 175: Fuscus cum Vacula facit; 235: Faventinus cum suis rogat(1); 581: scr(ipsit) Florus cum Fructo; 668: Semu | cum pueris | rog(at); 7665: Infanticulus cum sodalibus rog(at).

32 He too was honored there. IV Ο 476: ἀγαθῇ τίχῃ. | δόγματι τῆς Ὀλυμπικῆς βουλῆς Φιλόστρατος Αθηναίος; τὸν σοφιστὴν. | ἡ λαμπροτάτη πατρίς.