

Two Megarian Inscriptions at Brocklesby Park (UK)

Abstract

In this article we publish two Greek inscriptions, possibly or probably from ancient Megara, which are now in the collection of the Earl of Yarborough at Brocklesby Park, Lincolnshire, UK. The inscriptions have not been subject to scholarly examination for more than a century. We offer an account of their discovery and editions of both: one is a funerary stele of the late classical period with a relief sometimes thought to be Attic; the other is a statue of a priestess with inscribed base of the late Roman period.

Keywords: Megara; funerary inscription; dedication; dexiosis; priestess; Artemis

Introduction

This paper¹ offers a new edition of two Greek inscriptions at Brocklesby Park, Lincolnshire, UK;² it is intended to facilitate the ongoing work of Adrian Robu towards a new edition of Megarian inscriptions to be published as part of *Inscriptiones Graecae* part VII, second edition.

The two inscriptions studied here, the collection history of which points to Megarian provenance (possible in the case of **1**; very likely in the case of **2**), were acquired by Sir Richard Worsley (1751-1805) of Appuldurcombe in the Isle of Wight, UK.³ He took possession of them

¹ We owe particular gratitude to the Earl of Yarborough for granting us permission to undertake autopsy of the inscriptions published here, and to his staff for their assistance during our visit. We would like to thank also Deborah Kamen and Julietta Steinhauer for their helpful discussion of some complicated aspects of priesthood. We also would like to record the important assistance of Adrian Robu (who has been very generous in sharing his expertise on Megarian epigraphy). Roslynne Bell, Olga Palagia and Susan Walker all offered valuable insights on the dating of the statue and its restorations: we are very grateful to them for their help. We are indebted also to the two anonymous readers of this publication for their suggestions.

² On the collection of antiquities at Brocklesby, see MICHAELIS 1882, 226-240; SMITH 1897; VERMEULE 1955, 130; VERMEULE and VON BOTHMER 1956, 324-335; WAYWELL 2007, 139-142; LIDDEL and LOW 2020, 1-9. On the Athenian inscriptions in the collection and with a detailed account of their collection history, see LIDDEL and LOW 2020. On the five items of Megarian sculpture at Brocklesby, see DESPINIS 2010, 114-116.

³ The early Hellenistic proxeny decree *IG VII 11* was acquired by James Dawkins (1722-57) and is currently in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Other Megarian inscriptions once in UK collections include the stele of Pollis (purchased by the J. Paul Getty Museum in 1990: *SEG* 41.413) and a fragmentary gravestone of the fourth century BC (also at the Getty: *SEG* 28.440 = CLAIRMONT, *CAT* 3.384). For the current holdings of Megarian sculpture across Europe, see DESPINIS 2010, 113-121. It was claimed by its discoverer, Percy Clinton, Viscount Strangford (1780-1855), that *IG VII 16* (second century B.C.; see *SEG* 13.283 = *I. British Mus.* 136A + 136B), now at the British Museum, came originally from Megara, but doubt is cast on this by RIGSBY 1996 (342-344, 348-350, nos 167-170), who suggests that the decrees concern Kore *Soteira* at Kyzikos.

and other objects during the course of an extended voyage through Europe and the Levant undertaken between 1783 and 1788.⁴ He arrived in Athens on May 9th 1785, and travelled from there to Eleusis and Megara, encountering *en route* the French scholar and traveler Jean-Baptiste-Gaspard d'Ansse de Villosion.⁵ Worsley kept a detailed travel journal (WORSLEY, 1785-87), which includes extensive digressions on Greek history, the ancient monuments which he saw, and the culture and society of contemporary Greece (we discuss this journal in more detail in LIDDEL and LOW 2020, 2-3). It includes a detailed paraphrase of the content of **2** (WORSLEY 1785-87, I 147; see below). The *Travel Journal* (I 146) also mentions, but does not describe in detail, «two ancient inscriptions» found in the ruins of fortifications near Megara; it is possible, but not certain, that one of these might be **1**.⁶

After his visit to Greece and the Levant, Worsley spent a further period abroad performing diplomatic duties in Venice. In this period, he continued to build up his collection of ancient and modern art and sculpture; and a year after he returned from Venice, in 1797, he published the first volume of his *Museum Worsleyanum, or a Collection of Antique Basso-Relievos, Bustos, Statues and Gems; with Views of Places in the Levant*; a second volume followed in 1803.⁷ This work contained the first publications of the two inscriptions studied here; it was reprinted in 1824. The book includes also illustrations and descriptions of three further pieces of uninscribed sculpture allegedly from Megara: a funerary monument representing four figures (two of them in *dexiosis*), a relief depicting a seated male (interpreted as a representation of Telephus) with standing female and another representing a procession (WORSLEY 1824, I 14-15, 17 and 25).⁸ From the late 1790s, Worsley's collection was displayed at his house at Appuldurcombe, on the Isle of Wight. The *Catalogue Raisonné* of the collection, published in 1804, includes detailed descriptions of both **1** and **2**, and records that both items were displayed in the «Athenian Room» of the house. (It is worth noting that this room contained a number of

⁴ On Worsley's collection and that at Appuldurcombe House, see GUILDING 2014, 207-220; WAYWELL 2007, 139-142.

⁵ SMITH 1897, 1-2. Encounter with Villosion: JORET 2010, 288, and n.6, below.

⁶ Worsley's *Travel Journal* (1785-87, I 148-49) notes also two inscribed lists of victors which served as statue bases. These had also been reported by G. Wheler in the late seventeenth century (WHELER 1682, 432-434) and were later published as *IG VII 49*. Worsley noted also an inscription of «Sabinas [sic] wife of Adrian» and a list of «favours they had received of Herodes Atticus». Identification of the former inscription is difficult but *IG VII 73* (in which the tribe Pamphyloi honour Sabina and Hadrian; noted also by Wheler: WHELER 1682, 432; transferred to Aegina in 1829 or 1830: *IG IV² 2*, 1126) is a possibility, as is *IG VII 74* (in which the Hadrianidai bestow honours upon them). The latter of the two is probably the honorific inscription for Herodes Atticus *IG VII 88* (seen also by Wheler: WHELER 1682, 432). Worsley goes on to report (*Travel Journal*, 1785-87, I 151) that at Megara he encountered Villosion, who had been despatched by Society of Belles Lettres of Paris «in search of the ancient inscriptions». This may explain how the Eleusinian base noted by Worsley came to be transcribed by Villosion and was brought into the collection of the Louvre (WORSLEY 1785-87, I, 145, 186; WORSLEY 1824, I 45-46; *IG II² 3575 = I.Eleusis 454*).

⁷ The volume had been long-planned, and early fascicules were circulated in 1794: GUILDING 2014, 200.

⁸ The relief representing a procession is referred to at DALLAWAY 1800, 362 no. 32. For these three objects, see now DESPINIS 2010, 114-116.

non-Athenian objects; the placement of the inscriptions here does not, therefore, imply that Worsley now believed them to be of Athenian origin.) On the sale of the Appuldurcombe property in 1855 the collection formed by Worsley was transferred to seat of the Earl of Yarborough at Brocklesby Park in Lincolnshire.⁹ The two inscriptions have remained there since then.

No. 1: A Funerary Inscription (Figs 1 and 2)

Eds WORSLEY 1824, I p. 15 no. VI (drawing p. 14); *CIG* 1091; MICHAELIS 1882, no. 65; SMITH 1897, no. 65; *IG VII* 132 (DITTENBERGER, based on BOECKH's text in *CIG*); CLAIRMONT, *CAT* 2.797 (photograph). Cf. *Catalogue Raisonné* 1804, p. 13; SCHOLL 1996, no. 367; WAYWELL 2007, 142; DESPINIS 2010, 116 no. 4. Autopsy Liddel and Low 2019.

A stele of grey-white marble which has been cut to shape above the inscription at the top, below the relief panel at the bottom and on both sides; worn surface and broken bottom-left hand corner. The depiction is represented within a sunken panel. An adult, bearded, male stands with mantle over left shoulder. He engages in *dexiosis* with an adult woman seated on a high-backed chair with feet placed on a stool; she wears a sleeved chiton and mantle and footwear with straps. Her hair is short and gathered in a band. Between them stands a boy. Height 0.35m; width 0.245m; thickness 0.019 (left) -0.034 (right). Height of upper, inscribed, panel: 0.094m.

The first extant inscribed line appears at the top of the preserved surface and runs to the top-right corner of the extant part of the stone. The second line appears above the sunken panel and also runs to the end of the right-hand edge. The letters of the first two lines are roughly and unevenly incised and appear shallow; sloping bar on the alpha in line 2; omegas broad and low; kappas in lines 1 and 2 with diagonals not reaching to the top or bottom of lines, no serifs. The final extant letter of line 1 seems to be a delta with diagonals extending beneath the horizontal. The third line is inscribed at the top of the sunken panel above the child and woman; its letters are more deeply and more tidily inscribed (especially kappa); splayed omega; sigma with flat top bar. Letter height: 0.010-0.015m.

Above sunken panel

1st half of 4th cent. B.C.

.ΙΩΝ Ἀριστοκλείδ[ας]

Vacat 0.054m

ΚΑΛΛΙ

In sunken panel above relief

⁹ They are mentioned in the 1856 Brocklesby Catalogue, located in the Sculpture Gallery (but with very minimal descriptions).

2nd half of 4th cent. B.C.

Καφισίων

Line 1 Ἴων Ἀριστόκλεια MICHAELIS, SMITH; ΩΝΑΡΙ Διόκλεια WORSLEY, BOECKH, DITTENBERGER; «vs. 1 tamen ἀνδρὶ coniici potest» BOECKH | line 2 ΚΑΛΑΙ BOECKH; καλαί MICHAELIS; Καλ<λ>ι DITTENBERGER. WORSLEY: «In the bass-relief No. VI we read the name of the deceased *Cafision*, according to the Doric dialect used at Megara, instead of *Cefision*. The other letters express two female names in the vocative case, that is, the *beautiful Onari and Dioclea*. »

-ion Aristokleidas

Kalli-

Kaphision

The irregular style of the letters suggests that the names may have been written at different times: the sloping bar on the alpha in line 2 suggests a date in the early fourth century BC; the style of the letters in line 3 points to a date in the second half of the fourth century. There is little that is distinctively Megarian about the letter-forms.¹⁰ The monument has been cut down, perhaps substantially, to preserve only the inscribed and sculpted areas which originally were part of what might have been a taller and broader stele, possibly on the scale of the recently-published pedimental stele from Megara for Aristokritos and Euthymis (*SEG* 41.416 + 44.399, now on display at the Archaeological Museum of Megara) of the fourth-/third century BC, measuring 1.40m in height and 0.44-0.465 in width. Moreover, the style of the Brocklesby piece, with a *dexiosis* scene represented within a shallow sunken square panel with square niches cut out of its top corners, is reminiscent of the new Megarian stele (though of a type known also from Attica).

The two adult figures greet each other with clasped hands (*dexiosis*): this is a commonplace feature of the iconography of classical funerary monuments (including those at Megara, as noted above), symbolising a bond (whether familial, or of marriage, or simply of friendship) between two individuals which is unbroken by death.¹¹ The theme of the scene, with a child between two adults (one standing and one seated) in *dexiosis*, is one familiar from classical Attic funerary iconography (see, for instance, CLAIRMONT, *CAT* 2.747, 816, 820, 821, 848a, 858, 874 etc.). The relative age of the two figures may indicate that they were partners in marriage and that the child between them was theirs. It is quite possible that the stele may have been among those monuments adorning a family enclosure (*peribolos*) and that names of individual

¹⁰ However, the shape of the kappa of lines 1 and 2 of our inscription (with diagonals not reaching to the top or bottom of lines) and the delta at the end of line 1 (with diagonals extending beneath the horizontal) resemble that of line 5 of the recently-published stele from Megara (*SEG* 41.416 + 44.399).

¹¹ On the significance of the gesture (and a survey of recent scholarly approaches to it), see LAMBERT 2018a, 31 n. 112, LAMBERT 2018b, 33, and LIDDEL and LOW 2019, n. 28.

family members were added over a period of time as a way of demonstrating family connections.

Despite the faintness of the letters, ΙΩΝ Ἀριστοκλείδ[αζ] (line 1) is the most plausible reading: traces of an upright to the left of the omega could be those of an eta, mu or upsilon but it does seem more likely that it is an iota; there is space for one or two more letters in the extant space to the left on the extant part of the stone (but some of the left edge is now lost). The positioning of the horizontal bar of the triangular letter at the end of the visible part of line 1 make it resemble a delta rather than an alpha (though previous editors' Ἀριστόκλεια is a plausible alternative reading given that the right edge of the stone is now lost). ΩΝΑΠΙ [Δ]ιόκλεια was suggested by the stone's first editors; indeed, a delta in the place of the sigma was illustrated in the drawing in *Museum Worsleyanum* (**Fig. 2**) but was not visible to us.¹² At the start of line 1, ΙΩΝ is likely to be the end of a male name; [Ἰ]ων is less likely (a name attested only in Attica).

It is possible that there are remains of letters in the area between lines 1 and 2, but these traces are unreadable.

It is impossible to make certain sense of line 2, though it seems most likely to be the start of another name beginning Καλλι-. Καφισίων (line 3) is a secure reading. None of the extant names suggest anything about relations between the named individuals. We cannot be certain about the order in which the names were inscribed nor of which of the characters they label. If we were to envisage that a painting stood between lines 1 and 2, Καλλι- might represent the remains of the patronymic of Aristokleidas, its final letters lost in a cut-away part of the right-hand side of the stone.

WORSLEY (1824, I p. 15; cf. *Catalogue Raisonné* 1804, p. 13) says the stele derives from Megara, but it is unclear whether this is based upon record or recollection of its acquisition or (more likely) is a reasonable inference based on the form «Kaphision» for «Kephision». Καφισίων is a form common in central Greece (see *LGPN* IIIB, s.v., pp. 227-228). Κηφισίων but not Καφισίων is otherwise attested in Attica, though other names with the Καφι- element are attested in Attica (see Byrne, *Athenian Onomasticon*: <http://www.seangb.org>). Ἀριστοκλείδας (and Ἀριστόκλεια) are well-attested names in central Greece (as is the alternative reading, Διόκλεια: as Adrian Robu points out to us, names in Diokl- are common in Megara). Central Greek or Attic provenance is therefore plausible, and the record of Worsley's travels (see above, **Introduction**) makes Megara a plausible place of origin. We might add that the iconography of this monument is of the type that could derive from Attica or Megara: commemorative style is a phenomenon that cut across the borders of the ancient city-state.

No. 2: Statue of Asklepias (**Fig. 3**)

¹² As can be seen by comparing it with the modern photograph (**Fig. 1**), the drawing from the *Museum Worsleyanum* (**Fig. 2**) is inaccurate in terms of the placement of the extant inscribed lines.

From Megara. Eds WORSLEY 1824, I 79-80 (with drawing); *CIG* 1064; KAIBEL 1878, 870; MICHAELIS no. 26; *IG VII* 113 (DITTENBERGER, based on BOECKH's text in *CIG*); SMITH 1897, no. 63. Cf. *Catalogue Raisonné* 1804, pp. 13-14; DALLAWAY 1800, 360 no. 4; VISCONTI 1835, 113; Townley Archive TY 15/6 *Antiquities at Appuldurcombe* 1790 no. 34; JORET 1910, 288; ROBERT 1936, 22 no. 18; SMITH 2008, 195 no. 86; DESPINIS 2010, 115 no. 3. Autopsy Liddel and Low 2019.

Statue and inscribed base of white marble. The figure, approximately 2/3rds of life size, stands, wearing a peplos, belted high below the breasts, the central fold of which is accentuated and which features a long overfall that terminates at the hips. The right hand holds a phiale; the outstretched left forearm is draped. Slippers on feet. Struts connect the arms to the body. Statue: height: 0.825m; base: height 0.125m; width 0.305m; thickness 0.205m. The inscription fills the front face of the statue base; lines 1, 2 and 4-6 extend onto its right face.

The statue appears to have been damaged at the time of its discovery. WORSLEY (1824, I 79) reported that it was found without head or arms but was restored by an artist at Rome; Michaelis (following CONZE 1864, 216) suggested that the head, right forearm and left hand were new. SMITH (1897, no. 63) observed that the nose and chin, right hand with phiale, and left hand with drapery appeared to be restored. Our autopsy confirms that the over-sized head is unlikely to be original and was sourced probably from another statue and that the same applies to the right forearm and left hand. As Roslynne Bell points out to us, the head's waving locks of hair, parted at the centre and swept back, are of a classical style, suggesting an early prototype. There is damage to lines 1 and 4 of the Greek text. Letter-forms: with apices; square sigmas (Ϻ); round omicrons and thetas; some alpha-bars are broken; extensive use of ligatures. Letter-heights: 0.0096 (omicron) - 0.0144 (mu).

3rd-4th century A.D.?

On base beneath statue

ἄζομένη κούρην Λητωΐδα [εἰ]οχέαιραν

Ἄρτεμιν Ὀρθωσίην πόλεως περὶ τείχεα πάντα.

εἶμι ἱερῆς ἐγὼ Ἀσκληπιάς, ἐκ δὲ τοκῆων

πατρὸς Εὐκτιμένου Ἀσκληπιάδαο γενέσθην,

5 μητρὸς σεμνοτάτης Νεικηφορίδος γένος ἐσθλόν.

οἱ δ' εὖ γεινάμενοι μ' ἔδοσαν ἱερῆδα τῆδε θεαίνῃ

βουλῆς καὶ δήμου ψηφισαμένης περ' ἐμεῖο.

I stand in awe of the arrow-shooting maiden born from Leto,
Artemis Orthosia, around all the walls of the city.
I am the priestess, Asklepias, begotten of parents:
My father Euktimenos son of Asklepiades;
My most reverend mother, Neikephoris: a noble descent.
My parents, raising me well, gave me as a priestess to this goddess
When the council and the people balloted it for me.

Accounts of the object's acquisition strongly point to a Megarian provenance. The discovery is alluded to in WORSLEY'S *Travel Journal*, volume I, 146-147 in a description of his visit to Megara on 18th May 1785:

«Among these ruins [of the “ancient fortress” at Megara] which are considerable there are two ancient inscriptions, but they are mutilated ... in front of one of the houses belonging to one of the principal Greeks of this place I found a small statue, of Asclepias, a priestess of Diana, as appears by the following inscription upon the pedestal upon which the statue [rests? (word illegible)]. The Senate and the People have had this inscription cut in hexameter verses to Asclepias, priestess of Diana, daughter of Euktimenos, son of Asclepius, and of Nicephoris; her parents who were of great birth had consecrated to the worship of the daughter of Latona. This statue is about three feet high, the Drapery is very fine but unfortunately the hand is wanting. However I thought myself very fortunate to become possessed of it, which I did for a small trifle [sic].».

Worsley's account in the *Museum Worsleyanum*, however, elaborates the account of the discovery, claiming that it was «was dug out of some ruins in the city of Megara» (1824, I 79). According to Vilhoison, with whom Worsley visited Megara, he purchased the statue in the city (JORET 1910, 288). Certainty about the exact details of its acquisition is, therefore, unattainable, but the accounts concur in the view that it derived from Megara.

There are two notable features of object. One is the fact that the text wraps around the front face of the base and continues onto its right side (**Figs 4 and 5**). This may have been a means to squeeze the lines onto a base too narrow for them but it may have been deliberate: it has the effect of preserving the lineation while also leading the reader round to the side of the inscription and statue. The other feature is that, as noted by WORSLEY (1824, I 79), the inscribed base and statue appear to have been made from a single piece of marble. This phenomenon was one that was regarded as noteworthy even in antiquity: see *IG XII 5 2* for the text of the seventh-

century dedication to Apollo at Delos making this claim about the association of the base and statue.¹³ Both features may have augmented the prestige of the statue.

The drapery of the sculpture is reminiscent of that of statues of young female initiates dedicated by their parents to Artemis *Orthia* at Messene in the first century BC (THEMELIS 1994, 111-117; CONNELLY 2007, 150-152; DILLON 2010, 81-82; BRØNS 2017, 282 fig. 86). The statue (as does the inscription) represents the figure as a priestess, which is confirmed by her holding a phiale from which a libation could be poured (CONNELLY, 121). Olga Palagia and Susan Walker agree with our view that a date in the third or fourth century A.D. for the statue is appropriate on the grounds of the deep and regular drill channels of the drapery.¹⁴

There are features of the inscribed text which suggest that the author was familiar with the language of epic and its morphology. As was noted by SMITH and MICHAELIS, the statue speaks in hexameter verse (but line 6, with an extra foot, amounts to a heptameter). Epic forms are deployed (e.g. ἄζομένη (cf. *Il.* 1.21); εἰοχέαιραν line 1; τοκήων line 3 (cf. *Il.* 15.663); Ἀσκληπιάδαο line 4 (cf. Ἀτρεΐδαο etc.); γενέσθην line 4; θεαίνη line 6; ἐμείο line 7). However, ει for ι (e.g. line 1) is a result of iotacism and a feature of late antique texts.

The inscribed dedication published here lacks any historical context by which it can be dated, but letter-forms allow an approximate dating. The small apices and forms of sigma and omega (ϰ, ϰ) resemble those in a third-century A.D. monument from Megara now at the National Archaeological Museum, Athens (see DESPINIS 2010, 83, 90–91 no. 4 with fig. 48). The mixture of round and square letter-forms and use of ligatures (in each line) point to a date in the third or fourth century A.D.¹⁵ It seems, therefore, that torso and inscription are contemporary.

Notes on 2:

Line 1: εἰοχέαιραν: Artemis is frequently designated in epic poetry as ἰοχέαιρα, that is, the one who «delights in archery» (Homer, *Il.* 5.53, 447; 6.428; 20.39, 71; 24.606; *Od.* 6.102; 11.172; 15.478; Homeric Hymn 27 line 2; Hesiod, *Theogony* 14, 918, etc.).

Line 2: πόλεως περὶ τείχεα πάντα: Apollo is said to have built the walls of the city as a favour to Alkathoos (*Theognis* 772-782); Alkathoos was said to have brought the cults of Apollo and Artemis to Megara (Paus. 1.41.3-4). An Athenian casualty list of the fifth century BC makes reference to a battle where the Athenians lost their lives «beside the walls of Alkathoos» (Ἀλκάθοο παρὰ τείχεσιν: *SEG* 48.83, line 3).¹⁶ Walls were crucial to the Megarians throughout their history into Late Antiquity: Megarians at some point between AD 408 and 410 thanked

¹³ Another example of an inscribed base and statue in honour of a priestess made from a single stone with both intact is *IG* II² 3462 = *I.Rhamnous* I 201; II 133.

¹⁴ As Roslynn Bell observes (per e.litt.), the struts that connect the arms to the body suggest a date after the second century A.D.; see HOLLINSHEAD 2002.

¹⁵ Cf. the fifth-century *IG* VII 52 with photograph in ROBU 2020.

¹⁶ For the view that this was a battle at some point between 431 and 424 BC see MATTHAIIOU 2011, 83-91, summarised at *SEG* 61.80.

Herkouleios, Praetorian Prefect of Illyria, for restoring the walls of their city (and aqueduct) after its devastation by the Visigoth Alaric (*IG VII 93*, cf. *SEG 46.518*); and in 472 they honoured Diogenes, son of Archelaus, Hegoumen of the Hellenes, for spending money on the city walls and a bath (*IG VII 26*).

It is possible that this line makes reference to an extra-mural sanctuary of Artemis or some kind of celebration of Artemis which included a procession around the city walls: according to Pausanias (9.22.1-2) at Tanagra the annual ephebe judged to be fairest of all won the privilege of carrying a lamb around the city walls, an imitation of Hermes *Kriophoros*, who had saved the city from a plague by carrying a ram around its walls.

Line 2: Ἄρτεμιν Ὀρθωσίην there was a concentration of shrines to Artemis Orthosia in SW Boiotia especially in the areas of Koroneia and Lebadeia: see SMITH 2008, 118 and SCHACHTER 1981, I 100-101. The cult is attested at Megara in a fourth-century BC dedication (*SEG 48.568*; Despina 2010, 119).¹⁷ It is known also in cities with claims of kinship links to Megara and is attested by Herodotus' account of an altar to Artemis *Orthosia* at Byzantion (Hdt. 4.87). Pausanias had nothing to say about Artemis Orthosia at Megara, but did comment on other cults of Artemis at the city, mentioning a bronze statue of Artemis *Soteira* by Strongylion at Megara (1.40.2) and in a temple of Artemis close to the tomb of Hyllos (1.41.3) and other statues (Paus. 1.44.2, 1.44.4). A priestess of Artemis *Soteira* was honoured by the demos and boule at Megara during the Roman period (*IG VII 112*).

It is quite possible that the dedication to Artemis makes some allusion to traditions about the Persian wars which circulated during late antiquity. At some point perhaps in the fourth or fifth century AD the priest Helladios wrote up on a large stone block at the place of the memorial of the Megarian heroes of the Persian war a «Simonidean verse in honour of the deceased and the city which had been lost in the passage of time (*IG VII 53* lines 1-4). It commemorated those Megarians who had died, some of them below Euboea and Pelion, «where is the precinct of holy Artemis the archeress (Ἀρτέμιδος τοξοφόρου τέμενος); some at Mt Mykale, some before Salamis.... some on the Boiotian plain» (lines 5-11). Indeed, the worship of Artemis at Megara appears to have been associated with stories about the Persian wars. Theognis 774-82 attributed to Apollo the rescue of Megara from the Medes. Moreover, Pausanias, in his *Description of Greece* (1.40.2-3), perhaps drawing upon local accounts of Megarians (see Liddel *BNJ* 487 F 16), offered an explanation for a bronze statue Artemis *Soteira* at Megara: he claimed knowledge of a story that said that Mardonios' men, after ravaging the Megarid (cf. Hdt. 9.14), wished to retreat to Thebes to rejoin Mardonios. However, by contrivance of Artemis night drew in as they made their way (γνώμη δὲ Ἀρτέμιδος νύκτα τε ὁδοιποροῦσιν ἐπιγενέσθαι) and they became lost in a mountainous area: «shooting arrows to test if the enemy army was nearby, an adjacent rock moaned as it was struck, and they shot arrows with more zeal. At last they exhausted their arrows, believing they were shooting at enemy soldiers. And then day came and the Megarians attacked, fighting as armed men against unarmed men

¹⁷ For discussion of this object (now in Paris) in the context of the cults of Megara, see ANTONETTI 1998, identifying the round spoked object in relief on it as a votive wheel: Ἡδύτιον | Ἀρτέμιδι | Ὀρθωσίαι.

without good supplies by now even of missiles, and they killed the majority of them. And to commemorate this they had a statue of Artemis the Saviour made.» The allusion to Artemis as *ιοχέαιρα*, therefore, may offer an allusion to this or a similar tradition; moreover, the tradition of Artemis *Orthosia* as an archer who directs her arrows directly at a target may also resonate with this story. Indeed, Artemis *Orthosia* was said by Apollodoros to support people in their quest for victory (Scholium on Pindar *Ol.* 3.54a).

Line 4: Εὐκτιμένου Ἀσκληπιάδαι: Euktimenos is a name which is relatively well-attested elsewhere in Greece (the *LPGN* lists 20 attestations of the name, of which 10 are from Attica); this is, however, the only attestation of the name in Megara. Asklepiades is a well-attested name in central Greece; the *LPGN* records 41 individuals bearing this name in this region, although only one other instance from Megara: *IG VII 75*, an honorific base of the mid-second century A.D.).

Line 5: μητρὸς σεμνοτάτης Νεικηφορίδος: Neikephoris is relatively well-attested, particularly in Asia Minor, but cognate names such as Neikophoros are very well known in Attica, the Peloponnese and Central Greece. Again, this is the only attestation of the name, in its female or male form, in Megara. The superlative σεμνοτάτη was a common term to describe both humans and deities. It was used to describe a certain Charopis on an epitaph from Chaironeia dated to the first century AD (*ArchDelt 2*, 1916, 256, no. 1). It is attested elsewhere as a laudatory descriptor for a mother: it appears in a dedication from Gytheion of 100-50 BC (*IG V*, 1 1186 line 2); it was used to describe the empress Pompeia Plotina in the inscribed letters to the Epicureans at Athens, 125 AD (*SEG 55.249* line 2).¹⁸ It appears to be a quality attached to women generally and is used also with respect to women portrayed as wives (e.g. *IG V*, 1 535 lines 15-16 from Sparta). In this case it may indicate that Asklepias' mother had also held a religious office. It is possible that it had relevance to Artemis: the chorus in Euripides' *Hippolytos* (61) describe Artemis as *semnotates*.¹⁹

Line 6: γένος ἔσθλόν is a phrase that is rare but epigraphically paralleled elsewhere (*I.Cret.* I xvii 37; *HASPELS* 1971, 313, 40) and perhaps indicates that Asklepias' mother had an illustrious heritage. Περ' stands probably for περί (as suggested by BOECKH).

Line 7: The genitive participle ψηφισαμένης in the feminine form appears to be constructed in apposition to βουλῆς; καὶ δήμου seems to be added on: this might suggest that the decree to appoint her may well have been initiated in the council. But we must note that evidence for the practices of selecting priests in the Greek world is extremely sparse: selection by vote seems to have been an acceptable custom but there is no evidence that it was widely deployed.²⁰ On the other hand, in fifth-century Athens a priesthood could be established by decree of the

¹⁸ Cf. also *IG XII*, 7 239 lines 25-26 and *IG XII*, 7 239 lines 27-8 of Amorgos and Euripides, *Ion*, 1086.

¹⁹ Cf. Bacchylides 5.101. The term is, however, frequently used in association with other deities: see LSJ s.v. σεμνός, I. See also ROBERT 1965, 222, on the quality.

²⁰ For the evidence for the selection of priests and other religious offices, see TURNER 1983, 120-140; PIRENNE-DELFORGE 2005, 6-13. For the selection of a priestess of the Cult of the Mother Goddess at Minoan Amorgos in the first century BC, see *IG XII*, 7 237 line 16; for the Eleians' election of a priestess for Eileithyia at Olympia, see Paus. 6.20.2 and CONNELLY 2007.

assembly (*IG I*³ 35), and its duties or perquisites could be reaffirmed or set out by decree (cf. *IG I*³ 36); priestesses were sometimes the honorands of decrees of the Athenian assembly (LAMBERT 2011). It is not unparalleled for the text of a decree to be enunciated in verse, and they sometimes are preserved in this way on private dedications during the imperial period (e.g. *F.Delphes* 1.210; 2.106; *I.Olympia* 457; see also RHODES with LEWIS, 1997, 560 with n. 42).

General Comments on 2:

The inscription of this monument envisages the statue of Asklepias speaking in the first person (line 3) and accounting for her appointment (lines 6-7). She exists in the nominative, as an agent, in the words of MA, «as an autonomous actor» (MA 2007a, 207). But the question of who set up this statue is left unanswered: possibilities include a dedication by another individual involved in the cult of Artemis at Megara or a relative or friend.²¹ Alongside her appearance as an autonomous actor, emphasis is placed in this inscription on the family ancestry of Asklepias, which dominates lines 3-6 of the text. It demonstrates family solidarity and acknowledgement of, or perhaps gratitude towards, her parents for their role in delegating her to the priestesshood (line 6). She is the member of a family in which she takes pride. Such a focus was a common one in inscriptions relating to priestesses in ancient Greece: we might think of the inscribed base for the statue of Philtera, a priestess of Athena *Polias* ca. 130-125 B.C., which boasts of a prominent ancestry which includes Lykourgos the orator and Diogenes the liberator of Athens (*IG II*³ 4, 1386).

If, as the inscription suggests, Asklepias had become eligible for priestly office on the basis of her ancestry, it is just possible that she was chosen from a shortlist of eligible candidates by vote of the council and assembly of the Megarians (line 7).²² Perhaps this was highlighted by the creation of a statue with an inscription, set up on a single stone, in order to distinguish her tenure from that held by those who had purchased it. Family monuments for females usually mention the name of the dedicator (as DILLON 2010, 39 observes), and so it is quite possible, alternatively, that the statue was set up by a public body: the reference of the final line to her selection by decree make it possible that this statue constituted a publicly-granted award. This interpretation is made more plausible by comparative evidence: an inscribed base from Megara of the Roman period set up by the demos and boule bestowing honours upon a priestess of Artemis *Soteira* (*IG VII* 112). There is, moreover, no indication of whether Asklepias was alive or deceased at the time when the statue was set up and so whether the statue celebrated or commemorated her life.²³

²¹ Priestly statues set up by relatives and friends: DILLON 2010, 42-51; MA 2013, 169-74; public honours: DILLON 2010, 38-40.

²² Selection from shortlists of those eligible by family ties: TURNER 1983, 127-128; CONNELLY 2007, 46-50; BLOK and LAMBERT 2009 (selection by sortition at Athens). PIRENNE-DELFORGE 2005, 14, notes that the tendency to confer priesthoods on members of local elite families accelerates in the imperial period, even in notionally public cults.

²³ An example of a clearly post-mortem statue for a priestess from Athens is that of the long-serving priestess of Athena *Polias*, Lysimache, the inscribed base of which states that she had lived to 88 years and served as priestess for 64: see *IG II*² 3453 with *AIO* notes.

This statue and its base, alongside other inscribed objects, provide evidence for the vitality of the honorific and epigraphical habits in Megara during the imperial period and later. Honorific inscriptions of the imperial period include those which bestow honours upon the emperor, his family and other benefactors (see ROBU 2020, 39-40 n. 3 citing *IG VII* 70-74, 93, 106-107, 3491) including priests and priestesses (*IG VII* 110-113). Such evidence extends into the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., from which period there are there inscriptions in honour of benefactors (e.g. *IG VII* 26, 93) and some which celebrate aspects of archaic and classical Megarian history, in the shape of the epigrams for Orsippos (*IG VII* 52) and the deceased of the Persian Wars (*IG VII* 53).²⁴

Nothing exact is known about the original location at which the object was set up at Megara, but we might envisage that it stood within, or close to, a sanctuary of Artemis or even a statue of Artemis *Orthosia*. The reader is informed that Asklepias «stands in awe» (ἄζομένη: line 1; cf. *Il.* 1.21) of Artemis the maiden: perhaps the statue was set up so as to face the representation of the deity. As MA notes, «statues attract statues» (MA 2007b, 89), and indeed a cult statue of a deity may have attracted votive portrait statues of her adherents. However, while there are attestations of a statue of Artemis *Soteira* at Megara, there are none otherwise attested of Artemis *Orthosia*. Overall, this object attests to the continuation of cult practice or the memory of cults in late antique Megara (cf. ROBU 2020, 60) and the interpretation of the verses proposed here suggests that cult practice that was overseen in part by the decree of the council and assembly (line 7).

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²⁴ See ROBU 2020. For another inscription of the third or fourth century AD possibly pertaining to the events of 480 B.C. see JOHNSTON 2011 (*SEG* 61.327).

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Captions:

Fig. 1. **1.** © Forschungsarchiv für Antike Plastik, image FA967-09. Photograph: Mr Raoul Laev.

Fig. 2. Engraving of **1** from the *Museum Worsleyanum* (Heidelberg University Library, C 3140 A FOL RES:1).

Fig. 3. **2.** © Forschungsarchiv für Antike Plastik, image FA 1166-01. Photograph: Mr Raoul Laev.

Fig. 4. **2.** Detail of front face of inscribed base. Photograph: P. A. Low.

Fig. 5. **2.** Front and side of inscribed base, showing text wrapping around the corner of the stone. Photograph: P. A. Low.

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