

BOOK REVIEWS

Patricia A. Butz, *The Art of the Hekatompedon Inscription and the Birth of the Stoichedon Style* (Monumenta Graeca et Romana 16), Leiden: Brill, 2010. xxiv + 172 pp. ISBN: 978-90-04-18308-7.

This book, developed from part of a doctoral thesis completed fifteen years earlier, is an aesthetic study of the Hekatompedon Inscription from the Athenian acropolis (*IG* 1³ 4). The text was inscribed on two reused metopes from a temple; it deals with prohibitions and penalties; it mentions the hecatompedon, a ‘hundred-foot’ temple on the acropolis (*B*.10-11, 18); and it is usually, and by Butz (hereafter *B.*), restored to mention the archonship of Ph[ilocrates], 485/4 (*A*.14-15, *B*.26-7). Epigraphically it is an exceptional piece of work (not only extremely elegant — *B.* describes it as ‘the most beautiful inscription written in the ancient Greek alphabet, from any locale, from any period’ — but with letters *c.* 2.0-2.5 cm. high, much larger than in most Athenian inscriptions), and it is one of the first fully-fledged instances of the *stoichēdon* style, found particularly but not only in Athenian public inscriptions of the fifth and fourth centuries, in which the letters are placed both horizontally and vertically on a regular grid and there is the same number of letters in each line.

Chapter 1 is devoted to a meticulous study of the letter forms of the inscription. In all essentials the style is the same throughout, but the letters are slightly smaller in the lower part of *A* than in the upper part of *A* and in *B*, and one technique was used to cut *omicron* and the other rounded letters in the upper part of *A* (apart from a distinctive *thēta*) and another in the lower part of *A* and in *B*.

Chapter 2 discusses the *stoichēdon* arrangement, noting that, while this is not one of the inscriptions in which guide lines are preserved, it is the earliest to survive in which the placing of the letters is so regular that guide lines must have been used. (*IG* 1³ 1, the decree for Salamis of shortly before 500, has one letter under another but not equal horizontal spacing as far as the second *stoichos* of line 7, but then changes to wider spacing, not wholly *stoichēdon*.) The horizontal spacing of the letters is optically rather than mechanically even; vertically there were probably not double guide lines marking the bottom of one line and the top of the next, but the letters are placed in their *stoichoi* so as to leave space between the lines (again in contrast to the Salamis decree).

Chapter 3 moves on to the content, and to the punctuation. The content is ‘religious in subject matter but highly administrative in intent’. The upper part of *A* involves three archons in the agora, *prytaneis* (‘chiefs’, not necessarily the *prytaneis* which the council of five hundred had at any rate from the 450’s), treasurers on the acropolis, and [slaves] and free men; it ends with an enactment and dating formula and a *vacat*. The lower part of *A* involves treasurers, a *prytanis* and a public (*sc.* slave). *B* involves prohibitions for the priestesses, *oikēmata* (buildings) and their contents, treasurers and a *prytanis*, and ends with an enactment and dating formula and a reference to ‘(these) two stones’. The text is baldly paratactic, and *B.* sees it as a republication in 485/4, perhaps with some changes, of older provisions. To articulate the text there is frequent use of a minor interpunct, of three small circles enclosing a dot, in a vertical line, not given a separate *stoichos* but fitted between letters, and one instance survives (*B*.8) and others may be postulated of a major interpunct, of nine small circles enclosing a dot, arranged 3×3 in a square, which is given a separate *stoichos*.

In chapter 4 *B.* turns to the origins of the *stoichēdon* style. R.P. Austin in *The Stoichedon Style in Greek Inscriptions* (1938) considered Attica the most likely place of origin and Samos the other possibility. *B.* judges that of early instances discussed by him and others the earliest both from Athens and from Samos could be of *c.* 540; she then adds the Samian *kouros* dedicated by Isches (*LSAG*, 1990 supplement, p. 472, **F**), which some date as early as the 570’s, and other

Samian dedications dated about the second quarter of the sixth century, to make Samos look more likely than Attica — and she notes that already in the Cup of Nestor from Pithecusae (*LSAG*, p. 239, 1), of c. 700 or earlier, there is some attempt to align the letters in the different lines. But was this invented by the Greeks out of nothing? B. notes that in Egypt, with which the Greeks had contact from the seventh century onwards, statues had for a long time been based on a grid of modules for the different parts of the body; hieroglyphic characters were too varied to be fitted into a *stoichēdon* pattern, but some Egyptian texts were arranged on a grid. She therefore suggests that Samos, with its particular involvement in the Greek colony at Naucratis, is a likely place for ‘manipulation of the principle of the figural grid to new subject matter, namely Greek alphabetic texts’. I wonder if this is right. Of course, the Greeks did import and adapt from other cultures, but Egypt was not the source of their alphabet. If B.’s suggestion were right, might we not expect to find mechanical *stoichēdon* from the beginning, increasing in elegance, rather than approaches to *stoichēdon* developing into full, gridded *stoichēdon*? It seems to me more likely that the possibility of arrangement on a grid was something perceived with the development of the alphabet.

Chapter 5 focuses on the *stoichēdon* style as the ultimate abstraction, with its placing of the letters on a grid. The word *stoichēdon* was used in Greek (the earliest surviving instance is in Arist. *GA* 4. 770 A 26) to refer to things placed in rows; the earliest occurrence which Austin noted in what has become its technical epigraphic sense is in A. Boeckh’s *CIG* (and it appears in the *Oxford English Dictionary* only in a quotation from S. V. Tracy in the entry ‘word’). B. focuses on its one appearance in an inscription, the *stēlē* of Moschion, *SEG* 8 464.33, of the second or third century A.D. from Egypt, where it is used in a simile to refer to the abacus scheme of “l. 27” in that inscription (the scheme required *stoichēdon* in the epigraphists’ sense of that word, and in fact it is inscribed in an approximation to *stoichēdon* but not on a grid), elucidated by diagrams in *SEG*, which unfortunately B. cites but does not reproduce. She contrasts fully regular *stoichēdon* (as ‘rectified’ *stoichēdon*) with departures from full regularity (as ‘offset’ *stoichēdon*), and argues that the latter should not be regarded as primitive or imperfect — and since her book was completed an instance of truly offset *stoichēdon* has been found, in a casualty list from the battle of Marathon, where the letters of one line are located vertically between the letters of the previous line, giving a similar impression to the pattern of bricks and the pointing between them which avoids structural weakness in a wall (G. Stainhauer, *Horos* 17-21 [2004-9], 679-92, with 690 *eik.* 1 and 691 *eik.* 2).

Chapter 6 returns to the Hecatompēdon Inscription, ‘as monument and masterpiece’. With its elegant, large lettering, on metopes of fine Hymettan marble (not Parian, as used to be thought), this inscription is indeed monumental, and the regular *stoichēdon* arrangement contributes to its monumentality. The cutter was designated the Hecatompēdon Master by H. Immerwahr, and B. claims that the inscription is indeed a masterpiece. Following Immerwahr, she attributes to the same cutter or at any rate to the same director part of the Persian Wars inscription *IG* 1³ 503/4 (A.1-2, with the same three-circle interpunct), a fragment of a sacred law from the Piraeus, with a similar interpunct, *IG* 1³ 242, and the dedication of Smicrus, *IG* 1³ 646; and she considers other possibilities; but the Hecatompēdon Inscription is the cutter’s master work.

The book ends with appendixes giving a full fragment-by-fragment treatment of *A* (two fragments have been added since the publication of *IG* 1³), and texts and translations of both *A* and *B*. The book is illustrated with many drawings and photographs: the use of glossy paper has allowed a high quality of reproduction, though a few of the photographs are not very clear. Disappointingly, in a study devoted to the minutiae of a meticulously-cut inscription, B. has not been as meticulous as she might have been over the minutiae of her own book.

This has evidently been a labour of love. It brings out very well the qualities which make this exceptional inscription exceptional, and it embodies and will stimulate further thought about the *stoichēdon* style and its development.

P.S. Butz did not know, and I did not know until after completing this review, C.M. Keesling, 'Rereading the Acropolis Dedications', in D. Jordan & J. Traill (edd.), *Lettered Attica: A Day of Attic Epigraphy . . . 8 March 2000* (Publ. Canad. Arch. Inst. Ath. 3, 2003), 41-54: she discusses the development of the *stoichēdon* style, without committing herself between an Athenian and an Ionian origin, and focuses on texts displaying what she calls 'a consistent pattern of letter alternation' (e.g. Meiggs & Lewis 15. A = IG i³ 501. A), of which the Marathon casualty list now gives us a conspicuous example. I thank Dr. A. Petrović for this.

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Elizabeth A. Meyer, *Metics and the Athenian Phialai-Inscriptions: A Study in Athenian Epigraphy and Law* (*Historia Einzelschriften* 208), Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010. 167 pp. ISBN: 978-3-515-09331-6.

The *phialai*-inscriptions are fragments from a set of Athenian inscriptions, of the second half of the fourth century, cataloguing instances when a metic, X, had 'escaped' (*sc.* prosecution by) Y, and a *phialē* (shallow dish, here of silver: see the drawing at her p. 67 fig. 1) weighing 100 drachmae was dedicated. The standard interpretation which has been built up since the late nineteenth century is that these were the *phialai exeleutherikai* of IG 2² 1469.A.5-6, 15-16, 1480.A.9, dedicated by slaves living apart from their masters after gaining their freedom; that the prosecutions were in *dikai apostasiou* (private suits for desertion) for breaking the conditions of their manumission, and the dedications were a kind of tax or fee for the absolute freedom gained by acquittal in these cases and the publication of the result; and that the prosecutions were fictive, with prosecutor and defendant colluding to establish the defendant's absolute freedom.

Meyer (hereafter M.) notes that that interpretation is open to a range of objections, which she finds cumulatively fatal. In particular, it is only an assumption that these *phialai* were *phialai exeleutherikai*; [*dikai apo*]stasiou is simply a restoration in IG 2² 1578.2 (= her 29.2); a fee of the kind supposed is without parallel in Athens and very high compared with such fees elsewhere; there seem to be too many instances of this phenomenon for a few occasions, particularly when we remember that in the fourth century *dikai* (private suits) reached a court only on appeal; the Athenian state was otherwise not normally involved in manumissions; and this seems an unnecessarily cumbersome way to bring about manumissions. In this book she reedits all the fragments (Part II); and sets out the history of the traditional interpretation and the objections to it, and offers a new interpretation (Part I).

In Part II M. has done a very thorough job. She does not add or subtract any fragments, except that she is not sure that SEG 44 68 (= her 33), containing part of one name and a *paragraphos* below it, belongs; but she has nearly 150 new readings, some of them significant. She provides photographs of all the fragments, in many cases for the first time (with captions giving only IG or Agora inventory numbers, not her own numbers). Building particularly on the work of D.M. Lewis, she discusses which fragments belong to the same *stēlē*, concluding (pp. 13-14, in Part I) that twenty of the thirty-three are from five *stēlai* and that altogether a maximum of eighteen *stēlai* but probably fewer are represented. She dates all after *c.* 335/4, placing earliest IG 2² 1560 which refers to a law and 1575. A which can be restored to do so (= her 10 and 25), and latest IG 2² 1578 and SEG 25 180, 26 180 (= her 29, 30, 31), which she believes dealt with new *phialai* as they were dedicated (*cf.* below), and arguing that there is no chronological pattern in the variations in format within and between *stēlai*.