

## Themistocles' *philotimia* in *IEleusis* 300 (= SEG 30.93) ll. 65-67: some linguistic observations

Since its publication by Trepsiadēs in 1932, *IEleusis* 300 (= SEG 30.93), an Athenian decree of the 20/19 BC honouring the *dadouch* Themistokles, son of Theophrastus of Hagnous, of the *genos* of Kerykes, has kept attracting a steady flow of scholarly interest as a unique window into the various religious and administrative duties linked to *gene* priesthoods in post classical Athens.<sup>1</sup> In particular, in the last two decades or so, *IEleusis* 300 has become one of the main bones of contention in the contemporary debate about the methods used by *gene* to appoint candidates to priesthoods after the 21 BC Athenian religious reform.<sup>2</sup> Also on the basis of the exceptional praise (ll. 34-37)<sup>3</sup> bestowed onto Themistocles as torch-bearer in the Eleusinian Mysteries in *IEleusis* 300, our honorand (= no. 16 of Clinton 1974), linked by marriage to a descendant of the Eteoboutad politician Lykourgos of Boutadai, and known to us as the 're-organiser' of the priesthood of Poseidon Erechtheus ([Plut.] *X orat.* 843C),<sup>4</sup> has been seen by some as the leading figure promoting and enacting the overall reform of the Athenian *gene* in 21 BC.<sup>5</sup>

Be this as it may, what our inscription repeatedly emphasizes is Themistokles' extraordinary zeal and commitment to the performance of the *dadouchy* to the greater glory of his *genos*, the Kerykes, and of the sacred rites in general (cf. ll. 34-37 (on which see n. 3) and

---

\*My sincerest thanks to A.C. Cassio and G. D'Alessio for having read and improved the initial draft of this paper. It goes without saying that I alone am responsible for what I have written.

<sup>1</sup> After the ed. pr. by Trepsiadēs, full-scale re-editions of the text have been provided by Roussel 1934, Clinton 1974: 50-57 and id. *Eleusis*, IA: 299-300 (text), II: 304-12 (commentary). For a detailed bibliography on the inscription up to 2002, see Clinton 2 *Eleusis*, I: 300. The text printed by Lambert 2011: 124-26 reproduces that of Clinton *Eleusis*; the translation (126-128) is his own. When not otherwise specified, the text of the inscription quoted in this article is that printed by Clinton *Eleusis*.

<sup>2</sup> See Aleshire 1994 (by allotment from a restricted pool of pre-elected candidates); Clinton *Eleusis*, II: 304-305 and 307 (by election); Blok-Lambert 2009 (by allotment but not from a restricted list of preselected candidates). On the huge question of the revival of the *gene* in the religious reform at Athens around ca. 21 BC, see the two different ideological perspectives (Lambert: a distinctly 'Romanizing revival'; Aleshire: a Greek revival of old traditions) sketched out by Lambert-Aleshire 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Praising his extraordinary ἀρετή and εὐγένεια, the delegation declares that Themistokles 'with the outstanding performance of his *dadouchy* has enhanced the dignity and honour of the sacred rites', with the result that 'the grandeur of the Eleusinian mysteries is deemed worthy of greater awe and proper adornment by everyone' (ll. 34-37 τῆι περὶ τὴν δαιδουχίαν ὑπεροχῆ[ι] τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ τ[ε] μίον τῶν ἱερῶν ἐπαύξειν, ἐξ ὧν τὸ περὶ τὰ μυστήρια μεγαλοπρεπὲς περιπτοτέρας ἐκπλήξεως ὑπὸ παντὸς ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ προσήκοντος ἀξιοῦται κόσμου). Lambert's translation of τοῦ προσήκοντος ἀξιοῦται κόσμου at l. 37 is incorrect (id. 2011: 127 '... is accorded greater awe by every man and by the throng of people which comes').

<sup>4</sup> The relevant passage is the following: διετάξατο δὲ καὶ τὴν ἱερωσύνην τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος Ἐρεχθέως. On the meaning of διετάξατο ('to arrange', 'to organise' rather than 'to undertake the priesthood of'), see Aleshire 1994: 331 n. 29 and ead. in Aleshire-Lambert 2011: 566.

<sup>5</sup> Aleshire in Aleshire-Lambert 2011: 565-68 (in this direction already Schmalz 1996); more cautiously and, in my mind, correctly, Lambert in Aleshire-Lambert 2011: 569, observes that 'if he [sc. Themistokles] had carried out a systematic reform of all the Attic *gene* at this time, it is perhaps a little surprising that the decree mentions only the Kerykes and not the wider reform.'

ll. 61-63<sup>6</sup>). Themistokles' outstanding performance as sacred official is ideologically presented as indissolubly linked to the inherited transmission of both εὐγένεια and priesthood (cf. e.g. ll. 37-39 παρειληφότα τὴν εὐ[γ]ένειαν καὶ τὴν ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἱερωσύνην ἐγ διαδοχῆς παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς Θεοφράστου καὶ τοῦ πάππου Θεμιστοκλέους κτλ.). Themistokles, to use Lambert's words, is presented to the potential reader as a quintessentially 'aristocratic priest'.<sup>7</sup> Part and parcel of this aristocratic self-display of religious devotion and φιλοτιμία is, with a consciously archaizing gesture, Themistokles' archival research and revival of ancestral traditions that had fallen out of practice (ll. 63-68). The text of these lines is worth quoting in full:

... σπουδάσαντα περὶ τὴν τῶν πατρ[ί]-  
ων ἐπίγνωσιν καὶ τὴν ἴδῃσιν ἐσχηκότα μὴ μόνον ἐκ τῆς περὶ τὴν ο[ί]-  
κίαν γεγонуίας ἐπὶ πολλὰς γενεὰς αὐτῶι δαιδουχίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆ[ς] 65  
περ[ί] αὐτὸν φιλοτ[ε]μίας εἰς τὴν τῶν ἐκλελειμμένων πατρίων ἀ[πό]-  
κτησιν, ἐπιπεσοῦσης τῆς περὶ τὰς ἀπογραφὰς ζητήσεως πολλὰ [καὶ]  
[μ]ε[γ]άλα διαπεπράχθαι κτλ.

Themistokles' antiquarian interest in and knowledge of the 'ancestral traditions' (ll. 63-64 σπουδάσαντα περὶ τὴν τῶν πατρ[ί]ων ἐπίγνωσιν) has a double source: it derives from both the hereditary transmission of the priesthood within his family (ll. 64-65 ἐκ τῆς περὶ τὴν ο[ί]κίαν γεγонуίας ἐπὶ πολλὰς γενεὰς αὐτῶι δαιδουχίας: 'the tenure of the *dadouchy* by members of his house for many generations'<sup>8</sup>) and from his own archival researches to recover τὰ πάτρια, ancestral practices that had somehow fallen into oblivion (ll. 66-67). While the nature of Themistokles' archival researches (his ζητήσις περὶ τὰς ἀπογραφὰς at l. 67) has been the subject of various speculations among scholars,<sup>9</sup> no one seems to have questioned so far the exact meaning of the text of ll. 65-66, that is, the direction and scope of Themistokles' φιλοτιμία. The text of these lines as printed by Clinton goes back to Trepsiadēs, who, however, did not report in his original transcription that ἀπόκτησιν at ll. 66-67 is in fact a supplement.<sup>10</sup> Clinton was the first to rectify the error by printing ἀ[πό]κτησιν:<sup>11</sup> as it is in fact visible from the plate (no. 136) published by Clinton *Eleusis*, IB and from a recent photograph of the inscription kindly made available to me by the Ephorate of Western Attika, Peiraus and islands, after the initial alpha we have a lacuna (and part of the marble has been chipped away) while the following line (67) starts with ΚΤΗΣΙΝ (the inscription is non-stoichedon). At end of line 66, thus, after A there is a lacuna of two letters.

<sup>6</sup> πάντα δὲ πράττοντα τῆς τοῦ γέ[ν]ους αὐξήσεως ἕνεκα καὶ τῶν προσηκόντων τιμῶν αὐτῶι τε καὶ ἐκ[ά]στωι τῶν ἐκ τοῦ γένους ἱερέων.

<sup>7</sup> Lambert 2011: 89-92 (quotation from 89).

<sup>8</sup> Translation by Lambert 2011: 128.

<sup>9</sup> Full discussion in Clinton *Eleusis*, II: 312. Already Oliver 1980: 43-45 proposed to interpret the ἀπογραφαί of *IEleusis* 300 as records registering the membership within the Kerukes *genos*, that is, de facto a record of eligibility for office.

<sup>10</sup> Trepsiadēs 1932: 226 prints the following text of ll. 66-67: τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν φιλοτιμίας εἰς τὴν τῶν ἐκλελειμμένων πατρίων ἀπόκτησιν. The same is true also for the edition of Roussel 1934: 821.

<sup>11</sup> Clinton 1974: 52. This difference from the ed. pr. is not recorded by the author among the 'significant corrections' listed at the bottom of the new edition.

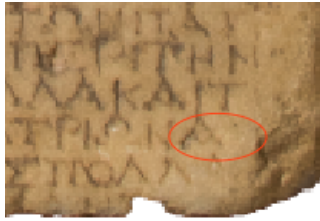


Figure 1. *IEleusis* 300 = EM 631 by courtesy of the Ephorate of Western Attika, Peiraus and islands

While Clinton rectified the error, he and all the other subsequent scholars have kept Trepsiades' supplement ἀ[πό]κτησιν without questioning its suitability to the context. Whereas the general sense of the expression is clear (Themistokles' commitment to the restoration/recovery of the ancient rites),<sup>12</sup> a closer look at the semantic range of ἀπόκτησις shows that this cannot be the right word in our inscription. Just like ἀποκτάομαι means 'to lose possession of, to alienate' (*LSJ<sup>9</sup>*), both in a concrete and metaphorical sense,<sup>13</sup> so ἀπόκτησις indicates the act of 'giving away', 'alienating' something. This act of dispossession can be metaphorical or very literal: in the second-century AD philosopher Secundus, our earliest extant occurrence of the term in Greek literary texts, death is described as 'loss of life' (*Sent.* 19 θάνατος ἀπόκτησις βίου), whereas in four legal documents spanning from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD ἀπόκτησις acquires the technical meaning of 'deed of gift', that is, 'donation' intended as an act of patrimonial dispossession.<sup>14</sup> What Themistokles is aiming at in his zeal (φιλοτιμία εἰς + acc.) cannot possibly be 'the loss' (ἀπόκτησις) of ancient traditions that had fallen out of use (τῶν ἐκλελειμμένων πατρίων) but just its opposite: their recovery (ἀνάκτησις).<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, the text of *IEleusis* 300 l. 66-67 must be supplemented τῆ[ς] | περ[ι] αὐτὸν φιλοτ[ε]μίας εἰς τὴν τῶν ἐκλελειμμένων πατρίων ἀ[νά]κτησιν.

The second element that deserves attention in τῆ[ς] | περ[ι] αὐτὸν φιλοτ[ε]μίας εἰς τὴν τῶν ἐκλελειμμένων πατρίων ἀ[νά]κτησιν is the attributive position of περ[ι] αὐτὸν, sandwiched as it is between the definite article and the noun φιλοτιμία. Of course, φιλοτιμία

<sup>12</sup> Clinton *Eleusis*, II: 312 refers to Oliver's translation/paraphrase: Themistokles exerted his zeal to discover τὰ πάτρια not only via the knowledge he inherited as member of the Kerykes but also via 'his noble effort for the *genos* toward the recovery of the πάτρια which had become obsolete' (Oliver 1950: 50). See also Lambert's translation of these lines: 'but also from his honour-loving behaviour with respect to it (sc. the *genos*) as regards lost and discontinued translation' (id. 2011: 128).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Hsch. α 6415 Cunningham ἀποκτᾶσθαι· τὸ ἀποβάλλεσθαι, a quotation from Greg. Naz. *Or.* 40.32 [= 36, 404C M.] μὴ τὸ καλῶς κτᾶσθαι τυπούτω μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ καλῶς ἀποκτᾶσθαι, (where Gregory exhorts the newly baptized not only to make good use of their financial resources but also to give them away 'well', that is, he encourages them towards ascetic dispossession by donating to the poor). The verb makes its first recorded appearance in literary texts in Cassius Dio *Hist. Rom.* (*Joannis Antiocheni excerpta e Dione derivata*) p. 752.12 Boissevain = fr. 162.1.2-3 Roberto ὅσα γὰρ τῷ Αὐγούστῳ ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ περιποιήθη, οὗτος ἐν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ ἀπεκτίσαστο (said of Gaius Tiberius).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. P.Sorb. 2.69 (= *TM* 20110; 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, Hermopolis), P.Lond. 5.1761 (*TM* 36936; 6<sup>th</sup> century AD? Hermopolites?), P.Würz. 19 (= *TM* 17393; 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, Hermopolis); P.Grenf. 2.70.25 (= *TM* 22627, 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, from Kysis; the reading, though, is uncertain: Crönert in *Mitteis-Wilcken* 1912: 210 suggested as alternative reading ἀπὸ Κύσ(εως) but cf. Preisigke 1915, I: 183 s.v). For this technical fiscal meaning of ἀπόκτησις, see Gascoy 1994: 42-43 ('un compte de titulaire d'impôt'; the 'cession (onéreuse ou gracieuse), ou abandon d'un bien').

<sup>15</sup> See *LSJ<sup>9</sup>* s.v. ἀνάκτησις ('regaining', 'recovery') and ἀνακτάομαι ('regain for oneself, recover').

περί + acc. (just like φιλοτιμία + gen., or ἐν + dat.,<sup>16</sup> or πρὸς + acc.) to express the goal of one's ambition is a well-attested form in both literary and epigraphic texts as a quick search with *TLG* and *PHI* immediately shows. Yet, since in our text the direction towards which Themistokles' zeal is directed has already been specified by εἰς + acc. (i.e., εἰς τὴν ... ἀ[ν]άκκτησιν), one may legitimately wonder what is the additional information conveyed by περί αὐτόν, if any at all. To the best of my knowledge, the only suggestion that has been put forward (and accepted by all subsequent scholars) has been that by Oliver, who referred περί αὐτόν to the *genos* of the Kerykes and thus translated 'his [i.e. Themistokles'] noble effort for the *genos* toward the recovery of the *πάτρια* etc.<sup>17</sup> At least two observations can be made. First, grammar seems to speak against this suggestion: unless we take περί αὐτόν as one of the rare cases (and all prior to 400 BC) where we have a *neuter* form of the pronoun αὐτός ending with final *nu*,<sup>18</sup> there is no way that αὐτόν could refer to γένος (neuter). Secondly, the last mention of the γένος is, if not remote, anyway at a certain distance in our decree: it occurs three lines above, at l. 63. Furthermore, if the first source of Themistokles' knowledge about the mysteries comes from his inherited priesthood and family tradition (ll. 64-65), the second one seems somehow connected to his own personal initiative, through which he was able to 'accomplish many great services' (ll. 67-68 πολλά [καὶ] [μ]ε[γ]άλα διαπεπράχθαι) and deserve thus the honour presently awarded to him by the Athenian *demos*. It seems thus more reasonable to take τῆ[ς] | περ[ὶ] αὐτόν φιλοτιμίας as an example of a common post classical feature of the *koine*, that is, the use of a prepositional phrase in place of a possessive adjective or the genitive of a personal pronoun.<sup>19</sup> In other words, τῆς περὶ αὐτόν φιλοτιμίας would be the equivalent in our inscription of the classical τῆς αὐτοῦ φιλοτιμίας (for the use of indirect reflexives in the same inscription see l. 33 τὸν ἑαυτοῦ<sup>20</sup> βίον).<sup>21</sup> Instances of this phenomenon in the syntagm ἡ περὶ αὐτόν φιλοτιμία (= ἡ φιλοτιμία αὐτοῦ) / ἡ περὶ αὐτόν φιλοτιμία (= ἡ ἑαυτοῦ φιλοτιμία, if the context requires the use of a reflexive pronoun)<sup>22</sup> in both literary texts and inscriptions are not unusual: among the inscriptions cf. e.g. *I Aphrodisia* 32 ll. 16-18 = Laum no. 100 (1<sup>st</sup> AD) τὸ δὲ περὶ αὐτὸν<sup>23</sup> εἰς τὴν πατρίδα φιλότιμον ἐνδεικνύμενος, *lvP* II 430 = *IGR* 4.440 (imperial age) ὁ δῆ[μ]ος | Γάϊον Φούριον Γαίου υἱὸν Ῥοῦφον | διὰ τὸ πᾶσαν εἶναι περὶ αὐτόν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν πρὸς ἑαυτόν εὖνοιαν (where πρὸς ἑαυτόν clearly refers to the *demos*, whereas περὶ αὐτόν ἀρετὴν to the personal excellence of the *laudandus*)<sup>24</sup>, *I Ephes.* 614C ll. 5-9 (=

<sup>16</sup> Cf. ll. 57-58 of our inscription: φ[ι]λ[ο]τιμίας ἐμ πολλοῖς καὶ μεγάλοις ἀγῶσιν.

<sup>17</sup> Oliver 1950: 50; his interpretation is accepted also by Lambert 2011 (see above n. 12)

<sup>18</sup> For this rare phenomenon, see Threatte 1996: 330. Oliver 1950 does not mention this possibility.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Horrocks 2010: 92.

<sup>20</sup> For the spelling εατ –of the reflexive pronoun in Attic inscription of the Roman era, see Threatte 1996: 313 and 322.

<sup>21</sup> For αὐτ- (with smooth breathing) as the indirect reflexive together with αὐτ- and ἑα(υ)τ- in the Roman period, see Threatte 1996: 322-23.

<sup>22</sup> Threatte 1996: 316 observes that 'normally the genitive of the reflexive is in the attributive position, that of αὐτοῦ in the predicative but rare exceptions probably occurred'. The issue is further complicated by the occasional use of the αὐτ- form as indirect reflexive in the Roman period (see note above).

<sup>23</sup> I follow Laum 1914, II: 100 in intending AYTON as a reflexive pronoun.

<sup>24</sup> Schweizer 1898: 162-63 observes that in the inscriptions of Pergamon '[d]ie Formen αὐτο- und ἑαυτο- kommen z.T. noch neben einander vor' but that 'Verwechslung von αὐτο- und αὐτο- findet sich nicht'.

EPhesos 1104 McCabe, 1<sup>st</sup> AD) ἐπεὶ μετήλλαξε τὸν βίον Μάρκος Ἀντώνιος, Μάρκου υἱὸς Φαβία ἄλβος, ἀνὴρ ἐν πολλοῖς τὴν περὶ αὐτὸν πρὸς τὴν πόλιν εὐνοίαν ἐπιδειγμένος, TAM V.2 1356 (imperial age) ἡ βουλή καὶ ὁ δῆμος ἐτείμησαν Ἑρμίππου Ἑρμίππου τοῦ Ἑρμίππου ἥρωα διὰ τὴν περὶ αὐτὸν ἀρετὴν γενόμενον πάσης τειμῆς ἄξιον REG 1996:2/3 (from Xanthos, II BC) ll. 22-23 ἐπιγνόντες τὴν τε ἐν τοῖς ἐπίανω χρόνοις περὶ αὐτὸν καλοκάγαθίαν.<sup>25</sup> The 'many and great services' that Themistokles accomplished during his tenure as dadouch were prompted both by his hereditary pride as a member of the Kerykes *genos* and by 'his own' personal zeal for the recovery of the ancient rites.

Lucia Prauscello

lucia.prauscello@classics.ox.ac.uk

### Bibliography

- Aleshire, S.B. and Lambert S.D. (2011) 'The Attic *gene* and the Athenian religious reform of 21 BC', in J. H. Richardson and F. Santangelo (eds.), *Priests and state in the Roman world*. Stuttgart: 553-75
- Blok, J. and Lambert, S.D. (2009) 'The appointment of priests in Attic *gene*', *ZPE* 169: 95-121
- Clinton, K. (1974) 'The sacred officials of the Eleusinian mysteries', *TAPA* 64: 1-143  
— *Eleusis, the inscriptions on stone: documents of the sanctuary of the Two Goddesses and public documents of the Deme*, 3 vols. Athens 2005-2008
- Gascou, J. (1994), *Un codex fiscal hermopolite (P.Sorb. II 69)*, American Studies in Papyrology no. 32, Atlanta
- Horrocks, G. (2010) *Greek: a history of the language and its speakers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edn. London
- Lambert, S.D. (2011) 'The social construction of priests and priestesses in Athenian honorific decrees from the fourth century BC to the Augustan period', in M. Horster and A. Klöckner (eds.), *Civic priests. Cult personnel in Athens from the Hellenistic period to late antiquity*. Berlin: 67-133
- Laum, B. (1914) *Stiftungen in der griechischen und römischen Antike. Ein Beitrag zur antiken Kulturgeschichte*, 2 vols. Berlin
- Mitteis, L. and Wilcken, U. (1912) *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde*, 2 vols, Leipzig
- Oliver, J.H. (1950) *The Athenian expounders of the sacred and ancestral law*. Baltimore  
— (1980) 'From *gennētai* to *curiales*', *Hesperia* 49: 30-56
- Preisigke, F. (1915) *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*, 2 vols, Strassburg
- Roussel, P. (1934) 'Un nouveau document concernant le *génos* des ΚΗΡΥΚΕΣ', in *Annuaire de l'institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales 2 (= Mélanges Bidez)*. Brussels: 819-34
- Schweizer, R. (1898) *Grammatik der pergamenischen Inschriften. Beiträge zur Laut- und Flexionslehre der gemeingriechischen Sprache*, Berlin
- Threatte, L. (1996) *The grammar of Attic inscriptions*. vol. II. Berlin and New York
- Trepsiadēs (1932) 'Ψήφισμα τιμητικὸν εἰς ἄδοϋχον Θεμιστοκλέα', in K. Kourouniotes (ed.), *Eleusiniaka* I. Athens: 222-36

---

<sup>25</sup>G. D'Alessio pointed out to me that the use of this syntagm (abstract noun combined with a prepositional phrase in place of a possessive adjective or the genitive of a personal pronoun) seems to be particularly frequent in honorific inscriptions: cf. e.g. *IMagn.* 160 I.4 διὰ τὴν περὶ αὐτὸν ἀρετ[ὴν καὶ δικαιοσύ]νην.