

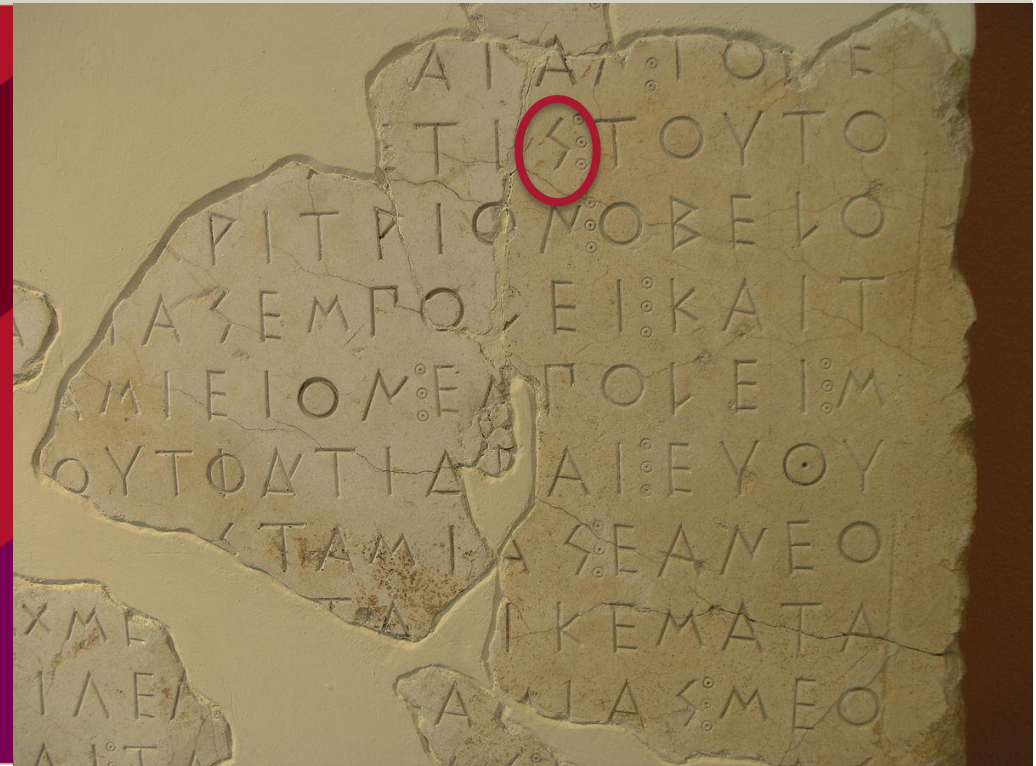
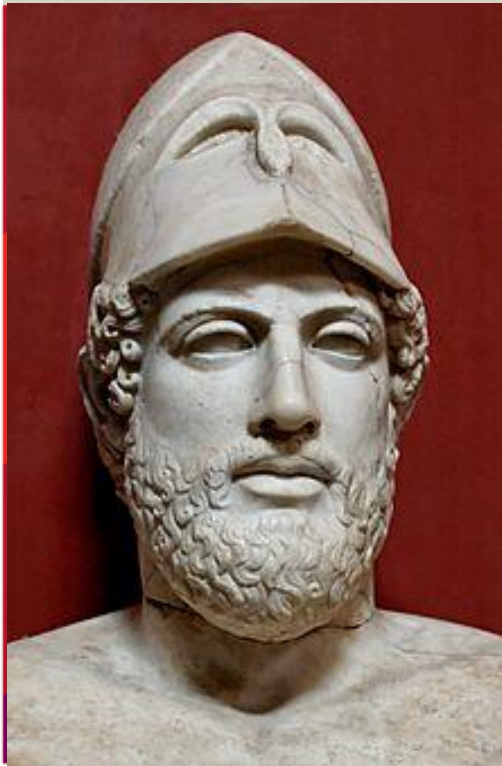
Re-dating the Athenian Empire

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Option H Greece: The Greek World 500 – 400 BC Development of
2 Athens and the Athenian Empire

Option G Pericles Evaluation
4



What I will discuss

- The nature of the problem & why it is important
- The history of the 3-bar sigma debate – the “sigma-enigma”*
- New dating criteria
- Old & new dates
- 2 case studies
- Dating imperialism

* A. Henry, *ZPE* 120 (1998) 45-8



Cavalcade. Block II from the west frieze of the Parthenon, ca. 447–433 B.C.

The nature of the problem & why it is important

* Our understanding of the Athenian Empire is based upon three types of evidence:

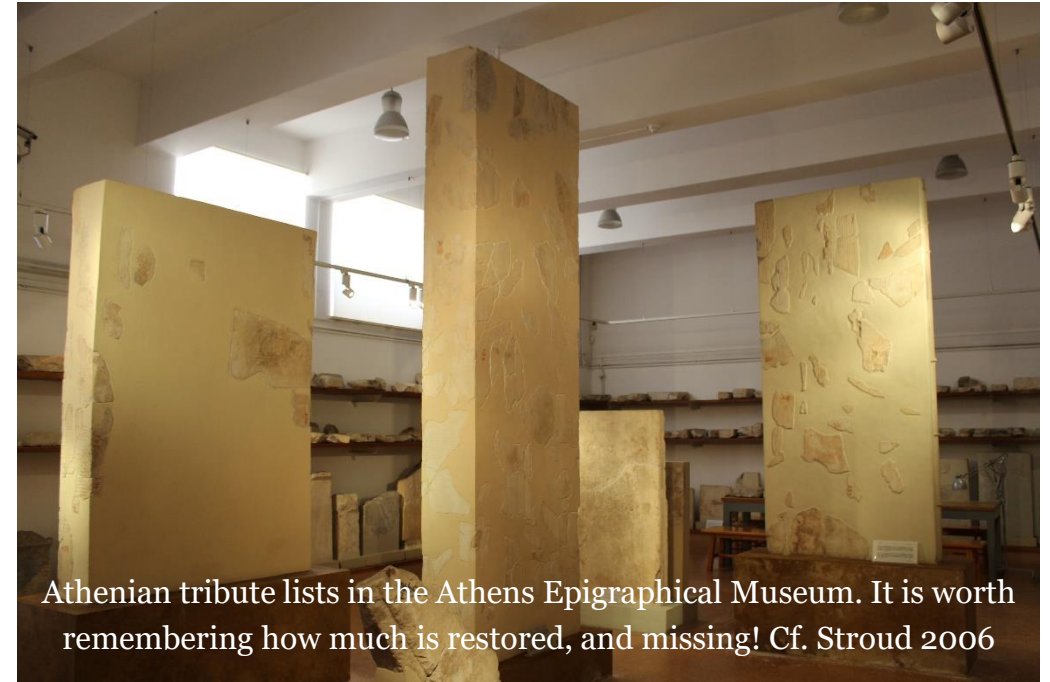
1. Texts, including Thucydides, Plutarch, Xenophon, Diodorus Siculus, plays etc
2. Archaeology, including artefacts such as coins
3. Inscriptions

* There has been a tendency to privilege the first type of evidence, especially Thucydides, with absence of evidence often being seen as significant

* Epigraphical evidence from inscriptions can pose interpretive difficulties due to missing or damaged sections, especially dates which rely mainly on the name of the eponymous Archon being preserved. In the absence of this, epigraphists have relied upon other criteria

The history of the 3-bar sigma debate

- ATL published in 1939
- Used the 3-bar sigma lettering criterion which held that no Athenian public document containing this form (as opposed to the Ionic 4-bar sigma) could predate the year 446 B.C. (= date of last *aparchē* inscription – IG I³ 265)
- Cf use of ‘tailed rho’
- From 1961, Harold Mattingly alone opposed
- In 1990, Chambers, Gallaci & Spanos used photo-enhancement & laser scanning to argue that the archon on the Egesta decree was [Ant]iphon (418/7 B.C.), not [Ha]bron (dated 458/7 B.C.).
- It took until 2010 for this to be widely accepted



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- Historical contextualisation should always take precedence over other considerations.
 - Grammatical observations can be good guidelines: similarity in diction, syntax, idioms and *similia* offer good comparison anchors.
 - Archon names appear in the prescripts of Attic decrees from 421/0 onwards. Clearly something caused the Athenians to reorganise their bureaucratic protocol (perhaps the Peace of Nicias).

(Papazarkadas 2009, 68)

But, not every 5th-century inscription must be down-dated; it only means that the later date cannot be ruled out on account of its letter forms.

(Rhodes 2008, 503)

Key decrees – old orthodox dating

M&L	IG I ³	M&L date	Subject	Context
31	10	469-50	Phaselis	Compelling court cases to be held at Athens
37	11. a	458/7 ?	(S)Egesta	Involvement in Sicily
40	14	c. 453/2	Erythrae	Allied submission - requirement for members of the League to bring offerings to Great Panathenaia
44	35	c. 448	Athena Nike	Acropolis building program
45	1453 + ors	450-46	Coinage etc	Enforcing the use of Athenian coins, weights and measures
46	34	447 ?	Tribute (Clinias)	Tightening up tribute collection – allies as cash cows
47	37	447/6 ?	Colophon	Treaty imposing democracy
52	40	446/5	Chalcis	Oath of loyalty to Athens

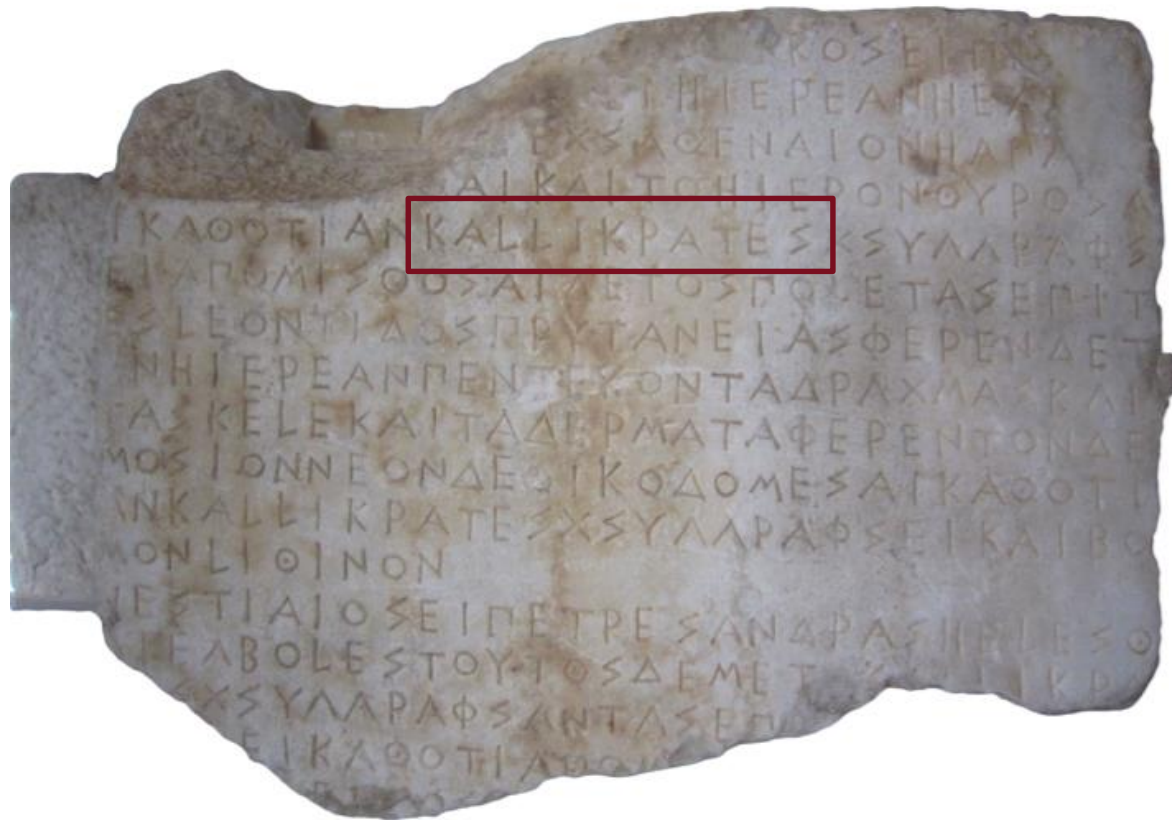
Key decrees – new dating

M&L	IG I ³	M&L date	New date	Subject/Context
40	14	c. 453/2	435/4	Erythrae: Allied submission - requirement for members of the League to bring offerings to Great Panathenaia
47	37	447/6 ?	428/7	Colophon: Treaty imposing democracy
31	10	469-50	420s	Phaselis: Compelling court cases to be held at Athens
46	34	447 ?	425/4	Clinias: Tightening up tribute payment
45	1453 + ors	450-46	425	Coinage: Enforcing the use of Athenian coins, weights and measures
52	40	446/5	424/3	Chalcis: Oath of loyalty to Athens
44	35	c. 448	424/3	Athena Nike: Acropolis building program
37	11. <i>a</i>	458/7 ?	418/7	(S)Egesta: Involvement in Sicily

Case studies

IG I³ 35 – Athena Nike decree

c. 448 or 424/3 B.C. ?



[ἔδοχσεν τει βολει καὶ το]ι [δέ]μο[ι·...] 1
[.....ἐπεστάτει..8].ικος εἶπε· [τει]
[Ἀθηναίαι τει Νί]κει hiέρεαν hὲ ἄγ[..
[.....11.....]ι ἔχς Ἀθηναίον haπα[σο]
[ν...7....].σθαι καὶ το hiερὸν θυροσα- 5
ι καθ' ὃ τι ἂν Καλλικράτες χσυγγράφσ-
ει· ἀπομισθοσαι δὲ τὸς πολετὰς ἐπὶ τ-
ες Λεοντίδος πρυτανείας· φέρειν δὲ τ-
ὲν hiέρεαν πεντέκοντα δραχμὰς καὶ
τὰ σκέλε καὶ τὰ δέρματα φέρειν τον δε- 10
μοσίον· νεὸν δὲ οἰκοδομεσαι καθότι
ἂν Καλλικράτες χσυγγράφσει καὶ βο-
μὸν λίθινον. vac.
hesτιαῖος εἶπε· τρες ἄνδρας heλέσθ-
αι ἐγ βολες· τούτος δὲ μετ[ὰ] Καλλικρά- 15
[το]ς χσυγγράφσαντας ἐπ[....10.....]
[..4..]ει καθ' ὃ τι ἀπομ[ισθοθέσεται..]
[...6...] ει [.] ος [.....18.....]

IG I³ 35 – Athena Nike decree

[...].ikos proposed: to select (or: establish) as a priestess for Athena Nike whoever will be [allotted] from all Athenian women and to provide the sanctuary with doors in whatever way Kallikrates will specify; and the *poletai* are to place the contract within the prytany of Leontis; the priestess is to receive fifty drachmai and to receive the backlegs and hides of the *dêmosios* sacrifices; and that a temple be built in whatever way Kallikrates may specify and a stone (marble) altar. *vac.* Hestiaios proposed: that three men be selected from the *boulê*; and that they will make the specifications with Kallikrates and [.....] in accordance with [the contracts...]

- The polis decided to honour Athena with new sacrifices
- Paid by the *dēmos* to garner her support or thank her for victory
- Radical step of creating a new priestess selected from all Athenians (not a *genē*)
- Glorious new temple and altar
- Priestess appointed for life and remunerated by perquisites + 50 drachmae. p.a.

Case studies

IG I³ 35 – Athena Nike decree

- *Post quem* is 448 when the Acropolis building program was conceived. The embellishment of the cult of Athena Nike and the construction of her temple are part of this.
- *Ante quem* is IG I³ 36 which refers explicitly to the earlier decision conventionally dated to 424/3.
- The temple was built in the 420s and Mattingly suggested the decrees should be associated with this.
- BUT:
 - The decree could have been associated with the commissioning of the building works in 448.
 - The plan of the temple required integration with the SW wing of the Propylaea begun in 437; there was a large treasury of Nike in her sanctuary before 433/2 which could have required doors.

So there are several plausible historical contexts

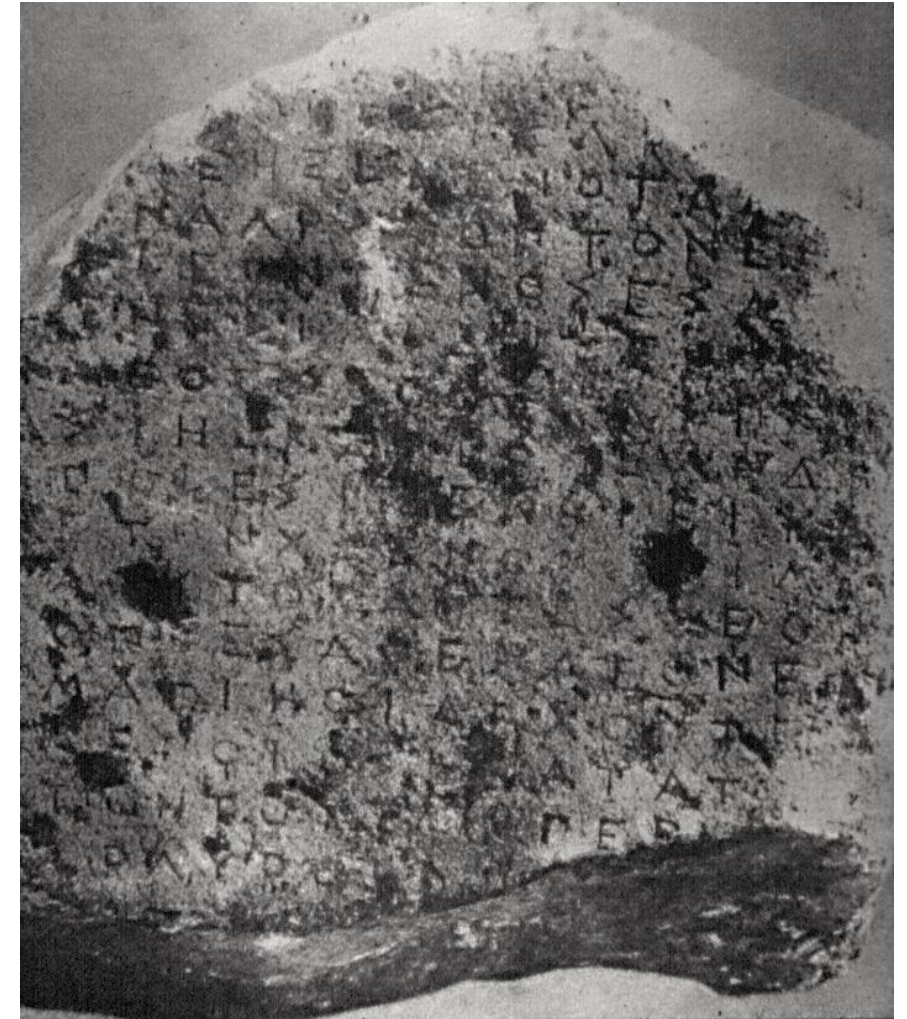
Case studies

IG I³ 1453 & ors – The Coinage Decree

- Many examples all found outside Athens: Smyrna; Olbia (?); Aphytis (in Macedonia); Kos, Siphnos and Syme (islands); Hamaxitos (in the Troad)
- No fragment has a date or datable reference
- Numismatic evidence is no help
- Kos fragment inscribed in Attic with the 3-bar sigma

Possible dates:

- 449 – ‘missing year’ on the ATL
- 414 - Aristophanes *Birds* 1040 ff parodies the decree
- Mid 420s = consensus



IG I³ 1453 & ors – The Coinage Decree

- Aphytis fragment is in two parts. The 1st fragment was published in 1935
- The 2nd fragment was discovered in 1969 but “languished unrecognized” until publication in 2003 by Miltiades Hatzopoulos
- The second fragment (non-joining) preserves the end of the stele

So what?

The Smyrna fragment contains the same final words as the Aphytis fragment, but its text continues for another 9 lines, with big discrepancies in content.

Major implications for epigraphical method. Cannot assume a ‘composite’ text. Different copies were set up tailored to local circumstances. Was there more than one date and/or more than one decree? (Per R. Stroud [2006], 18-26)

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- The word 'empire' has pejorative connotations - changed over (modern) time
 - Inscriptions attest to democratic practice
 - Thucydides (1.95-9) – summarises substantive change from 478 – 467 from *hēgemonia* (popular leadership) to *archē* (exacting rule/control)
 - He portrays Athenian empire as moderate under Pericles, but harsh under Cleon and his fellow demagogues. Scholars tend to read the 'tone' of inscriptions through this prism
 - A down-dating (or redating back) of many of the inscriptions to 430s/420s fits this literary evidence better
 - Harris (2016) argues that paired opposites of *demokratia/oligarchia* enter discourse in the context of tensions with Sparta. Word *demokratia* 1st appears in the 420s – cf. Pericles' funeral oration (Thuc. 2.37.1). Previously Athens based her right to lead on fighting the Persians and opposing tyranny.
 - Was there ever any intention to have an empire?

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Thank you

ANY QUESTIONS?

