

More on the Prytaneion Decree

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EDMOND J. MORRISSEY's recent article in this journal (19 [1978] 121–25) makes a substantial contribution toward our understanding of the Prytaneion Decree and provides the basis for further progress. The decree (*IG I² 77*) grants maintenance in the Prytaneion to certain people and reaffirms this privilege for others. The honorands include two sets of victors at the Olympic, Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean games. The second is clearly the hippic victors, for the word [κ]έλεται is preserved. One would naturally assume that the first group is also defined by reference to their sport, and most scholars have accepted Schöll's restoration (lines 11–13), κα[ὶ ἠοπόσοι νενικέκασι Ὀλυμπίασι] ἐ Πυθοῖ ἐ Ἰσθμοῖ ἐ Νεμέ[αι τὸς γυμνικὸς ἀγῶνας, εἶναι αὐτ]οῖσι τὲν δίτεσιν.¹

This phraseology, however, differs from the description of the second group as “those who have won . . . or win in the future.” With Schöll's restoration, there is no room in the definition of the first group of victors for the words, “or win in the future.” In an earlier study of the inscription I concluded from this difference that the first group of victors is being confirmed in their privileges while the second is being awarded maintenance for the first time.² Yet it is hard to believe that the Athenians waited until after the middle of the fifth century to honor the victors in the equine events.³ Moreover, if one restores, with Schöll, only the perfect tense, there is a danger that future victors in the first category will not be included in the grant. If, on the other hand, one alters the perfect to the subjunctive, Morrissey notes that this formulation may be “inadequate in regard to the rights of past victors.”⁴

¹ *Hermes* 6 (1872) 37–40.

² *AJP* 92 (1971) 236. Actually, one would use the perfect to designate past victors and the subjunctive to designate future victors, whether he was making an initial grant or renewing a previous one.

³ Perhaps one could overcome this difficulty by positing that the Prytaneion Decree extends honors from some hippic victors to all of them.

⁴ p.122. In addition, Morrissey objects to Schöll's restoration of the accusative of ‘contests’ when the horse race appears in the dative, but the same phenomenon occurs in the victor lists, *IG II² 2311–17*.

Morrissey solves this dilemma by restoring the first definition to match the second, “those who have won . . . or win in the future.” In order to add the seventeen letters of [ἐ νικέκοσι τὸ λοιπὸν], he must eliminate the seventeen of [τὸς γυμνικὸς ἀγῶνας]. One thing is certain: the space available for the description of the first group will allow either two verbs or the combination of one verb plus the event honored. It will not permit two verbs *and* the event. Unless we can explain why one clause of the decree uses two verbs to describe the victors while the other uses only one, we must accept Morrissey’s restoration and proceed from there.

Morrissey’s text does raise certain problems of grammar and sense. I have maintained that νικέκοσι, restored in lines 12–13 and preserved in line 17, is a subjunctive, since the “future indicative in the protasis of a conditional sentence is almost unknown in Athenian decrees for the simple reason that it regularly conveys a threat or a warning.”⁵ According to Morrissey (123), “Despite Thompson’s arguments to the contrary, the verb νικέκοσι must be a future.” He gives no further explanation of his view, nor does he cite any evidence for it. The question is decided by a tribal decree of ca 400 (*IG* II² 1138) in honor of a choregic victor which includes instructions “to inscribe also anyone who has won (νενίκηκεν) from the archonship of Eukleides in the boys’ or men’s events at the Dionysia, Thargelia, Promethia or Hephaistia.” It continues, ἀναγράφειν δὲ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν εἰάν τις τούτων τι νικήσῃ τὸς ἐπιμελητὰς ἐφ’ ὧν ἂν νικήσῃ. Like the Prytaneion Decree this tribal resolution concerns past *and* future victors, and both inscriptions require the subjunctive. In the Prytaneion Decree, however, there appears to be no room for ἂν.⁶ Rather than abandon Morrissey’s restoration and the logic behind it, we should probably look to a law paraphrased by Demosthenes (24.93) which also applies retroactively and prospectively, καὶ εἴ τιμι τῶν ὀφειλόντων προστετίμηται δεσμοῦ ἢ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν προστιμηθῆ.

Even more troublesome is the strange redundancy in Morrissey’s text, which can be paraphrased as, “All victors shall have their maintenance and other privileges, and all hippic victors shall have

⁵ *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 236; cf. B. L. Gildersleeve, *TAPA* 7 (1876) 5–23.

⁶ In fact, one of the advantages of his restoration is to fill the gap in lines 16–17 with the names of the major festivals, but to do so requires the omission of ἂν.

their maintenance.” Logically, the first group of honorands, “Those who have won at Olympia, Delphi, Isthmia or Nemea, or those who win in the future,” should *include* the second group, “Those who have won in the chariot or horse race at Olympia, Delphi, Isthmia or Nemea, or those who win in the future.” As the text now stands, there is no apparent reason to make separate mention of the hippic victors. Noting that horse racing was an aristocratic pastime, Morrissey suggests (124) that “democratic opposition towards the granting of *sitesis* to hippic victors could well have become serious enough to warrant an explicit restatement of their rights in our decree.” Not only is there no evidence of such opposition, but once the race for chariots drawn by a pair of horses was introduced at Olympia in 408 the Athenians extended maintenance to the winner.⁷

For anyone who accepts Morrissey’s text but is not convinced by his explanation of it, there is only one alternative. If all victors receive maintenance, it is pointless to say that hippic victors shall receive the *same* thing. Therefore, the hippic victors must receive something *different*. In addition to the maintenance which is granted to all champions, the equestrian winners have an extra privilege, presumably one connected with horses.

Several possibilities come to mind, such as the erection of a statue in the Agora or on the Akropolis, the right to dedicate one’s chariot or bury one’s horse there, or a procession through the Agora on horseback or in the winning chariot. Lykourgos, however, remarks that in other cities it was customary to set up statues of athletes, but at Athens good generals and the Tyrannicides were so honored.⁸ A parade would be appropriate, but not peculiar to hippic victors, for Diodoros (13.82) tells how a champion runner paraded around

⁷ Plato, *Apol.* 36D, shows that the Athenians so honored the winners of the race for pairs, while Pausanias (8.8.10) says that this contest was first instituted at Olympia in 408. As for the passages cited by Morrissey, Thucydides (6.15.3–4) does not say that the people were hostile to Alkibiades for spending money on *horses*; it was the extravagance, not the object, of his spending which frightened them. [And.] 4.24 shows the same thing. While it is true that Sokrates (*Apol.* 36D) says that he has more right to maintenance than a hippic victor, Isokrates (4.1) complains about the honors paid the other type of victor, those who use their bodies in *τοὺς γυμνικοὺς ἀγῶνας*.

⁸ 1.51; cf. Homer A. Thompson and R. E. Wycherley, *The Agora of Athens* (Princeton 1972) 158–60.

Akragas on a chariot, accompanied by three hundred other chariots. The dedication of the vehicle or the animal would also be fitting but has nothing to do with the main subject of the decree, maintenance in the Prytaneion.

On the other hand, we are told that when Alkibiades was competing at Olympia the Ephesians set up a pavilion for him, the Lesbians donated the wine and other items for his lavish entertainment, and the Chians provided fodder for his many teams of horses.⁹ We have been looking for an honor suitable for hippic victors but not for runners or wrestlers. In a decree which concerns maintenance what could be more appropriate than fodder for the winning horses?

The decree, then, should probably run as follows: "All hippic victors shall have their maintenance in accordance with what is written on the stele (in the Prytaneion), and their horses shall have feed."¹⁰ After γεγραμ[μ]ένᾱ in line 18 various scholars have reported traces of *pi* or *epsilon*.¹¹ The suggested grant of fodder may follow immediately with something like ξ[ναι δὲ τροφέν], or there may be a connecting phrase, such as π[ρὸς δὲ τῷ κίτῳ].¹² Either way, it is difficult to fit the necessary wording into the twenty-seven spaces before ι περι τὸ στρατ--- in the next line.¹³ If we actually are dealing with the feeding of horses, it probably occurred near the Strategion in the Agora.¹⁴

⁹ [And.] 4.30; Plut. *Alc.* 12.1; Athen. 12.534d. The first two say that the Chians also provided animals for sacrifice, while Athenaios gives this duty to the Kyzikenes.

¹⁰ As Morrissey says, his restoration requires that the provision for the hippic victors is a renewal of their privilege; it is not certain whether this applies to the fodder for the horses. Renewals are justified in the decree by reference to "what is customary," "what has been given" and "what is written." In this section, "what is written on the stele" applies only to the victors themselves, unless the author has repeated this phrase after mentioning fodder.

¹¹ Cf. *IG* I 8; Morrissey (121) reports that Michael Jameson favors dotted *epsilon*. See the photograph published by H. T. Wade-Gery, *BSA* 33 (1932/33) 124.

¹² This phrase occurs (without the particle) in line 14. **Ετι* is not normal in Attic decrees, but, if Perikles himself is the composer of this one, we might expect something unusual. *IG* I² 304A, a list of loans for military expenses, uses the phrase *ἵπποις κίτος πασιν*.

¹³ *Iota* might belong to *καί*, *ἔναι*, or *ἵπποις*; *nu* is equally possible and would probably be the last letter of an infinitive.

¹⁴ It would seem more reasonable to associate the feeding of horses with the Hipparcheion, but it may not have been built by the time of the Prytaneion Decree.

In any case, the Prytaneion Decree appears to provide an additional privilege for victors in the hippic contests at the Panhellenic festivals, and that privilege was probably maintenance for their victorious steeds.¹⁵

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¹⁵ The second section of the decree, beginning in line 5, renews the grant of maintenance for the descendants of the Tyrannicides. At the end of line 7 James H. Oliver recognized the words [κ]αὶ ἐ[ῖ] and made this the beginning of the third section; cf. *The Athenian Expounders of the Sacred and Ancestral Law* (Baltimore 1950) 139–41 and *AJP* 75 (1954) 169–74. I argued, however, that some of the honorands receive maintenance *ex officio*, as priest or victor, while others had obtained the privilege personally by a special vote of the *demos*; cf. *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 231–33. Therefore, the second section should continue past [κ]αὶ, as follows: “the descendants of Harmodios and Aristogeiton shall have their maintenance . . . [and anyone else who has received the honor] from the Athenians,” [κ]αὶ ἐ[ῖ] τις ἄλλος εἴλεφε τὸν τιμῆν. To support this version I should have cited a close parallel from a deme decree of the fourth century (*IG* II² 1176) which reaffirms the honor of *proedria* in the theatre of Dionysus in the Piraeus: εἰν[αὶ δὲ προεδρίαν τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν] καὶ τῶι δημάρχῳ κα[ὶ τοῖς ταμίαις καὶ τῶι κή]ρυκι καὶ εἴ τῳι ἄλλῳι [δεδώκασι οἱ δημόται τῇ]ν προεδρίαν. On this inscription see Adolf Wilhelm, *Urkunden dramatischer Aufführungen in Athen* (Vienna 1906) 235–39.