

The Location of the *Lapis Primus*

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THE FIRST editor of fragments 3 and 4 of the *lapis primus* of the tribute quota-lists, K. S. Pittakes, described the physical dimensions of the two fragments as follows: τὸ μῆκος καὶ τῶν δύο τμημάτων εἶναι 53 ο/ο, τὸ ὕψος 27 ο/ο, καὶ τὸ πάχος 20 ο/ο· τὸ ἄνω μέρος τῆς πλακὸς εἶναι τετμημένον ἐπίτηδες, ὅπως ἐπὶ τούτου τεθῆ γείσσον μετὰ ἀετώματος, ἐφ' οὗ πιθανῶς ἦν ἐπιγραφή.¹ Pittakes saw that the treatment of the top surface of the stone presupposed a crowning member, and he assumed that it was a pediment with inscription. His statement has been overlooked in the subsequent literature, as has been also the marble projection which must have led him to his observation.

In *Historia* 13 (1964) 130–4, I noted the existence of the curving ridge, which was originally more than 0.03m. high and appears on three fragments. At that time, I expressed my hope of having the top pieces of the *lapis primus* dismantled in order that it might be studied. I visited Athens in the summer of 1965, and Dr Markellos Mitsos kindly had these upper fragments removed from the plaster. While my article, with photographs, was awaiting publication, one of the editors of *ATL*, who had not previously noted the ridge, published two observations² which must be examined: he states (1) that the

¹ *Ephemeris Archaiologike* 1853, p.693. Pittakes had earlier given the text, without commentary, in *L'ancienne Athènes* (Athens 1835) 425 and 432.

² Three other arguments advanced by B. D. Meritt in *Hesperia* 35 (1966) 134–40 I wish here to controvert. The first is an argument which Meritt has often repeated, that since no known fragment has been identified from the upper reverse part of the *lapis primus*, this portion of the stele must have been uninscribed. The logical conclusion, rather, would be that the upper reverse side was lost. Anyone who has worked with large stelai such as the *lapis secundus* or the Attic stelai knows that parts may be missing in unexplained fashion. The *lapis secundus* (see the diagram in *ATL* I [Cambridge (Mass.) 1939] 68) has many fragments from one part of the stele but hardly any from the bottom obverse. And similar unexplained gaps exist in the Attic stelai and other inscriptions. If the block containing the upper reverse top of the *lapis primus* was condemned to the lime kiln, it would have left no trace. Secondly, Meritt continues to cite as a parallel for beginning an inscription below a top edge the example of *IG* I² 304B. In this he is mistaken. Meritt claims that he disposed of this subject in *TAPA* 95 (1964, published in 1966). But he there omits any mention of the

marginal drafting was “not smoothly finished”; and (2) that the ridge was “not meant to be seen.”³

As to the first point, B. D. Meritt himself in 1926 referred to a “marginal *dressing*.”⁴ If one examines the photograph published in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 7 (1966) plate 7, figure 3, one sees that the margin was indeed smooth. There are discernible marks of a chisel;⁵ but the surface has been smoothed down with abrasives in such a way that most of the chiselling has been obliterated and a tight join would be possible with a superimposed piece similarly treated. A very informative comparison can be made with the band illustrated in G. M. A. Richter’s *Archaic Gravestones of Attica* (London 1961) figure 6, where the margin which constituted a “contact surface” was “smoothed with the drove” (p.10). In the case of the *lapis primus*, the band was not only smoothed with the drove chisel, as Meritt concedes, but abrasives were used as well to make a much smoother contact surface. It is unfortunate that a disagreement depending on visual observation should arise; but in the last analysis the historian or the epigraphist who does not trust the evidence of the photographs published by me in volume 7 of this journal, plate 7, figure 3 or by Meritt in *Hesperia* 35 (1966) plate 42, figures *a* and *b*, must be invited to inspect the surface himself. He will find that the surface is smooth not only to the eye but to the touch.⁶

fact that the last item on the top half of the text gives a date in the prytany of Erechtheis, which held the second prytany, and that the entry for the first line of the lower half likewise has Erechtheis and prytany II. The text was therefore continuous, starting at the top. This significant phenomenon of consecutive dating, by the days of the same prytany, is not noted by Meritt. For our immediate purpose, however, IG I³ 304b does offer a very interesting parallel to the *lapis primus*, because the mason inscribed his text on the reverse side not at the same level with the first line of the obverse but higher up, opposite the so-called cornice or geison on the obverse of the monolithic block. Thirdly, Meritt believes that the two partly visible letters in the first preserved line of the reverse side of the *lapis primus* are from a heading and he claims the authority of McGregor (*Phoenix* 16 [1962] 272) for this determination. But the basis of McGregor’s contention was that the letters were taller, whereas it has now been demonstrated (*Historia* 13 [1964] 132–3; cf. *GRBS* 7 [1966] 127) that according to McGregor’s own figure (0.014m.) the two letters have weathered to the same height as the letters just below. The letters are part of a list. Meritt does not address himself to the height of the letters, in which lies the point of the argument.

³ *Hesperia* 35 (1966) 137.

⁴ *AJP* 47 (1926) 171–2 (italics supplied).

⁵ Meritt (p.136) refers to pockmarks and damage to fr.3, but some of this may have taken place in modern times. When Pittakes (*L’ancienne Athènes* [Athens 1835] 432) first published fr.3, he included as part of the text what the *ATL* editors now call fr.2. The so-called fr.2 is not a separate fragment—Pittakes used the singular number (“sur un autre”) for the stone—but a part of fr.3 which was broken off after 1835. The damaged surface can be seen in *ATL* I, fig. 5.

⁶ Did Pittakes see more of the top surface than is preserved today? It seems likely. He

The second point—with which I heartily agree—assumes an importance which Meritt does not mention. And here there can be no difference of opinion. The conclusion that the ridge was not meant to be seen becomes significant only when we ascertain where the stele stood. And it is to this problem that this paper is addressed.

A. Kirchhoff in 1873 wrote at the beginning of his description of the *lapis primus*: “Lapis grandis Pentelicus quadratus in quattuor inscriptus lateribus, cuius disiecta membra in arce reperta sunt omnia.”⁷ The word “omnia” refers to the 105 fragments which Kirchhoff listed following this statement; so we must assume that the original location of the stele was on the Acropolis.

The question then arises as to just where on the Acropolis did the *lapis primus* stand. According to Boeckh,⁸ the first published fragment relating to the tribute, and the only one known at the time of the publication of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* (Berlin 1828),⁹ was discovered by R. Chandler and appears in the latter’s *Inscriptiones Antiquae* (Oxford 1774) Part II, No. 23. Chandler stated that the fragment was found on the Acropolis “in pavimento porticus Moscheae.”¹⁰ It is now published as fragment 33 of the Assessment Decree of 425 B.C.

In 1842, A. R. Rangabé, publishing many fragments of the quota-lists, wrote as follows: “C’est cette liste dont nous publions ici (de n. 131 à n. 248) de nombreux fragmens, trouvés dans les fouilles qui furent faites sur le plateau qui s’étend du Parthénon au temple d’Erechthée.”¹¹

gives the thickness of fragments 3 and 4 as 0.20m. *ATL* I provides no figures for the dimensions of any fragment; but I measured the maximum thickness of fr.3 at the top as 0.145m. and of fr.4 as 0.128m. Pittakes, therefore, presumably saw the stone when it was thicker than it is today. It is significant that fr.4 has two drilled holes and fr.3 only one. One infers from Meritt’s statements (comparing *Hesperia* 35 [1966] 136 n.15 with *ATL* I p. viii) that these very pieces were displayed with iron spikes in the nineteenth century; and, as *ATL* notes, many of these fragments have been damaged. *ATL* (*ibid.*) also reports that there are in the Epigraphical Museum “several fragments of Pentelic marble with no original surface,” believed to belong to the quota-lists. They were identified by the same drilled holes. Since fr.3 has only one such hole, it is quite possible that one of the uninscribed pieces may have been broken from this fragment. One would like to know whether there was originally a cutting for a socket or for clamps. This does not, of course, alter the fact that enough of the top surface still survives to support Pittakes’ conclusion of a crowning member. There is no parallel for such workmanship on a top surface for no purpose.

⁷ *IG* I p.94.

⁸ *Die Staatshaushaltung der Athener* II³ (Berlin 1886) 334.

⁹ No. 143.

¹⁰ *Op.cit.*, Pars I, p. xxiv.

¹¹ *Antiquités Helléniques* I (Athens 1842) 273–4. This statement was repeated, on the authority of Rangabé, by A. Boeckh, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) 334.

But the matter is not so straightforward. It was K. S. Pittakes who discovered most of the fragments in 1835,¹² the texts of many being first published without commentary in his *L'ancienne Athènes* (Athens 1835).¹³ However, preceding his text of some 82 fragments of the *lapis primus*,¹⁴ Pittakes wrote as follows: “Avant de descendre de la forteresse je publierai quelques inscriptions trouvées dans les excavations. A côté des Propylées sur différens fragmens qui faisaient une j'ai lu cette inscription, c'est un catalogue de la contribution que les villes donnaient annuellement aux Athéniens.”¹⁵

In 1853, in republishing fragment 6 of the *lapis primus*, Pittakes wrote as follows: “*Ἦυρον αὐτὴν τὸ 1835, καθὼς καὶ ὄλας σχεδὸν τὰς ἄλλας τὰς τὸν φόρον τῶν συμμάχων πόλεων κανονιζούσας, πλησίον εἰς τὴν γωνίαν, ἣν σχηματίζει ἡ βόρειος πτέρυξ τῶν Προπυλαίων, ὅτε τὸν ἐκεῖ προμαχῶνα τὸν καλύπτοντα τὰ Προπύλαια καθήρεσα.*”¹⁶ In the same year, Pittakes stated in connection with his publication of fragment 114, among others: “*Καὶ αἱ ἐπιγραφαὶ αὐταὶ αἱ ὑπ' ἀριθ. . . . 1234. . . εὐρέθησαν ἔνθα καὶ αἱ ἀνωτέρω, ἧτοι ἦσαν ἐντειχισμένοι ὑπὸ τὴν νότιον πλευρὰν τῆς βορείου πτέρυγος τῶν Προπυλαίων.*”¹⁷ In publishing 82 fragments of the *lapis primus*, Pittakes positively identified 59 as having come from the area of the Propylaia.¹⁸

Our investigation of the reports in Rangabé and Pittakes discloses that we have conflicting statements about where the fragments of the *lapis primus* were discovered: either (1) in the area between the Parthenon and the Erechtheion; or (2) in the area of the Propylaia. As we shall see, for our purposes the choice is not important; but, lacking additional information, it seems wisest to follow the statements of the scholar who found the fragments in 1835. In his account of the excavations on the Acropolis, P. Kavvadias began his history as follows:

¹² The Turkish garrison did not evacuate the Acropolis until 1833.

¹³ Pittakes later explained (*EphArch* 1853, p.693) his difficulties in reproducing the ancient texts, because “the one and only printer in Athens did not have the necessary characters.”

¹⁴ The total accords with the *ATL* enumeration of fragments. The texts are to be found in Pittakes, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 410–38.

¹⁵ *L'ancienne Athènes* (Athens 1835) 410.

¹⁶ *EphArch* 1853, p.693, no. 1146.

¹⁷ *Op.cit.* p.759.

¹⁸ Using the numeration in *ATL*, these are: Fragments 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 28, 29, 30, 31, 46, 49, 50, 51, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 66, 79, 82, 84, 85, 91, 92, 94, 107, 112, 117, 118, 128, 138, 140, 141, 142, 151, 156, 157, 159, 160, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 178 and 179. The provenance is given by Pittakes in his commentaries to the various pieces published in *EphArch* 1853. I am indebted to Mr Robert Ross for the enumeration.

Die archäologischen Arbeiten auf der Akropolis begannen mit dem Augenblick, wo diese, nach der Befreiung Griechenlands, den Griechen zurückgegeben und am 20./1. April 1833 von der türkischen Besatzung geräumt und von bayrischen Truppen in Namen des Königs Otto in Besitz genommen wurde. K. S. Pittakis aus Athen, ein warmer Verehrer des Altertums, der im Juli 1833 für den Bereich des griechischen Festlandes zum Mitarbeiter des damaligen General-ephoros der Altertümer, des deutschen Architekten Weissenborn, aus Rom, ernannt wurde, war der erste, der auf der Akropolis und in der Stadt Skulpturen und Inschriften sammelte; . . .¹⁹

Moreover, it is not until we come to page 10 of Kavvadias' history that we read about the excavations, begun in December 1837, at "der Platz zwischen Erechtheion und Parthenon." These, too, were made by Pittakes, who by this time had already published many fragments of the *lapis primus*. Certainly, the weight of the evidence is in favor of accepting the statement of Pittakes about the place of discovery in the area of the Propylaia.

Moreover, the provenance of the *lapis primus* cannot be disconnected from that of the *lapis secundus*, the later lists and the assessment decrees; for all stood on the Acropolis. Pittakes reported that fragments 1, 12 and 13 of the *lapis secundus* were found *περὶ τὰ Προπύλαια*.²⁰ The place of discovery of fragments 21, 39, 40 of the Assessment Decree of 425/4 B.C. was given as *παρὰ τὰ Προπύλαια*,²¹ and of fragments 15 and 27 as *περὶ τὰ Προπύλαια*.²² Fragments 3 and 5 of List 27 were found near the Beulé gate.²³ There seems to be ample evidence that the whole series of documents relating to the tribute stood near the Propylaia.²⁴

Having ascertained that the *lapis primus* probably stood near the Propylaia, the question arises as to whether the top of the stele could be seen by people within eyesight. The answer to this question requires only an inspection of a contoured map of the Acropolis. Very

¹⁹ P. Kavvadias and G. Kawerau, *Die Ausgrabung der Akropolis* (Athens 1907) 2; cf. W. Judeich, *Topographie von Athen*² (Munich 1931) 206.

²⁰ *EphArch* 1853, p.767.

²¹ *Op.cit.* p.765.

²² *Op.cit.* p.767.

²³ See *IG I*, suppl. p.175.

²⁴ A relatively small number have come from other areas. One fragment (Stele II, fr.6) was found within the Erechtheion (*EphArch* 1853, p.767), another by the southwest corner of the Parthenon (*op.cit.* 1853, p.765). One or two small pieces of the *lapis primus* have been found in the Agora and at least one on the south slope of the Acropolis; cf. Kirchhoff, *Monatsber. AbhBerl* 1880, 453 (fr.108).

detailed maps marked with elevations are given in Kavvadias and Kawerau, *Die Ausgrabung der Akropolis*, plates 1–6. But the plan at the back of W. Judeich, *Topographie von Athen*²⁵ is satisfactory for general purposes. Within the main passage of the Propylaia, the contour in meters is given as 144. Proceeding eastward,²⁵ the contour is 145m., with the contour to the north, near the northern retaining wall, 146m., and to the south 146.1m. As one ascends eastward the next contour is given in Judeich as 151.4m. According to Kavvadias and Kawerau, plate 5, the elevation of the rock at the northwest corner of the Parthenon is 153.34m. The top of the stele, accordingly, if located to the northeast, east or southeast of the Propylaia, would be below the eye-level of a person standing at the point of this last contour; and the Acropolis continues to rise toward the east.

If it should prove to be the case that Rangabé was right and that the *lapis primus* stood between the Parthenon and the Erechtheion, the matter is equally clear-cut. All students of architecture are agreed that the steps and stylobate of the Older Parthenon were in existence in 454 B.C. Dinsmoor refers to these foundations as a “lofty platform.”²⁶ There is no question but that anyone standing on the northern stylobate of the Parthenon would be at an eye-level higher than the top of a stele 3.66m. in height situated to the north in the direction of the Erechtheion.

There remains one idea which ought to be rejected. Meritt²⁷ has given his opinion that the stele “was set up in a low portico.” The English word ‘portico’ is normally a translation of the Greek word ‘stoa’. If we follow Judeich,²⁸ the only structure on the Acropolis for which he suggested the designation ‘stoa’ is one abutting on the Themistoklean wall in the northern area of the Acropolis. At the stairs leading down to an ancient exit from the Acropolis are walls of poros blocks of a building resembling a stoa. Even granting that the structure was a ‘stoa’, why Meritt thinks that it was erected before 454 B.C. and that it was “low”, he does not tell us. It is common sense to assume that a large document like the *lapis primus* was free-standing. This massive block of marble, weighing more than four tons and measuring roughly $3.7 \times 1.11 \times 0.37$ m., needed no covering and no

²⁵ The western part of the Acropolis is of course much lower.

²⁶ *Architecture of Ancient Greece*³ (London 1950) 160.

²⁷ *CP* 38 (1943) 235–6.

²⁸ *Topographie von Athen*² (Munich 1931) 471, referring to p.246. See, however, G. B. Stevens, *Hesperia* 5 (1936) 489–90.

support.²⁹ Whether it stood on some sort of pedestal, as did many stelai, we cannot know. But the whole design presupposes one could walk around it.

Returning full circle to the quotation from Pittakes with which this article began, we see that the dressed band and the projection of marble require us to follow Pittakes in his assumption of a crowning member.³⁰ The raised surface is not meant to be seen, as our study of the possible sites of the stele on the Acropolis has shown that it would have been unless covered by a superimposed piece. That the mason of 447/6 B.C. failed to utilize for an inscription the space at the back of the crowning member and the top of the reverse side of the stele proper seems unlikely.³¹ Finally, might it not be possible to find among the numerous cuttings on the Acropolis a set that might match the known dimensions of these stelai, and thus pin down even more securely their original location?³²

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²⁹ Pittakes suggested that it stood within the Propylaia, an idea which can be disproved by two facts: the stele was set up in 454/3 B.C., and the Propylaia was not begun until after 438 B.C. Similar vague suggestions appear within the literature (for references, see *Historia* 13 [1964] 132 n.13). In an effort to explain the alleged un-inscribed space, the *ATL* editors speculated on the idea of a beam or lintel or architectural block abutting on the top of the stele. At the same time, their descriptions are replete with such words and phrases as "running water," "weathering," "long exposure to rain," "water leaking down" (cf. McGregor, *Phoenix* 16 [1962] 274).

³⁰ G. B. Stevens (*Hesperia* 5 [1936] 443ff and suppl. 3 [1940]), in particular, has noted in his writings the existence of many rock cuttings for stelai on the Acropolis.

³¹ Many recent scholars who have supported the idea that the Athenian Kallias negotiated a peace with Persia have done so in the mistaken belief that there were architectural considerations of the *lapis primus* which proved that there was no tribute-quota in one year. This major premise is no longer true, for we need look no further than *IG I² 304B* (*supra* n.2) to see that a stonemason inscribed the text on the reverse side higher up than on the obverse. In this matter, scholars have brought the charge of omission of important material against Herodotos and Thucydides; but we can now observe that the great Greek historians may have omitted mention of the Peace of Kallias for the simplest of reasons, that it was never concluded.

³² Our study also illustrates the need for the dismantlement and the complete architectural study of the stele. As of now, we have not been told even the dimensions of most of the fragments. Reports of provenance have been overlooked. Positions, for which originally the claim was only one of probability or possibility, have come to be regarded as fixed. The important matter of the position of the reverse face of *IG I² 199*, for which Meritt originally claimed only "probability" (*HSCP* 37 [1926] 76), must be reopened. Moreover, Meritt (*Hesperia* 36 [1966] 137 n.19) now states that a difference in measurement of 0.031m. (*CP* 59 [1964] 272) is of no significance because of the difficulties in combining the fragments, although in his controversy with S. Dow over the measurements of the heading of *IG I² 198*, he had made a point of a difference of 0.0085m. (*CP* 38 [1943] 230). In all such matters we are entitled to greater accuracy.