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An Association of Orgeones in the Sanctuary of Asklepios at Eleusis

In 2003 Arnaoutoglou suspected that "an Athenian origin" for *IG VII 33*, recorded at Megara by Cyriacus of Ancona, "cannot be excluded."¹ Five years later, Byrne demonstrated that it was indeed Athenian, in fact Eleusinian, as the names in it indicated.² It is now *IG II/III*³ 4, 1, 646:

[οἱ] <δ>ε ὀργεῶ<ν>εσ <τ>ῶν [θεῶν].
 Σάτυρος Φιλίππο<υ>
 Φιλοκράτης Φιλίππου
 Φωκιάδης Τεισίου
 Καλλένικος Εὐθύμου.

I have indented lines 1, 3, 5 of Byrne's text (which reflects Dittenberger's in *IG VII 33*), since Boeckh (*CIG I 1082*) presented the text arranged according to the copy in Cyriacus' manuscript ("Dedi dispositionem textus Muratorianam"), showing that every other line was indented:

ΓΕΟΡΓΕΩΕΣΥΩΝ
 ΣΑΤΥΡΟΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΣ
 ΦΙΛΟΚΡΑΤΗΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ
 ΦΩΚΙΑΔΗΣ ΤΕΙΣΙΟΥ
 ΚΑΛΛΕΝΙΚΟΣ ΕΥΘΥΜΟΥ

The title Orgeones is usually not modified by a genitive indicating the gods whom they worship, the only example being *IG II*² 1252.3-4: περὶ τὰ κοινὰ τῶν ὀργεῶνων τοῦ Ἄμύνου καὶ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ καὶ τοῦ Δεξίονος. The restoration of the undefined <τ>ῶν [θεῶν] therefore looks suspicious. Dittenberger explained it by stating that the sanctuary in which the document was located would make it unnecessary to state the names of the gods.³ By the same reasoning, it would be even more unnecessary to state that the orgeones were "of the gods," since the orgeones were by nature worshippers of the gods.

1. I. N. Arnaoutoglou, *Θυσίας ἔνεχα καὶ συνουσίας: Private Religious Associations in Hellenistic Athens* (2003), 31 n. 1.

2. S. G. Byrne, The Dedication of the Orgeones of Prospalta *IG II*² 2352, in: A. P. Matthaiou, I. Polinskaya (edd.), *Μικρὸς Ἱερομνήμων. Μελέτες εἰς μνήμην Michael H. Jameson* (2008), 120-121.

3. «Nomina deorum addi non necesse fuit, quia in eorum delubro lapidem collocatum fuisse probabile est.»

Now that it is clear that the inscription is from Eleusis, it is possible to identify the sanctuary with great likelihood. Nothing in the inscription would indicate that it is the Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, which, as a state sanctuary, we should not expect to be used for the cult purposes of a private association, not to mention its restricted access as a sanctuary of the Mystera.⁴ According to current evidence, the only Eleusinian sanctuary known to have hosted a cult association, therefore suitable for an association of orgeones, is the Sanctuary of Asklepios and Hygieia, which was located ca. 1 km. north of the Roman forecourt of the Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore.⁵ This sanctuary may well have been visible in the fifteenth century, as it was not far from the road through Eleusis to Megara; and Cyriacus could have copied the inscription there, or, more likely, at Megara, where the stone had already been taken, presumably as building material.⁶

The surviving inscriptions from this sanctuary (*I.Eleusis* 680-686) range in date from before the middle of the fourth century BC. to the beginning of the third century AD. It was a private sanctuary; there is no indication in the documents that it was administered by the deme. Within it, an association of thiasotai set up in 249/8 a dedicatory stele (*I.Eleusis* 682) to Asklepios and Hygieia, listing the members of the association. Thus *IG II/III*³ 4, 1, 646 (= *IG VII* 33) informs us that the sanctuary would have been shared between orgeones and thiasotai, like the private sanctuary of Pankrates on the Ilissos, also shared by orgeones and thiasotai.⁷ *I.Eleusis* 681, a statue base dedicated by Epikrates son of Pamphilos of Leukonoion to Asklepios in the late 4th century, held a life-sized (now acephalous) statue of the god, which can currently be seen assembled on this very inscribed base in the Eleusis Museum.⁸ In his detailed description of the statue Kourouniotes noted that its rear was only superficially finished (suggesting that it stood against a wall within a room),⁹ and in a discussion of comparable statues of Asklepios concluded that it was most likely a copy of a Praxitelean original.¹⁰ It is conceivable that it functioned as the cult statue within a temple, the existence of which is implied by *I.Eleusis* 683: during the reign of the emperor Claudius Euphrosynos the son of a hierophant, who was serving as zakoros of Asklepios and Hygieia, dedicated the pronaos. The donor of the statue of Asklepios, Epikrates son of Pamphilos of Leukonoion, was related to the contractor for the construction in 354/3 of part of the stoa next to the southern wall of the Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore (*I.Eleusis* 141.21-23); in fact he may have been the brother who served as guarantor for the contractor.¹¹

4. Cf. J. D. Mikalson, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens* (1998), 148-149; D. Knoepfler, Une femme de Callatis à Athènes dans un nouveau décret au IIIe siècle av. J.-C., in: A. Robu and I. Bîrzescu, edd., *Mégarika. Nouvelles recherches sur Mégare et les cités de la Propontide et du Pont-Euxin* (2016), 209-210 n. 61; K. Clinton, On the Sanctuaries of Kalliste and Ariste, Artemis Soteira, and Agathe Theos at Athens, *ZPE* 227 (2023) 74.

5. As reported by A. Skias, *Πρακτικά* 1898, 87-90, inscriptions and other objects from the sanctuary were excavated in 1898 and earlier by Δ. Μεθενίτης in his vineyard, located along the right bank of the Eleusinian Kephisos ca. 100 m. west of the remains of the Hadrianic aqueduct. Skias mentioned that he was planning to excavate the site, but apparently his plan was not realized.

6. On Megara as the more likely place where Cyriacus copied it, see Byrne, loc. cit.

7. *SEG* XLI 83 (unpublished decree of thiasotai), 84 (unpublished dedication of Athenian orgeones).

8. Inv. no. 5100; J. Travlos, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie des antiken Attika* (1988), 152 fig. 184. It is described by K. Kourouniotes, Ἀγάλμα Ἀσκληπιοῦ ἐξ Ἐλευσίνος, *ΑΔ* 9 (1924-25) 105-117, who transferred it from Mr. Methenites' courtyard to the Eleusis Museum ca. 1915 and restored it to its original base; both statue (Skias, *op. cit.*, 90) and base were found separately in the 1890s. Kourouniotes dated the base ca. 320 BC on the basis of a close match of its lettering with that of *I.Eleusis* 97-98 (ca. a. 320 a.).

9. Kourouniotes, *ibid.*, 107-108.

10. Kourouniotes, *ibid.*, 116-117.

11. Kourouniotes' (*ibid.*, 110) restoration of Epik[rates Pamphilou Le]ukonoieus in *I.Eleusis* 141.22-23 is possible but not certain; cf. *I.Eleusis* II, pp. 131-132.

The restoration of the undefined <τ>ῶν [θεῶν], as mentioned above, seems dubious, as it is both otiose and unparalleled. A more likely restoration could be the name of the god to whom the monument is dedicated, ὀργεῶνες <τ>ῶ<ι> [Ἀσκληπιῶι], as in *IG II² 2352*, the main inscription discussed by Byrne, or, even better, the names of the god or gods who are the objects of the orgeones' devotion, ὀργεῶνες <τ>ο<ῦ> [Ἀσκληπιοῦ], as at *IG II² 1252.3-4* (cited above, p. 55). But this length of the line would put it out of balance with the symmetry of the lines below, and in the case of <τ>ῶ<ι> [Ἀσκληπιῶι], the previous restoration [οἴ]<δ>ε expects the names of the dedicators to follow immediately, not interrupted by the name of a god, which would be more suitable before or after all the names of the dedicators. A more plausible restoration would be ὀργεῶνες <τ>ο<ῦ> [ἱεροῦ], which occurs at *IG II² 1361.21*, regulations issued ca. 325 BC by orgeones worshipping Bendis; a similar title, οἱ ὀργ[εῶ]νες τοῦ ἥρωιο, was adopted by orgeones of a Heroon in 333/2.¹² The form of the document may be reconstructed as follows:

s. IV/III a. [οἴ]<δ>ε ὀργεῶ<ν>ες <τ>ο<ῦ> [ἱεροῦ].
 Σάτυρος Φιλίππο<υ>
 Φιλοκράτης Φιλίππου
 Φωκιάδης Τεισίου
 Καλλένικος Εὐθύμου

 [Ἀσκληπιῶι καὶ Ὑγείαι]
 [ἀνέθηκον].

However, if the names of the gods, Ἀσκληπιῶι καὶ Ὑγείαι, preceded line 1, Dittenberger's restoration ὀργεῶ<ν>ες <τ>ῶν [θεῶν] may not be inappropriate, especially since it takes better account of Cyriacus' text. The fact that he had trouble reading the first line, however, tends to suggest that it was indeed the first, suffering from chips at the top edge of the stone.

It is a sad fact that the site of this important local sanctuary, which functioned for at least six centuries, has, to my knowledge, not been identified in recent times.¹³

In any case, this dedication set up by an association of orgeones, copied by Cyriacus of Ancona, most likely provides further testimony of the vibrant role played by this local Sanctuary of Asklepios and Hygeia over the course of its long life at Eleusis.

12. *SEG XXIV 203.2-6*: ἐμίσθωσεν Χάροψ [Φ]αληρεὺς καὶ οἱ ὀργ[εῶ]νες τοῦ ἥρωιο τὸν [κῆπ]ον Θρασυβούλωι Ἀ[λωπε]κῆθεν.

13. John Travlos once roughly sketched for me a map with its location, but despite several attempts in the 1980s to locate it, I was not successful.