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The Athenian Assessment of 425 B.C. By Benjamin Dean Meritt and Allen Brown West. Pp. xiv. + 112; 17 Text-Figures; 2 Plates. (University of Michigan Studies: Humanistic Series, vol. xxxiii.) University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1934.

Two generations ago the historian George Grote pronounced the following verdict (in a footnote to vol. iv. p. 494, of his History of Greece. 4th edn., 1872). 'Now if Athens had doubled her tribute upon all the allies, just before that expedition' (of Brasidas into Thrace), Thucydides could not have omitted to mention it.' Nevertheless, this saying has long since been proved to rest on an unwarranted assumption, ~~since~~ for the 'doubling' of the tribute is an established fact, and the Athenian decree of 425 which embodied this resolution is a well-known document, in spite of the difficulties and obscurities which beset it. The monograph devoted to it by Professors Meritt and West, and recently published by the University of Michigan Press, proves in every respect worthy of its theme. They bring to their task the qualifications already familiar from their previous publications in the field of Attic epigraphy, whether written separately or in conjunction, and in the present work both in the handling and the presentation of the material they never fall below the consistently high standard which we have come to expect from them, a standard, in fact, which they have largely created for themselves.

Of the great marble stele, measuring approximately nine feet high and four feet wide, on which the document was engraved, the surviving portion, amounting to less than a third of the original, is broken into 43 pieces of various sizes, some of which have been successfully joined together. One is now in the Metropolitan Museum at New York, the rest are in the Epigraphical Museum at Athens, except for small portions broken off from

two ~~other~~ <sup>of these</sup> fragments since their first discovery. Though the original position of several of the pieces is determined by the preservation of the margin at some point, and of some others by an actual, or textual, contact with pieces so fixed, there were still many only vaguely located, and one group of five pieces which recent editors had rejected from the stele altogether. The authors' first task was therefore to find the exact position for these unplaced fragments, if humanly possible, before proceeding to a restoration of the text. The measure of their success is revealed in their book, and it must have surpassed their expectations. They confirm, in the first place, the conclusions of previous editors that the lines of the decrees which occupy ll. 3-60 (ll. 1-2 are taken up by headings) had seventy letters each, but in the text, of which they offer a complete restoration except for a few names, they have shown that certain restorations hitherto accepted without qualms are untenable, for various reasons. In some places more exact decipherment of worn or fragmentary letters, in others the discovery of unsuspected joins, or again the recognition of indications as to the position of fragments afforded by the study of their lines of breakage all play a part in contributing to a new and incomparably more satisfactory version of the text. The revised preamble now shows that the Prytanising tribe had seven letters in its name (*Αἰαντίς* or *Λευυτίς*), that the Secretary's name had six letters, ending in -δου or -χου, and that of the Epistates seven letters (as against six, five and nine respectively as given in the Editio Minor of the Corpus (I.G.<sup>2</sup>.1.63). In 1.4, in place of the erroneous [πέμψαι τάκτας] ἀπὸ [ἀνδρας, M.-W. now restore [πέμψαι κέρυκας] ἐκ τῶν [βουλευτῶν], having recognised faint traces both of the E and the N, and obtaining

[to Prynor: Epigraphical Caps.]

space for seven letters before the words ἐκ τῶν as a result of shifting this fragment one space to the right. The presence of a seven-letter tribe (Αἰαντίς or Αεοντίς) in 1.3, whereas in 1.34 and 1.54 f. the tribal names contain six letters only, raises a fresh difficulty of interpretation, which is fully and frankly discussed on pp.52 ff.

The lower portion of the stele, containing the lists of tributary states and the assessment of each, proves to have been drawn up in four columns, each 120 lines in length, according to M.-W.'s computations. Allowance, however, has to be made for the space occupied by headings and totals and for a certain amount of space left uninscribed after some of the groups, with the result that the total number of states is estimated at about 400—a far higher figure than the maximum derived from the quota-lists, but even further below the thousand suggested playfully by Aristophanes (Wasps, 707), which some historians have tended to take too seriously. In arriving at their total some admirable reconstruction has been accomplished by the authors, of which a good example is furnished by the group of five fragments (t, u, v, w, w' = Nos. 25, 26, 27, 36, 28). These were rejected first by Banner, following whom the editor of I.G.<sup>2</sup>i. ascribed them to the second assessment-list (I.G.<sup>2</sup>i.64), but M.-W. have restored them to the earlier stele, having found that No. 36 joins No. 35 by contact above, and by the clear evidence of a continuous fracture-line is to be closely associated with No. 37 below. Further, the contents of No. 25 prove not to contain the fragmentary remains of a clause relating to assessment, as hitherto believed, but names of states in the Ionian-Carian group, and it falls into place in column 1. The debated fragment No. 34 (= I.G.<sup>2</sup>i.543) containing the total of 250 + Talents for the Hellespontine tribute is also

re-assigned to the stele, and plays an important part in the evidence for the grand total at the foot, ~~of this list~~. Equally important is the newly identified fragment No. 38, with the total of 310 + Talents for the Thracian tribute and the heading of the list of Euxine cities, for, in conjunction with the total furnished by the almost complete Island-list (ca. 163 T.) we now have evidence for three of the four main groups, pointing to an increase of over 100% and warranting the conclusion that the fourth (Ionian-Carian) was increased in similar ratio; in it, moreover occur more names of newly assessed states than elsewhere—except perhaps in the Euxine group. Allowing for this increase in the Ionian-Carian tribute the total cannot be kept below 1000 Talents, and when account is taken of the two smaller groups, Ἀκταῖαι πόλεις and Πόλεις ἐκ τῷ Εὐχσεῖνο, for which the editors suggest totals of 50 and 175 Talents respectively, no doubt can remain that the grand total must be restored to read [14]60 +, and not [9]60 + as has been almost universally preferred—Professor Kolbe of Freiburg ~~being~~ <sup>being</sup> the sole champion of the higher figure.

To have established this unexpected result is not the least of the services that Professors Meritt and West have rendered in <sup>writing</sup> this book. If they do not dwell on its historical bearings it is not for want of realising its importance, but because it would involve treatment disproportionate to the <sup>plan</sup> ~~scale~~ of the present monograph. Their task, which they have admirably fulfilled, has been to present the evidence and clear away much error and misconception; and if they can find time to undertake the task, for which no-one is better qualified, of publishing a historical commentary embracing the whole range of the quota-lists, and the other assessment-records in addition to that for 425 B.C., we shall all be even more deeply in their debt.

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