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METROPOLITAN MUSEUM STUDIES

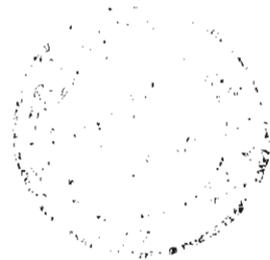
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A FRAGMENT OF A GREEK STELE FROM THE
LANSDOWNE COLLECTION

By GISELA M. A. RICHTER





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In the *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum* of October, 1930,¹ a short account was given of the fragment of an Athenian stele, of Pentelic marble,² which was purchased at the Lansdowne Sale.³ The piece has been known for a long time and has been frequently described and referred to⁴; but though it is a distinguished monument of an important period it has never been properly published. *Metropolitan Museum Studies* affords an opportunity to do so and to discuss certain aspects and problems which its study brings up. Starting with the evidence we have — that is, a comparatively small fragment of a grave monument — we shall examine it in detail and try to deduce from it the composition, history, and date of the monument, and finally make an attempt to complete the dedicatory inscription. In other words we shall first carefully examine the clues

and then draw what conclusions seem possible.

All that remains of the monument is the head of a woman and the upper part of the pediment with a portion of the inscription (fig. 1).⁵ The head is a little over life-size⁶ and in very high relief (figs. 4-7). Its forward inclination, the three-quarters view, and the great width of the stele suggest that the woman was seated. She wore a mantle which is drawn up on her head like a veil and a triple fillet in her hair; in her ear was a metal earring for which the hole still remains. The top of her head is roughly worked, which indicates that this part was above the line of vision and could therefore be neglected. The head itself is exceptionally well preserved, practically nothing but the end of the nose and a few chips being missing.

The stele of Phrasikleia (fig. 9),⁷ an approximately contemporary monument of similar

¹ Richter, vol. XXV, p. 218.

² Since its arrival at the Metropolitan Museum frequent wettings have removed part of the London soot with which the surface was coated, and the warm yellowish color of the Pentelic marble is slowly emerging.

³ That is, the sale of ancient marbles, the property of the Marquess of Lansdowne, by auction at Christie's on March 5, 1930.

⁴ Stackelberg, p. 36 (see note 33 on p. 154 of this article); Michaelis, *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 1862, vol. XX, p. 339, *Archäologische Zeitung*, 1880, vol. XXXVIII, pl. 9, pp. 81 f., *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*, p. 437, no. 1; Furtwängler, Introduction, p. 13; Friederichs-Wolters, no. 1035; Conze, no. 586, pl. CXVI; Smith, p. 13, no. 1; Collignon, vol. II, pp. 153, 154, fig. 76; Burlington Fine Arts Club Catalogue, pl. V; Arndt-Brunn-Bruckmann, pl. 582; Lansdowne Sale Catalogue, no. 83. The inscription is published in *I. G.*, II, 4294.

It is not known when the stele entered the Lansdowne Collection. It must have been some time between 1837, the year when it was mentioned by

Stackelberg as in Greece, and 1862, when Michaelis lists it as actually in the Lansdowne Collection. The present Lord Lansdowne has kindly given me the following information regarding it: "That it was not in the original (XVIII century) collection seems clear, for it is not mentioned in the Gavin Hamilton correspondence. . . . It must, I think, have been bought by Henry the 3rd Lord Lansdowne who, during the course of a long life, made frequent trips to the continent, and collected there at different times a large number of pictures and other works of art."

⁵ The dimensions are: greatest height, 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (65.4 cm.); greatest width, 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (52 cm.); height of pediment and epistyle, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (31.7 cm.); depth of pediment, less thickness of slab, 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (12.4 cm.); depth of relief, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (16.5 cm.); thickness of slab, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (3.8 cm.). (Slight variations from the published measurements will be noted. The irregular surfaces and fractures make accuracy difficult.)

⁶ Length of face, measured from below fillet, 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (17.2 cm.).

⁷ Conze, no. 289, pl. LXVII.

character, will help us to visualize the missing portions of our stele—the rest of the figure of the seated woman, the chair on which she sat, the attendant by her side, the pilasters which flanked the scene,⁸ the remainder of the pediment (fig. 2).⁹ In our stele the akroterion on the apex of the pediment was worked in a separate piece and fastened with a dowel; the rectangular dowel hole still remains (fig. 8).¹⁰ The slab itself is only 1½ inches (3.8 cm.) thick and must have been cut at the back, probably about three or four inches, presumably to lighten the weight when it was transported from Greece. The back, instead of having the usual rough finish with marks of the pointed chisel, is quite smooth. The *anathyrosis* (the dressing of the contact edge) visible along the front of the upper face is missing along the back, another indication that the slab was cut down. The extent of this cutting cannot be determined by the position of the dowel hole, which at present is 2¼ inches (5.9 cm.) from the front and 1¼ inches (4.3 cm.) from the back; for to center it only ⅔ of an inch (1.6 cm.) extra at the back would be required and there would be no point in cutting off that small amount. The akroterion was evidently not so thick as the stele and did not reach to the back.

We may note the drill holes in the deep groove by the ear, between the neck and the drapery (fig. 10); they were produced by the stationary drill used contiguously, not by the running drill, though the latter was in com-

mon use at the time.

The inscription on the epistyle (fig. 1), cut in beautiful letters, reads . . . *ομενο(υ)ς θυγα* [τηρ] “. . . , the daughter of . . . omenes.” On the right we can reconstruct with certainty τηρ.¹¹ There is not room for the name of the deme.¹² Since the high finish of the inscription suggests an even balance, there may have been the same number of letters on the left as on the right. In that case we may reconstruct nine letters on the left for the name of the daughter and for the beginning of her father’s name. But since the majority of such epitaphs are not symmetrically spaced, we cannot be sure of this number. The available space allows a maximum of ten letters.

The forms of the letters are those current from about 442 to about 360 B.C. The Ionic gamma (Γ), as well as the Attic form (Λ), occurs in Attica in the second half of the fifth century, especially during the last two decades, for private and even for official monuments.¹³ Ο is the regular form for spurious ΟΥ (e.g., in the genitive ending) until about the middle of the fourth century B.C.¹⁴ Σ occurs in the latter part of the fifth century as well as the more characteristic form Ξ (e.g., on a decree of about 424 B.C.).¹⁵ The Ε with the central horizontal bar very slightly shorter than the upper and lower ones is more usual in the fourth than in the fifth century but is paralleled in the fifth, for instance, on the stelai of Phrasikleia¹⁶ and Polyxena¹⁷ and on an inscription found on the Akropolis.¹⁸ It follows then that,

⁸ The pilasters were probably also present in our stele, for the strongly projecting pediment and the presence of an epistyle would seem to call for such a support. See p. 153.

⁹ The width of the pediment is determined by the point at which the top lines of the raking and horizontal cornices meet, since this is the usual practice in measuring Greek stelai (see Conze, *passim*).

¹⁰ Although the dowel hole is undoubtedly ancient, the metal dowel, diagonally inserted in it, must be modern for it is not fastened with lead, as was customary in ancient times, but with modern mortar. This information I owe to W. B. Dinsmoor.

¹¹ Cf., e.g., *I. G.*, II, 3699, 3755, 3827, 3828, 4015.

¹² This conforms to the usage for private monuments in the V century, whereas later the deme is generally mentioned (Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, vol. II, pp. 173 f.).

¹³ Larfeld, *Griechische Epigraphik*, p. 261; Meisterhans-Schwyzler, pp. 4 f., note 17.

¹⁴ Meisterhans-Schwyzler, p. 6.

¹⁵ Kern, pl. 15.

¹⁶ Conze, no. 289.

¹⁷ Blümel, no. K 26.

¹⁸ *I. G.*, I², 924; Larfeld, *Handbuch*, vol. II, part 2, p. 438.



FIG. I. FRAGMENT OF A MARBLE STELE, END OF THE V CENTURY B.C.
FROM THE LANSDOWNE COLLECTION

as far as the inscription is concerned, our stele might date from the second half of the fifth century or the first half of the fourth. For a more exact assignment we must be guided by the style of the head.

When Michaelis published the stele in the *Archäologische Zeitung* in 1880,¹⁹ he assigned

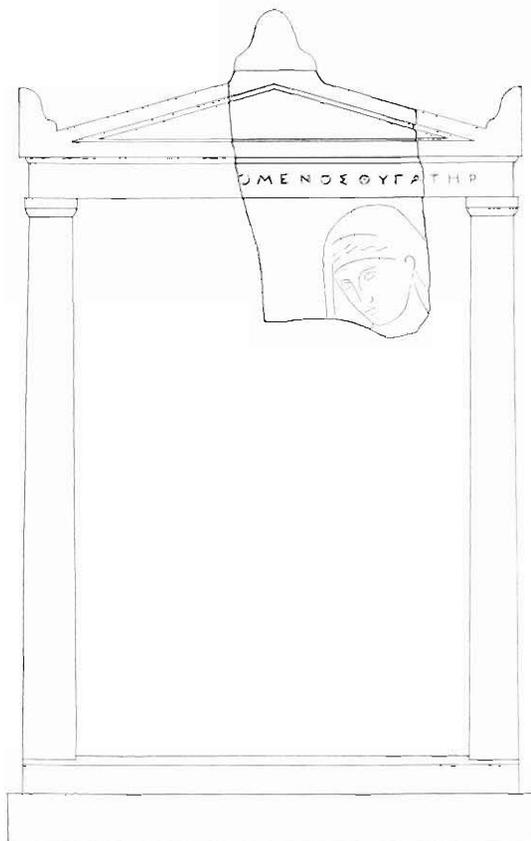


FIG. 2. PROBABLE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE STELE SHOWN IN FIGURE I

it to the first half of the fourth century and he retained this view in his *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*.²⁰ Furtwängler was the first to place it in the fifth century, that is, in the period of the Parthenon pediments, about 440-

¹⁹ Volume XXXVIII, pl. 9, pp. 81 f.

²⁰ Plate 437, no. 1. ²¹ Page 12.

²² Volume I, *Text*, no. 586, p. 127.

²³ Pages 9-10.

²⁴ cf., e.g., Robinson, p. 190, no. 464.

²⁵ There are a few instances of the triangular fore-

430.²¹ The fifth-century date has since been generally accepted, for instance by Conze in his *Attische Grabreliefs*,²² in the Burlington Fine Arts Club Catalogue,²³ and in the catalogues of casts among which a reproduction of the head is included.²⁴ Furtwängler based his dating on the arrangement of the hair, which, instead of being brought down at the sides, waves sidewise and backward, so that the line of the forehead forms an arc instead of the triangle habitual in the fourth century.²⁵

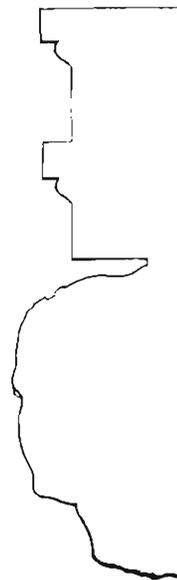


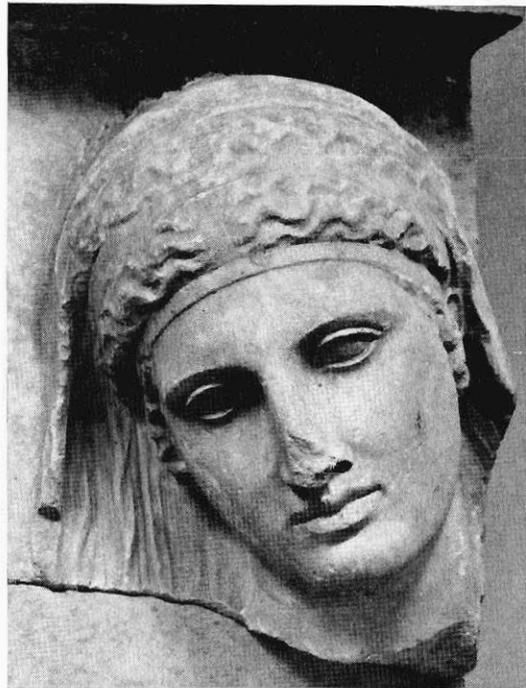
FIG. 3. SECTION OF THE STELE SHOWN IN FIGURE I

This fifth-century assignment would seem also to be upheld by the type of the face, which still has the impersonality of the fifth century, not yet the softer, more gracious quality introduced in the fourth. A helpful comparison is, for instance, the Sabouroff head in Berlin (fig. 13),²⁶ dated about 370 B. C.,²⁷ with its dreamy, languid expression in contrast to which our

head also in the fifth century (cf., e.g., Richter, *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum*, 1931, vol. XXVI, pp. 96, 97).

²⁶ Furtwängler, pls. XII-XIV; Blümel, no. K 43, pl. 51.

²⁷ By Furtwängler, Introduction, p. 13.



FIGS. 4-7. HEAD FROM THE STELE SHOWN IN FIGURE I

head appears almost severe. A peculiar feature in the treatment of the hair, namely, the wide central parting, occurs also on the statue from Tarquinii in Berlin (fig. 14), dated in the last third of the fifth century.²⁸

The rendering of the drapery, as far as we can judge from the small piece preserved (fig. 11), likewise points to the latter part of the fifth century. The shallow, variegated, widely spaced ridges find close parallels on the scul-

selves (fig. 12).³⁰

These stylistic comparisons bring us to the very end of the fifth century rather than to the decade 440 to 430 assigned by Furtwängler. And this later date is borne out also by the fact that the inscription shows, as we have seen, a number of forms which though occurring in the fifth century did not become fully established until the fourth (the Ionic Γ instead of the Attic Λ , Σ for ξ , E for E).

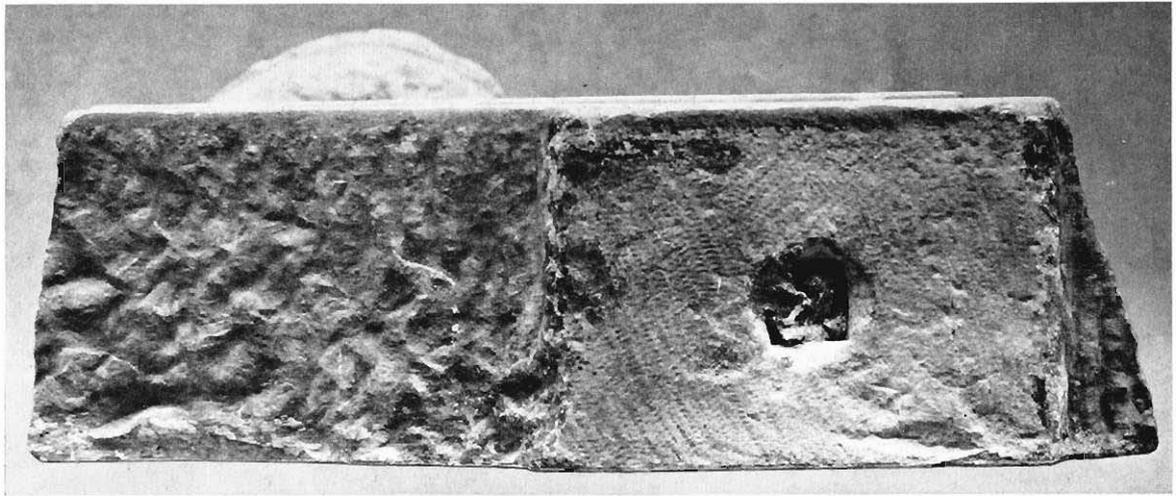


FIG. 8. TOP OF THE STELE SHOWN IN FIGURE 1, SHOWING DOWEL HOLE FOR THE ATTACHMENT OF THE FINIAL

tures of that period. We may compare particularly the figures of the Athena Nike parapet, dated about 410 B.C.,²⁹ where the folds show the same tendency to break and turn on them-

The shape of our stele—a slab surmounted by a pediment and flanked on either side by a pilaster—is found also in other stelai of the fifth century. The earliest extant example

²⁸ Blümel, no. K 6, pp. 7-10, fig. 4, pl. 8.

²⁹ Rhys Carpenter, p. 81, dates the Victory reliefs between 421 and 415 on "historical probability and stylistic criticism"; that is, before the fatal Sicilian expedition of 415 and as a product of "the younger Pheidon school . . . then active." But about 410 is historically also probable, for between 411 and 407 Athens enjoyed temporary successes (especially the important victory of Kyzikos) which would be particularly appreciated after a period of depression. Also finances picked up (a toll was levied at the Bosphorus and Kleophon's financial administration revived optimism [Ferguson, in *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. V, p. 344]). The building inscriptions of the Erechtheion dated 408-407 record payments made to

sculptors for carving figures of the frieze, showing that work was proceeding on the Akropolis at that time. Stylistically the parapet figures appear to be later than the karyatids of the Erechtheion, dated by the building inscription 421-413; for in the parapet the rendering of transparent drapery has been carried considerably further than in the karyatids. Architectural evidence suggests that the parapet was built after the temple of Athena Nike (about 426), since the temple was planned without the parapet (as shown by the relation of the parapet slabs to the temple steps at the western end [Dinsmoor, *A. J. A.*, 1926, vol. XXX, p. 9, fig. 4]). All these considerations point to 410 as a likely date for the parapet.

³⁰ Casson, pp. 151-152, no. 9; Carpenter, pl. XX, 1.

(about 450-440) is perhaps the stele from the Peiraicus in the National Museum in Athens³¹ of the period of the Parthenon frieze—as yet without an epistyle. Pediments with pilasters and with or without epistyle occur throughout

Thus, in the evolution through which the Greek stele passed—from the tall, narrow form with a single figure or at most two figures current in the sixth century to the shorter, wider slabs with crowded compositions favored dur-



FIG. 9. STELE OF PHRASIKLEIA, END OF THE V CENTURY B.C.
NATIONAL MUSEUM, ATHENS

the rest of the century alongside of those with pediments only,³² until in the fourth century the pediment-pilaster-epistyle form is the accepted one.

³¹ No. 716; Conze, no. 293, pl. LXIX.

³² cf., e.g., besides the stele of Phrasikleia mentioned above, those of Polyxena (Blümel, no. K 26, pl. 36), Tynnias (Conze, no. 617, pl. CXVIII), Hegeso

ing the fourth century—our stele can be placed in the period heralding the later form. The wide slab has been adopted, the pediment introduced, the pilasters added, the depth of the

(Conze, no. 68, pl. XXX), Mika and Dion (Conze, no. 157, pl. XLVIII). I have found no example with epistyle and without pilasters. Besides the pedimental finial, other forms are of course in use.

relief considerably increased, but the composition, if we may judge by the related stele of Phrasikleia, is still spacious and harmoniously interrelated.

The monument to which our fragment belonged must have been an important one, for it is considerably larger than the average and it is executed with unusual care and finish. The father who set it up in memory of his

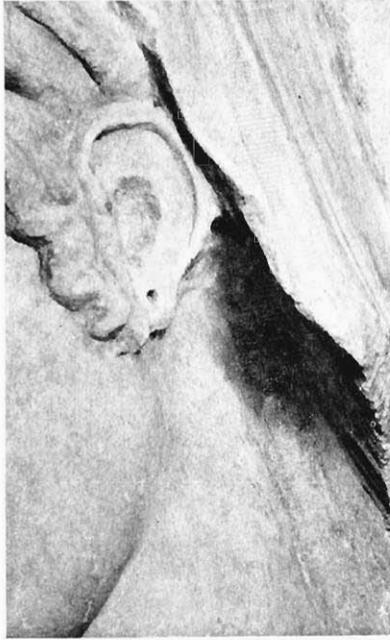


FIG. 10. DETAIL OF THE HEAD SHOWN IN FIGURE 7 SHOWING MARKS OF THE DRILL

daughter must therefore have been a prominent or at least a wealthy man; and the girl was presumably not yet married; otherwise the husband's name would appear. That a father set up so important a memorial to his daughter shows incidentally in what high regard daughters were held in late fifth-century Athens. It is perhaps indicative of a change of outlook since the sixth century, when grave-stones were chiefly memorials to dead sons, to judge at least by extant monuments. We must remember that the girl of our stele was a contemporary of Aristophanes's *Lysistrate* (411 B. C.). The father was probably a resident of

Athens, for what evidence we have points to Athens as the provenance of our stele.³³

With the data at our command is it possible to reconstruct the name of the father? We can at least make an attempt. If the monument dates from about 410 the father must at that time have been old enough to have a grown-up daughter. His name ended in *omenes*. We have a maximum of ten letters for the girl's name and the beginning of the father's name. Whom do we know with a name ending in *omenes* prominent enough in Athens toward the end of the fifth century to have dedicated such a splendid memorial?³⁴ From the list of men known in Athens during this period whose names ended in *omenes*³⁵ we may select the following as perhaps the most likely possibilities: (1) Andromenes, the father of Ameinokleia, whose name appears on a splendid gravestone perhaps of this period³⁶; (2) Hippomenes, a member of the *Bουλή* under Theramenes, who introduced in 411-410 B. C. a motion for a decree³⁷ (a member of that council

³³ It is presumably identical with that mentioned by Stackelberg in his *Gräber der Hellenen*, published in 1837, p. 36: "In meiner Sammlung befindet sich der aus Athen übersandte Gipsabguss von einem der Phrasikleia ähnlichen, nur durch die Neigung nach der andern Seite und durch wellenförmiges, krauses Haar unterschiedenen lebensgrossen Kopfe, welcher zu einem ähnlichen Grabepithema gehört, und aus welchem der hohe Schwung der Kunst des Phidias lebendig hervorblickt."

³⁴ I want to acknowledge the help of M. Milne, Assistant in the Department of Classical Art, in collecting the evidence for such possibilities, and for many valuable suggestions.

³⁵ Andromenes, Aristomenes, Automenes, Hippomenes, Kleomenes, Nikomenes, Somenes, Theomenes (all apparently citizens except Somenes, who was a metic). There are altogether thirty-seven names ending in *ομένης* and one in *ομένης*, viz., Somenes, listed by Bechtel, pp. 306, 309 ff., and Sundwall, p. 162; and of these sixteen are listed by Kirchner and by Sundwall as belonging to Athenians.

³⁶ Conze, no. 901, pl. CLXXVII, and vol. IV, p. 119.

³⁷ *J. G.*, II², 12; Wilhelm, *Österr. Jahresh.*, 1922-1924, vols. XXI-XXII, pp. 147 ff.; cf. Ferguson, *Classical Philology*, 1926, vol. XXI, pp. 72 ff., and in *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. V, pp. 338 ff.

had to be over thirty³⁸ and of the moneyed class³⁹; (3) Nikomenes, who furnished bail for Agoratos, an informer in the service of the oligarchical party, in 404 B. C.⁴⁰ and was then perhaps put to death by the Thirty⁴¹ or perhaps lived to propose a law about 403-402 concerning the legitimacy of children⁴²; (4) Aristomenes, who was one of the profaners of the mysteries in 415 (Andokides I. 12-13) and therefore presumably of the aristocratic class⁴³; and (5) Automenes, mentioned by Aristophanes in 422⁴⁴ as the father of Arignotos, a gifted *citharoede*, and of Aripgrades,⁴⁵ a man



FIG. 11. DETAIL OF THE DRAPERY SHOWN IN FIGURE 1

of literary taste⁴⁶ as well as a debauchee, and of a third, unnamed son, "an actor, terribly clever."⁴⁷

The best known of these men was perhaps Automenes, since his family was prominent

³⁸ Aristotle *Constitution of Athens* 30.2.

³⁹ At least he must have been well enough off to be a heavy-armed soldier: Thucydides VIII. 97.1: "They deposed the Four Hundred, voted to deliver the management of affairs to the Five Thousand (and all who could furnish themselves with a hoplite's outfit were to belong to this number), and decided that no one was to receive pay for any office, the offender to be accounted accursed." (Loeb ed., translation by C. Forster Smith). cf. also Aristotle, *op. cit.*, 29.5, 33.1.

⁴⁰ Lysias XIII. 23.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 30, 38, 43, 59.

⁴² At least, if he is identical with the Nikomenes mentioned by the scholiast on Aischines I.39. On this subject, cf. Schaefer, vol. I, pp. 139-140; Rauchenstein and Fuhr in their edition of Lysias; and Kirchner, vol. II, p. 141, nos. 10967, 10968.

enough to be attacked by Aristophanes from 424 until 392 or 389 – the date of the *Ecclesiazusae*; also its members were distinguished for artistic accomplishments and would therefore be likely to value a particularly fine memorial. (The bad reputation of Aripgrades was evidently a stain on an otherwise bright escutcheon.) If the father who erected our monument



FIG. 12. FRAGMENT OF A NIKE FROM THE PARAPET OF THE TEMPLE OF ATHENA NIKE, ABOUT 410 B. C. AKROPOLIS MUSEUM, ATHENS

⁴³ Since it was the custom of Athenian aristocrats to give to their daughters as well as their sons names formed on two unshortened stems (*Vollnamen*; cf. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, vol. II, p. 178), the five letters available for the daughter's name would seem to be too short; but there are exceptions (e.g., Kirchner, vol. I, p. 572, no. 8551).

⁴⁴ *Wasps* 1275-1283; cf. *Knights* 1278 ff.

⁴⁵ For Aripgrades cf. also Aristophanes *Knights* 1274-1289 (424 B. C.), *Peace* 883-885 (421 B. C.), and *Ecclesiazusae* 129 (392 or 389 B. C.); Aischines the Socratic in Athenaeus 220 bc; Aristotle *Poetics* 22.

⁴⁶ Van Leeuwen in his commentary on Aristophanes's *Knights* 1281, 1287, even thinks he was a comic poet; cf. also Aristotle *Poetics* 22.

⁴⁷ Aristophanes *Wasps* 1279.

was Automenes, the daughter's name was perhaps Aristo, for Automenes showed his fondness for names beginning in "Ari" in those of two of his sons; and ΑΡΙΣΤΩΑΥΤ nicely fills the available space in our inscription. If "Aristo" was an unmarried girl about 410 B. C. she must have been considerably younger than

torical interest to our stele we must admit that it is impossible to reconstruct the inscription with any confidence.

We have here then a fragment of an important monument, presumably dedicated by an outstanding Athenian of the end of the fifth century. Since life-size Greek heads of that



FIG. 13. FEMALE HEAD, IV CENTURY B. C.
ALTES MUSEUM, BERLIN



FIG. 14. HEAD FROM A FEMALE STATUE
END OF THE V CENTURY B. C.
ALTES MUSEUM, BERLIN

her brothers, who were grown up in 424 B. C.⁴⁸

But these are mere conjectures and there are other possibilities: the dedicator of our monument, for instance, may have had a name not recorded in extant literature or inscriptions. Tempting, therefore, though it is to add a his-

⁴⁸ Unless she had difficulty in getting married during the Peloponnesian war! (cf. Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 593 ff.)

period are conspicuously rare, our head assumes an important place in the meager store. It is the only example of its kind in the Metropolitan Museum. With its quiet dignity and serenity it shows us what constitutes idealism in Greek sculpture—the selection of a noble type and the elimination of unnecessary detail. The living form is simplified, freed of the accidental, and thereby lifted to a higher plane.

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