

CGRN 235

Boundary stone with a purity regulation from Herakleia Pontika

Date :

ca. 400 BC

Justification: lettering and Doric dialect (e.g. τότο instead of τούτου), cf. Solmsen.

Provenance

Herakleia Pontika [↗](https://pleiades.stoa.org/places/844944) (<https://pleiades.stoa.org/places/844944>). According to Hirschfeld, the stone was found in a bakery behind the oven but it subsequently disappeared.

Support

Stone block, having a semicircular form when discovered (perhaps not its original form, but due to reuse in or around a oven, see on Provenance). No further information is available about the state of the stone before its disappearance.

Height: 105 cm

Width: 28 cm

Depth: unknown

Layout

The layout of the text is only known from the drawing made by von Diest, published for the first time by Hirschfeld in capital letters.

Letters: unknown height.

Bibliography

Edition here based on Jonnes – Ameling *I.Heraclea Pontica* (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#I.Heraclea%20Pontica>) 70.

Other edition: [Hirschfeld 1883](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Hirschfeld%201883) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Hirschfeld%201883>): 885, no. 51.

Further bibliography: [Solmsen 1898](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Solmsen%201898) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Solmsen%201898>); [Parker 1983](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Parker%201983) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Parker%201983>); [Morris 1989](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Morris%201989) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Morris%201989>); [Sourvinou-Inwood 1996](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Sourvinou-Inwood%201996) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Sourvinou-Inwood%201996>); [Horster 2004](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Horster%202004) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Horster%202004>); [Harris 2015](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Harris%202015) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/bibliography/#Harris%202015>).

Text

ὄρος τῷ
ἱερῷ τότῳ
ἔνδος μὴ
θάπτειν.

Translation

Boundary stone of the sanctuary. Do not bury inside this place.

Traduction

Borne du sanctuaire. Ne pas enterrer en ce lieu.

Commentary

This stone, found in Herakleia Pontika, served as a boundary marker of a sanctuary, though to which deity the sanctuary belonged is unknown. The dialect of the inscription is Doric, perhaps including a Megarian spelling of ὄρος as ὄρρος (cf. [LSJ](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#LSJ) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#LSJ>) s.v. ὄρος); for Megara as the mother-city of the colony Herakleia Pontika, see also here [CGRN 169](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/169) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/169>) (Kallatis, itself colony of Herakleia Pontika).

Line 1: *Horoí* were small stones which stipulated the boundaries of a particular space, often a sanctuary or sacred land: see Horster, p. 23-33 (for another *horos* containing a ritual norm, see also [CGRN 60](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/60) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/60>), Thera). The boundary stones could function as ‘warning signs’, implicitly commanding viewers to act according to the prescription, while sometimes explicitly specifying particular regulations and prohibitions. For another boundary stone prohibiting certain actions, see [IG XII.5](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#IG%20XII.5) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#IG%20XII.5>) 183 (Paros). This type of short inscription, prescribing behaviour in a sanctuary, often comes without an enactment formula or an explicit penalty, yet one can assume that the relevant authority (often the sanctuary) would have enforced its provision: see Harris, p. 58-60.

Line 2: Several syntactic constructions are possible: *τότο* (i.e. *τούτου*) can determine *ἱερῶ* (without inter-punctuation) or instead be understood together with the preposition *ἐνδοσ*. The second interpretation seems the most plausible. For another example of a prohibition against burial “in this place”, see [LSS](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#LSS) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#LSS>) 120 (Cumae).

Line 4: The regulation forbids all burial within the sanctuary. In Classical Greece, it was the norm for burials to take place away from the dwellings of the living and from those of the gods. Nearly all Greek cities practiced extra-mural burial (for the exceptions of Sparta and Tarentum, see Parker, p. 70-73) and a prohibition on burying the dead in sacred spaces was customary. For the debate on the origin and evolution of these Greek burial customs, which differ from practice in the Mycenaean period, see e.g. Morris; Sourvinou-Inwood, p. 413-444. The only exception to the prohibition of burial in sacred spaces was for heroes, whose remains were often located and worshipped in public settings such as the agora (e.g. Battos, the founding hero of Cyrene: [CGRN 99](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/99) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/99>), lines 21-24), or in sanctuaries (e.g. Neoptolemus in the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi: Paus. 10.26.4). This inscription from Herakleia Pontika is therefore interesting because it makes explicit a norm which is normally implicit and generally understood, namely the interdiction of burial in a sacred space. There are a few other examples of such explicit prohibitions against burial: famously, burials were not allowed on the whole island of Delos (Thuc. 3.104), while Pausanias also mentions an interdiction of burial in the sacred grove of Asclepius at Epidaurus, marked by boundary stones (Paus. 2.27.1); cf. also [SIG³](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#SIG%C2%B3) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/abbreviations/#SIG%C2%B3>) 1220, in relation to the city-walls of Nisyros. In the case of Delos, the unusual scope of the prohibition, extending to the whole sacred island, explains why the norm would be made explicit. Why it was felt necessary to inscribe this particular norm on the boundary stone of a sanctuary at Herakleia Pontika is unclear. It is possible that this *horos* belonged to an extra-urban sanctuary which lay close to a necropolis. Another possibility is that the norm had been broken in the past, necessitating an explicit restatement of the prohibition against burial. In any case, it is clear that the regulation guards the sanctuary of an unknown deity against the pollution associated with the dead: for other regulations regarding the pollution caused by the dead and access to sanctuaries, see [CGRN 212](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/212) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/212>) (Pergamon), lines 3-9, and [CGRN 214](http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/214) (<http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/file/214>) (Miletos).

Publication

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