

## CGRN 43

### DECREE CONCERNING THE FESTIVAL OF HEPHAISTOS AT ATHENS

#### Date :

421/0 BC

Justification: archon Aristion and other officials in function.

#### Provenance

[Athens](#) . Fragment A found at the church of S. Demetrios Katephore; fragments B-D found at the Kapnikarea Church. Now in the Epigraphical Museum in Athens (inv. no. 6633).

#### Support

Four fragments of Pentelic marble (A-D). A intact above; below A, C damaged on all sides, below C, B (now lost), and finally D (intact on the left). Dimensions of the whole (the width is an estimate):

Height: 68 cm

Width: 69 cm

Depth: (above) 13.8 - (below)  
14.7 cm

#### Layout

Stoichedon 61.

Letters: line 1:0.9 cm high; lines 2-3:1.9 cm high; lines 4 ff.:1.1-1.5 cm high.

#### Bibliography

Edition here based on Lewis [IG I<sup>3</sup> 82](#).

Other editions: Kirchhoff [IG I 46](#); Kirchhoff [IG I.Suppl. 35b](#); Hiller von Gaertringen [IG I<sup>2</sup> 84](#).

Cf. also: Ziehen [LGS II 12](#); Sokolowski [LSCG 13](#).

Further bibliography: [Clerc 1893: 152-154](#); [Mattingly 1974](#); [Thompson 1977](#); [Kotsidu 1991: 155-170](#); [Rosivach 1994](#), Appendix B; [Aleshire 1994](#); [Van Straten 1995: 109-113](#); [Mattingly 1997](#); [Blok - Lambert 2009](#); [Wijma 2014: 86-94](#).

## Text

[θ]ε[οί]·  
 [Προκλῆς] Ἀτάρβο Ε[ύοννμεύς]  
 [ἐγραμμάτ]ευε, ἐπὶ Ἀριστ[ίονος ἄρχοντος]·  
 [ἔδοχσεν τῇ βολῇ καὶ τῷ δ]έμοι· ἡπποθοντ[ίς ἐπρυτάνευε, Προκλῆς ἐγραμμά]-  
 5 [τενε, .....<sup>8</sup> ἐπεστάτε· Ἀριστ]ίον ἔρχε, ἡυπέ[ρβολος εἶπε .....<sup>15</sup>]  
 [.....<sup>29</sup>.....]ι πεντετ[ερίδι .....<sup>21</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>28</sup>.....] νῦμ μὲν τε[.....<sup>25</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>17</sup>.....]Ο[.....<sup>12</sup>.....]ΟΝΟΣΤ[.....<sup>26</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>17</sup>.....]ν δε[.....<sup>12</sup>.....]ΕΡΕ[.....<sup>26</sup>.....]  
 10 [.....<sup>17</sup>.....] μὲν ΠΟ[.....<sup>39</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>16</sup>..... ἐ]ν τῇ ἀγορᾷ [.....<sup>34</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>16</sup>..... τ]οῖς δεμότεσι ΕΝ[.....<sup>31</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>12</sup>..... πεντέ]κοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν [.....<sup>29</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>16</sup>..... τ]ῆς μουσικῆς καθάπερ [.....<sup>28</sup>.....]  
 15 [.....<sup>11</sup>.....] τὸ ἡε[φ]αίστο καὶ τῆς Ἀθήναιας [.....<sup>26</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>9</sup>.....] Ἀθηναίο[ι]ς ἡόθεν χρὲ ἐχσαιρέ[ν] ἀργύ[ριον .....<sup>19</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>7</sup>..... ἡ]εροποιό[ς] δ[ε] ἡοίτινες ἡεροποιέσσο[ι] τὴν θυσίαν δέκα ἄνδρας δι]-  
 [α]κλε[ρόσαι] ἐκ τὸν δ[ικα]στὸν ἡένα ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς ἐκ τὸν [.....<sup>19</sup>.....ἄ]-  
 [ρ]χοι δ[ικακλ]εροσάντ[ον μ]ετὰ τὸν τῆς βολῆς· διακλεροσ[άντον δὲ] τοῦτοι ἐναντί]-  
 20 [ον τῆς βολῆς]· ἡοι δὲ λ[αχ]όντες μισθοφορόντον καθάπερ ἡ[οι] βολευταί ἡέος ἂν ἐ]-  
 [πιμέλοντα]ι τούτον· ἡ[οι] δὲ κολακρέται ἀποδιδόντον αὐτο[ῖς] τὸ ἀργύριον· δια]-  
 [κλεροσάτο] δὲ καὶ ἡε β[ο]λῆ σφὼν αὐτὸν ἡεροπ[ο]ιὸς δέκα ἄνδρ[ας] ἡένα ἐκ τῆς φυλ]-  
 [ῆς] ἡεκάστε[ς]· δόναι δὲ [κ]αὶ τοῖς μετοίκους τρεῖ[ς] βοῦς, τούτον τ[ὸν] τριὼν δὲ ἡοι ἡ]-  
 [ιεροποιοὶ] ν[ε]μόντον [α]ὐτοῖς ὁμὰ τὰ κρέα· τῆς δὲ ποντῆς ἡόπος [ἂν] ἡος κάλλιστα]  
 25 [πενφθῇ] ἡο[ι] ἡ[ιεροπ[ο]ιοὶ] ἐπιμελόσθον, καὶ ἂν τίς τι ἀκοσμέ[ι, κύριοι ὄντον αὐ]-  
 [τοὶ μὲν] ζεμ[ιὸν] μέχρι πεντέκοντα δραχμὼν καὶ ἐκγράφεν ἐς [τὸς] πράκτορας· ἐὰ]-  
 [ν] δὲ τις ἄχσ[ιος] εἰ μέζον[ος] ζε[μ]ίας, τὰς ἐπιβολὰς ποιό[ν]τον [ἡο]πόσας ἂν δοκῇ κ]-  
 [α]ὶ ἐσαγόν[τον] ἐς τὸ δικασ[τ]ήρι[ον] τὸ τὸ ἄρχοντος· τὸς δ[ε] β[ο]υ[ς] ἡεκάστον ἀπὸ σάλ]-  
 -  
 [πινγος] [προσαγαγῆν] πρὸς τ[ὸν] βομόν· ἡοίτιν[ε]ς δὲ ἀρῶνται ἐ[π]άνδρος αὐτός, ἡοι]  
 30 [ἡ]εροποιο[ὶ] ἡαιρέσθον] διακοσίος ἐχς Ἀθε[ν]αίων· τὴν δὲ λ[ανπάδα] .....<sup>5</sup> τῇ πε]-  
 [ν]τετερίδι [καὶ τοῖς ἡεφ]αιστίοις· ποιόντο[ν] δ[ε] [ἡ]οι ἡιεροπ[ο]ιοὶ ἡούτος ἡόστε]  
 [τῇ]ν λανπαδ[εδρομίαν] καὶ τὸν ἄλλον ἀγῶνα γίγνεσθαι καθά[περ] τοῖς Προμεθί[ο]-  
 [ις] τῇν θέαν [ἡοι] λανπάδαρχ[οι] ποιῶσι· καὶ τὸ λοιπόν, ἐὰν δοκῇ [.....<sup>13</sup>.....]  
 [τῷ] Π[ο]σειδ[όνι] .....<sup>9</sup>.....]ΝΤΟΝ ἡοι ἡιεροποιοὶ καὶ τῷ Ἀπόλ[λωνι] .....<sup>9</sup>.....]  
 35 [.....<sup>5</sup>.....]Ν· ἡ[οι] δὲ γυμασί[α]ρχοι ἡοι ἡειρεμένοι ἐς τὰ Προμέθια [.....<sup>13</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>6</sup>.....]Τ[.....<sup>13</sup>.....]ΟΣ ἡελόσθον· τὸν δὲ βομόν τῷ ἡεφαί[στοι] .....<sup>9</sup>.....]

[.....<sup>20</sup>.....] ΤΟ ποιесάτο ηε βολὲ καθότι ἄν αὐτῇ[ι δοκῇ καὶ τοῖ ἄ]-  
 [ρχιτέκτονι], καὶ [.....<sup>6</sup>.....] ΘΑΙ καθ' ἑμέραν ἐν τῇ τελευταίᾳ ΠΕ[.....<sup>13</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>19</sup>.....] ΑΝ καὶ ἀναγορεύεν καθότι ἄν κριθῇ ἡ[ο ἄγὸν ἑκάστο]-  
 40 [ς· παρόντων δὲ ἡοί τε ἱερ]οπ[ο]ιοὶ καὶ ἡοι ἀγωνισταί· τὸς δὲ κρ[ιτὰς .....<sup>9</sup>.....]  
 [.....<sup>15</sup>.....· ἐπιμελόσθων] δὲ τὸν ἄθλον τῆς ἀναγραφῆς ἡ[οὶ ἱεροποιοί]·  
 [.....<sup>14</sup>..... εἶπε· τὰ μὲν ἄλλα καθά]περ τῇ βολῇ· ἀναγράφ[σαι δὲ τὸ φσέφι]-  
 [σμα τόδε ἐστέλει λιθίνει καὶ καταθέναι ἐ]ν τῷ ἱερῷ· ἡο δὲ [γραμματεὺς τῆς]  
 [βολῆς ἐπιμελέσθω τῆς ἀναγραφῆς· καὶ ἀποδόντο]ν [τὸ] ἄργύ[ριον ἡοι κολακρέτα]-  
 45 [ι .....<sup>40</sup>.....]

## Translation

Gods. Prokles son of Atarbos of the deme Euonymon was secretary, during the archonship of Aristion. The council and the people decided, when the tribe Hippothontis had the prytany, Prokles was secretary, [...] was president, and Aristion was archon; Hyperbolos proposed (5): during the festival [...] (four lines) ... (10) [...] in the agora [...] to the deme-members [...] hundred fifty [...] of the music just as [...] (15) [...] of Hephaistos and of Athena [...] for the Athenians, from where it is necessary to take the money [...] the *hieropoioi* should choose by lot ten men to make the sacrifice, from the judges, one from each tribe from the [...] The [...] archs should organise the selection by lot together with those of the council and perform the lot-drawing in the presence (20) of the council. Those chosen by lot receive wages exactly as [the councillors do while they] take care of this. The *kolakretai* give them [the money]. The council must choose by lot among themselves ten men as *hieropoioi* one from each tribe. Three oxen are given to the metics, of these three the *hieropoioi* distribute the meat to them raw. (25) The *hieropoioi* must take care of the procession, so that it is conducted [in the most beautiful way possible], and if someone somehow behaves disorderly, [they have the authority] to impose fines of up to fifty drachmae and write out a copy for [the *praktores*]. If someone deserves a higher punishment, they should set the fine as high as they think right and introduce the case to the court of justice of the archon. Each will lead the male oxen by sound of trumpet to the altar. Those men who will lift [them in a manly manner ...] (30) the *hieropoioi* [must choose] two hundreds from among the Athenians. The t[orch...] during the festival and the Hephaisteia. The *hieropoioi* must make it so that the torch-race [and] the other competition happen in the same manner as the superintendents of the torchrace perform the spectacle [during the Prometheia]. For the rest, if [...] seems to [...] to Poseidon [...] the *hieropoioi*, and to Apollo [...] (35) [...]. [The gymnasiar]choi that were chosen for the Prometheia [...] they must choose [...]. The altar for Hephaistos [...] the council must perform [...] in the way that it [seems right] to them [and to the architect]. And [...] daily, on the last day [...] and to publicly proclaim how [each contest] was decided. (40) The *hieropoioi* and the competitors [must be present]. Those who have been selected [...] The *hieropoioi* must take care] of the inscribing of the prizes [...] made the proposal: the other things (will happen)] just as the council (sees fit). The decree is to be recorded [on a stone stele and set up] in the temple; the [secretary of the council will see to the inscribing. The *kolakretai* must give him the] money [...].

## Traduction

Dieux. Proklès, fils d'Atarbos du dème d'Euonymon, était secrétaire, sous l'archontat d'Aristion. Il a plu au conseil et au peuple, sous la prytanie de la tribu Hippothontis, Proklès était secrétaire, [...] était président, Aristion était archonte; Hyperbolos a fait la proposition : (5) au cours de la fête [...] (4 lignes)... (10) [...] sur l'agora [...] aux démotes [...] cent cinquante [...] de la musique selon [...] (15) d'Héphaïstos et d'Athéna [...] pour les Athéniens, d'où il faut prélever l'argent [...] que les hiéropes tirent au sort dix hommes qui accompliront le sacrifice, parmi les juges, un par tribu, de [...] Que les [...]arques organisent le tirage au sort avec ceux du conseil et qu'ils accomplissent le tirage au sort en présence (20) du conseil. Que ceux qui sont choisis par le sort soient rémunérés comme [les membres du conseil quand ils] s'occupent de cela. Que les kolakrètes leur remettent [l'argent]. Que le conseil désigne par le sort en son sein dix hommes comme hiéropes, un de chaque tribu. Seront donnés aux métèques trois boeufs dont les hiéropes leur distribueront la viande crue. (25) Que les hiéropes prennent soin de la procession afin qu'elle soit menée [de la plus belle manière possible], et si quelqu'un perturbe l'ordre, qu'ils [aient l'autorité] d'imposer une amende jusqu'à cinquante drachmes et de la transcrire à destination [des *praktores*]. Si quelqu'un est passible d'une amende plus élevée, qu'ils majorient la peine [à leur estime] et qu'ils introduisent une procédure au tribunal de l'archonte. Chacun [conduira] les boeufs au son de la trompette jusqu'à l'autel. Les hommes qui [les] soulèveront [virilement] [ (30), que les hiéropes en choisissent deux cents parmi les Athéniens. La t[orche...] durant la fête et les Hephaisteia. Que les hiéropes agissent afin que la course aux flambeaux [et] l'autre concours se passent à la manière dont les préposés à la course aux flambeaux organisent le spectacle [aux Prometheia]. Quant au reste, s'il semble [...] à Poséidon [...] les hiéropes, et à Apollon [... (35) ...]. Les gymnasiar]ques choisis pour les Prometheia [...] qu'ils choisissent. [...]. L'autel pour Héphaïstos [...] que le conseil accomplisse de la manière qui lui [semble bonne, ainsi qu'à l'architecte...] par jour, le dernier jour [...] et de proclamer publiquement la manière dont a été jugé [chaque concours]. (40) Les hiéropes et les compétiteurs [seront présents]. Ceux qui ont été sélectionnés [... Que les hiéropes prennent soin] de l'inscription des prix aux concours. [...] a fait la proposition. Les autres choses (interviendront)] selon (ce qui sied) au conseil. On inscrira [ce décret sur une stèle de pierre et la dressera] dans le sanctuaire. Que le [secrétaire du conseil prenne soin de la gravure. Que les kolakrètes lui donnent l']argent [...]

## Commentary

This decree regulates the celebration of a festival in honour of Hephaistos and Athena. By 421, Hephaistos had a temple on the hill west of the Agora, and earlier literary sources mention torch-races in honour of Hephaistos (Hdt. 8.98.2, A. Ag. 279-314). Similarly, the ritual of bull-lifting was already associated with the god of crafts (cf. see lines 29-30, below). Therefore, most probably, this inscription details the reorganization of an already existing festival, rather than instituting an entirely new one (see Wijma, p. 86-88; for another view, cf. Rosivach). For another decree from Athens, testifying to a later revamping of the festival of Athena, cf. [CGRN 92](#).

The first fragmentary lines of the inscription are difficult to interpret. We can discern a reference to a "four-year festival" (line 6), to an event happening "in the Agora" (line 11), to the involvement of the "demesmen" (line 12); to a number (150?, line 13), to "music" (line 14) and the gods Hephaistos and Athena (line 15). One may think of a procedure of meat distribution in the agora, possibly of a large number of animals (so Clerc; and cp. here [CGRN 19](#), face A, lines 19-21). Kotsidu connects the mention of the "agora" with the "music" in another way, while explaining that the musical contests of the Panathenaia were held in the Athenian agora.

The substance of the rest of the decree is somewhat more straightforward. Lines 17-23 specify the procedure for the selection of twenty *hieropoioi* by lot: ten from the pool of judges and ten from the members of the council, in both cases one from each tribe. The tasks of these officials included providing the metics with three oxen and then the raw meat of these animals (lines 23-24). The *hieropoioi* are also to conduct the procession in the most elegant manner possible and are given the power to fine small offenders, while larger offences are relegated to a court of justice (lines 24-28). The festivities also include leading an unknown number of bulls to the altar of Hephaistos at the accompanying sound of a trumpet, and 200 men are then to lift up the bulls (lines 28-30). The *hieropoioi* are probably also in charge of the organization of a torchrace, detailed provisions concerning which are given, though in a passage that is now unfortunately fragmentary (lines 31-41). The decree concludes with a further rider on the previous decree; this confirms all of the measures proposed by the council, and makes provisions for the inscribing and setting up of the stone (lines 42-44). For the *kolakretai* as financial officers in Athens, see here [CGRN 24](#), lines A6-9.

Line 16: Mattingly (1974) had interpreted ἐξαίρεϊν as "to set aside" and considered the verb to refer to a special fund "reserved" for the cult of Athena and Hephaistos. However, it is not clear how this interpretation fits in with the rest of the text. Thompson's interpretation, taking the phrase as a specification of the way in which the oxen for the metics (lines 23) are to be financed, i.e. "from the fund from where it is necessary to take out money (to finance sacrifices)", seems more pertinent. The "necessity" would then perhaps refer to the way in which things are laid out in other Athenian decrees or laws.

Line 17-23: The selection of candidates for a particular task or function by lot was a widespread feature of 5th- and 4th-century Athenian democracy. Sortition was preferred to election in those cases in which humans could not or did not want to motivate the choice for a particular person, and instead the gods were thought to select the right candidate (cf. Aleshire and Blok - Lambert); cf. also here [CGRN 74](#), line 2, with commentary.

Lines 23-24: Three oxen are to be given to the metics, of which the meat is to be distributed raw. Here, the metics are consciously singled out as a group; contrast references to δέμῳτεσι (line 12) and Ἀθε[v]αίων (line 30). As Wijma has argued, the decree should be seen as reflecting the growing involvement of metics in the Athenian community from the mid-fifth century onwards, which meant that their position should be acknowledged and at the same time demarcated. Many metics

were involved in the extensive building program of Perikles. Therefore, it makes sense that this group would be involved and honoured in a festival for the god of craftsmanship. Note that this is the only Athenian festival at the polis level in which metics were explicitly included in the sacrifices (Wijma, p. 89). On the distribution of meat to metics on the sub-polis level, cp. an earlier regulation from the deme of the Skambonidai, [CGRN 19](#), in which the Skambonidai themselves and the metics were to receive equal portions during a sacrifice to the hero Leos. It is unclear how we should assess the honour being bestowed on the metics by giving them the three oxen, since we do not know how many animals were provided to the Athenians during the sacrifice. However, the fact that the meat was to be distributed raw seems rather significant. The goal may have been to exclude the metics from the festive occasion of a communal banquet. As such the regulation would then have had the opposite effect of the often-occurring "οὐ φορά" rule, which strengthened the bonds between the members of a cultic group through an obligatory shared meal on the spot (cf. again Wijma); for οὐ φορά and similar instructions, cf. [CGRN 52](#) (Erchia), *passim*, and the commentary on lines 10-12 in [CGRN 32](#) (Thorikos).

Line 25-28: The *hieropoioi* are given the legal capacity to punish disorderly behaviour during the festival, but only up to a certain point (a fine of up to 50 drachmae). For comparable cases of personnel being granted the authority to sanction transgressors up to a certain level, cf. [CGRN 75](#) (Oropos), lines 6-20; for similar fines in this context, cp. [CGRN 186](#) (Ilion), lines 30-32.

Lines 28-29: There appears to be no direct parallel for the oxen being led to the altar to the sound of a trumpet, but cp. perhaps [CGRN 10](#) (Gortyn), line 9, an interdiction of sounding the trumpet in a festival context.

Lines 29-30: Cf. Van Straten, p. 109-113, for a diachronic discussion of festive occasions on which bulls were lifted. A cup from around 500 BC depicts the lifting of a bull by five youths, as well as Hephaistos; thus, according to the convincing interpretation of Van Straten (p. 112), this cup illustrates a festival in honour of Hephaistos. We do not know how many bulls were involved, since it is not clear how many of the 200 men would be needed to lift each individual bull. For bull-lifting, cf. also here [CGRN 26](#) (Athens), face A, line 17.

Lines 31-36: The *hieropoioi* to be selected by lot were to organize a torch-race as part of the festival. To do so, they should take an example from another torch-race at a four-yearly festival, perhaps the Prometheia. In the text printed here, the point of reference is indicated as the Prometheia, or at least, the Prometheia are restored as the model of the other contest a few lines onwards (lines 32-33). However, we cannot be certain. An alternative, though less precise restoration of lines 32-33, was proposed by Mattingly (1997, καθά[περ τεῖ πεντετερίδι]), who considered that the torch-race and the other contest were to be modelled on that of the Great (penteteric) Panathenaia. Perhaps additional sacrifices needed to be made to Poseidon and Apollo (line 34).



Line 36: The interpretation of the phrase *ἑλόςσθον τὸν δὲ βομὸν τῷ ἑφαί[στοι]* is not evident. Perhaps *ἑλόςσθον* and *τὸν δὲ βομὸν τῷ ἑφαί[στοι]* belong to two different grammatical phrases, refering to something that must be "chosen" and to the altar of Hephaistos respectively; alternatively, this is one phrase which refers most probably to how the athletes should "grasp", i.e. take hold of the altar during the race.

Line 38-43: The kind of action to be performed "as it [seems right] to the council [and the architect]" eludes us. The following lines refer to a ceremony in which the victors are proclaimed and prizes are awarded, presumably the torch-race and the contest mentioned earlier (see lines 31-36, above).

## Publication

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## Authors

Jan-Mathieu Carbon

Saskia Peels

## Project Director

Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge