

# New research on the Spartan inscriptions copied by Michel Fourmont (1690–1746)

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During a travel in Greece (1729-1730) aiming to collect manuscripts for the library of Louis XV, the abbot Michel Fourmont copied hundreds of inscriptions, especially in Athens and Sparta (Omont 1902; Raspi Serra 1992-1993). Boeckh, who integrated this material in his *CIG*, also demonstrated that some documents allegedly copied in Sparta were coarse forgeries (*CIG*, I, p. 61–104 with Spawforth 1976), as some distinguished scholars already suspected (for ex. R. Payne Night and Lord Aberdeen: Gengler 2016). Fourmont's reputation as an epigraphist duly suffered from his forgeries, but a systematic examination of his papers, which were only incompletely collated by the authors of the *CIG* and the *IG*, suggests a revision, at least partial, of this judgement and tends to confirm the relative accuracy of his work, as I will show here through a short example. The text presented here is seemingly unimpressive: it is a joint list of ephores and nomophylakes of hadrianic times also known through other inscriptions. It provides however a good sample of methodological issues, since it is transmitted in at least four copies preserved in Fourmont's papers and has been edited four times, though incompletely and unsatisfactory. The new examination of the documents enlightens not so much the text itself as the way Fourmont worked and the methods of the modern epigraphists who exploited his manuscripts.

## Text

[-----]  
 [anaglyphum]  
 [Ἀλέξις Φιλοκράτους: Π[ασι]-  
 [κλέων Φιλοκράτους: Εὐκλ[ε]ίδας]  
 [Δειφύλακος Φιλοκράτης Διογέ-  
 4 [ν]ου: Κλέωντος Βεβίου Φιλοκλέης Πασι-  
 κλέων, v. νομοφύ[λακος] Ἀλεξικράτης (Ἀλεξικράτους) v.  
 Ἀμμοκλῆς (Ἀμμοκλέους) ὁ καὶ Φιλοκράτης Κλέ-  
 8 [ων Σωσιπάτρου] Ἀριστοκλῆς Λυ-  
 σίπου· Τυγαῖος (Τυγαίου), γρ[αμματο]φ[ω]λάξ Νεκτα-  
 ρίας Ἀμμοκλέους.

## Commentary

Heading: Since Fourmont gave no mention of the relief seen by Roß, and since it is not depicted on the plate of Roß's edition, we can only infer from Roß's presentation of the text, that there was no room for the heading directly above the remaining text. But since it seems necessary to have in some way the mention of the eponymous and the quality of the magistrates listed in the first part of the text, we must postulate that the inscription began above the relief, perhaps with a more developed heading mentioning a special occasion just as in *IG* VI 51 (1-5: οἱ σπῆτι[ι]θ[ε]νέες ἔθροροι ἐπὶ Γα. Τουλίου Φιλοκλείδα) and/or a dedication in association with the relief. Cf. also *IG* VI 206-9.

1. 4: After *IG* 855.79r read . ΑΕΑΙ . . ΛΟΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ, Roß gives ΣΦΙΑΟΚΑ on his plate and edits [Ἀλέξις] Φιλοκράτους. The *IG* gives erroneously the ζ as a supplement and the φ as seen by Fourmont only. For the letter's form, Fourmont noted the Σ with slightly overreaching middle strokes in lines 1-2, just as Roß for the whole of the text.
- 2: At the end of the line, Fourmont 855.79r read . . . Υ . . Δ . . which could not correspond without any correction to the name Εὐκλείδα. Our interpretation respects the spacing of the letters given by Fourmont, which seems to be right almost everywhere else, but [Ε]ϋ[κ]λ[ε]ίδας, [Ε]ϋ[κ]λ[ε]ίδας or [Ε]ϋ[κ]λ[ε]ίδας were also possible, although less satisfactory. The letters do not appear on 571A.53r and are accordingly missing in Osann, *CIG* and Roß, but not in the *IG* based on 855.79r.
- 3: ΔΙΟΓΕΡΟΒΑC fac simile, ΔΙΟΓΕΡΟB Fourmont 855.79r, 571A.53r.

Copied by Fourmont close to the Late antique wall of Sparta, south of the Acropolis: Suppl. gr. 855 fo 79r (Fig. 1) (cf. fo 192r (Fig. 2) and Suppl. gr. 571A fo 40r and 53r (Fig. 3)); F. Osann, *Sylloge Inscriptionum antiquarum Graecarum et Latinarum*, Leipzig, 1822-, II, 28 (Fig. 4) after Fourmont Suppl. gr. 571A fo 53r; A. Boeckh, *CIG* 1238 after Fourmont Suppl. gr. 571A fo 53r and Osann; L. Roß, *Inscriptiones Graecae Ineditae*, I, Nauplio 1834, nr. 20 and pl. III (Fig. 5), after examination of a part of the stone at the Museum of Sparta; W. Kolbe, *IG* VI 52 (Fig. 6) after Fourmont Suppl. gr. 855 fo 79r, *CIG* and Roß.

The dimensions of the stone are unknown. Fourmont drew the left edge of the stone along the text down until the penultimate line and described it simply as a "common marble", but Roß pointed out that the text was surmounted by a relief of which only "the feet of some human figure" survived.

The letters underlined were seen only by Fourmont. The supplements are confirmed by another joint catalogue of the same magistrates (*IG* VI 51, also copied by Fourmont) and a catalogue of the *nomophylakes* (*SEG* 11 538); there is also another fragmentary catalogue of the ephors: *SEG* 11 506).

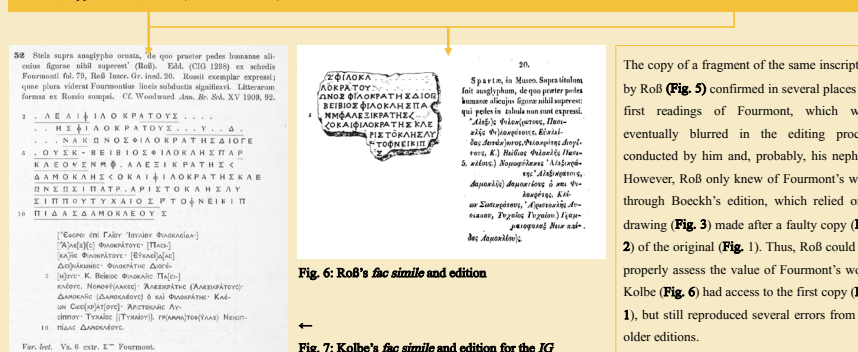
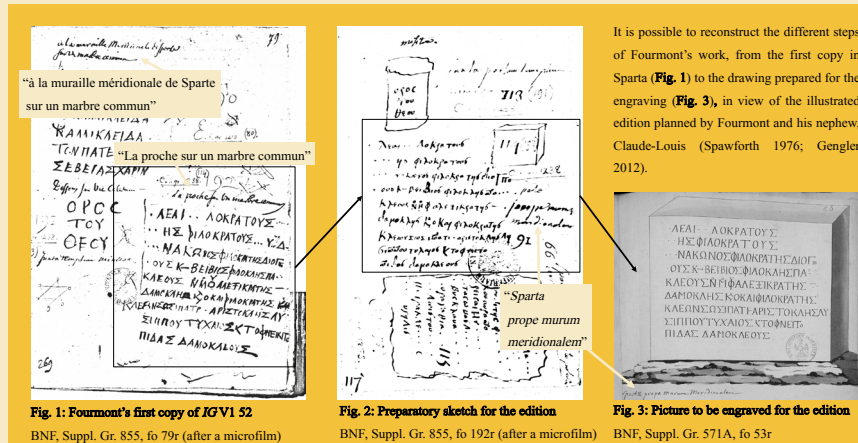
- 4: At the end of the line, Fourmont wrote ΠΑ . . in 855.79r, 571A.40r and 571A.53r, but another hand added in pencil the letters P<sup>A</sup> above the line in the lacuna of 571A.53r which is then certainly the model of Osann, who reproduced without commentary this supplement. The *CIG* and the *IG* after it give both ΠΑΡ as the version of Fourmont.
- 5: The *vacat* before the heading νομοφύ[λακος] appears clearly in the copy of Fourmont 855.79r. He also noted more carefully than Roß the combination of letters in the abbreviation of the magistrates' title; at the end of the line, Roß identifies rightly the abbreviation sign < noting in Sparta the father's name when it is the same as the son's name, which Fourmont transcribed here with a mere horizontal stroke .
- 6: The Σ of Ἀμμοκλῆς is inked out in 855.79r. Fourmont noted carefully the abbreviation sign < with marked apices in 855.79r, but the sign appears with a longer vertical stroke in 571A.53r making it look like a K. The letter appears as a K in Osann's *fac simile* and is also interpreted as such by Roß and Woodward (seemingly unaware of Roß's edition), both claiming to correct Fourmont. The *CIG* noted quite accurately in its *fac simile* the sign as reproduced in 571A.53r but deleted it in the edited text. At the end of the line, Fourmont crossed out the letters ΚΛΕ, written so close to the page edge that the last letter could be confused with a λ and rewrote them to the left of the next line. These letters were later integrated into this line in the process of drafting the definitive copy appearing in 571A.53r and afterwards in Osann and in the *CIG*. Roß's copy made after the stone confirms the original layout.
- 7: The patronymic of Κλέων appeared under the form ΣΩΣΙΠΑΤΡ. in 855.79r and ΣΩΣΙΠΑΤΙ . . in 571A.53r followed once again by Osann and the *CIG*. According to *IG* VI 51, the patronymic is however Σωσικράτους, I edit the text as given by Fourmont, though a correction as Σωσικράτου[ς] remains a possibility.
- 8: Once again, Fourmont noted clearly the sign < after the name Τυγαῖος with an apex at the summit of the angle formed by the two oblique strokes in 855.79r. The sign appears as a kind of incomplete K in 571A.53r though in a slightly different shape than a normal K. The following letters ΤΟΦΝΕΙΚΙΟ in 855.79r appear as ΤΟΦΝΕΙΟ in 571A.53r, an error already present in the draft 855.192r. Accordingly, Osann wrote in his *fac simile* ΚΤΟΦΝΕΙΟ and simply transcribed the letters in his edition. The *CIG*, having the same text in its *fac simile*, also recognised no interpretable letters and left a blank space in its edition. Roß correctly read ΤΟΦΝΕΙΚΙΙ and recognised left to those letters the upper part of the ligatured ΓΡ above the point where the stone was broken at his time, interpreting consequently ΓΡΤΟΦ as an abbreviation of the title γραμματοφ[ω]λάξ. The ligature was overseen by Fourmont, probably because of a confusion with the subsequent T.
- 8-9: Osann restored [Νικιτ]πίδας but without noticing, because of the defectiveness of his source, that a part of the name was concealed in the letters νειο that he previously transcribed. Roß edited erroneously Νεκικτ[π]ίδας instead of Νεκικτ[π]ίδας. The name of the secretary does not appear in *IG* VI 51.

## Conclusion

Although Fourmont demonstrated otherwise no great learning, his copies of genuine inscriptions seem reliable—at least, more than usually thought. The bad opinion about his work, which takes his origin in his forgeries, was also reinforced by the use by modern editors of faulty copies of the inscriptions.

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The comparison of Osann's *fac simile* (Fig. 6) with the different copies of the inscription in Fourmont's papers clearly shows that Osann used a later drawing of the inscription (Fig. 3) containing several errors and not the original copy (Fig. 1). The same drawing served as a source for the *CIG* and thus indirectly influenced Kolbe in his preparation of the edition for the *IG*.

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