

THE LATIN INSCRIPTIONS FROM ISTHMIA

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The site of the renowned Isthmian Games, today the village of Κόρα Βρόση, was excavated after the war for many years by Oscar Broneer under the auspices of the American School of Classical Studies. The excavations were recently resumed by P. A. Clement, who began his first campaign in 1967 continuing each year until 1972, and after a break of three years started again in 1976.* The areas explored were mainly the East Field (rather late and insignificant remains immediately east of the sanctuary of Poseidon and the stadion) Northeast Gate and, most recently, the Roman Bath. The last two areas were a part of the late Roman defensive system, the Hexamilion Wall, built across the Isthmus to protect the Peloponnese against the frequent hostile incursions at the close of antiquity. During the investigation of the Northeast Gate numerous reused blocks were discovered, some of them inscribed. The excavation of the Roman Thermal complex uncovered part of a large building with beautiful mosaic floor which probably dates from the second century A. D. Its northern walls were incorporated into Hexamilion wall at the beginning of the fifth century A. D. and henceforward the building served for defensive purposes only.¹

The inscriptions here published, most of them very fragmentary, came to light between 1967 and 1976 during the excavations at Isthmia in the following areas: Fortress Wall, East Field, Northeast Gate and Roman Bath. There are fewer Latin inscriptions than Greek, although their percentage is greater than elsewhere in Roman Achaia, due doubtless to the fact that the site of Isthmia belonged to the *ager* of the *colonia Laus Iulia Corinthensis*.

1. **Pl. 1: 1** Inv. No. ΙΣ 518. A fragment from a white marble slab found in the area of the Fortress Wall on May 11, 1967. There are traces of plaster on all faces. Inscribed and bottom faces smooth, others broken. Moulded edge above the letters.

* I would like to thank Professor Clement for having given me the permission to publish the Latin inscriptions discovered during the time when he was conducting the excavations.

Height 0.187 m, width 0.067 m, thickness 0.045 m. Height of letters 0.09 m.

————— OS —————

2. **Pl. 1: 2** Inv. No. IΣ 519. A fragment of an inscription on dark greyish limestone, found at the Northeast Gate on May 13, 1967. All faces except the inscribed one are broken. There are traces of four or five letters in the second text line.

Height 0.072 m, width 0.160 m, thickness 0.07 m. Height of letters 0.038 m.

——— tribules TRIB . MΑneiae? ——
————— traces —————

The horizontal *hasta* of the *T* is missing. Of the letters in the second text line one is *P*, *R* or *B*, others cannot be discerned. Of *A* only a small part of the first oblique *hasta* is preserved, thus excluding the possibility of completing the letters as *trib(unus) m[il(itum)]*. *Maneia* is one of the eleven known Corinthian tribes (see below).²

3. **Pl. 1: 3** Inv. No. IΣ 521. A small fragment from an inscription on white marble, found at the Northeast Gate on June 1, 1967. Front and back faces smooth, all others are broken. No one of the three visible letters is preserved entirely.

Height 0.086 m, width 0.023 m, thickness (original) 0.023 m. Height of letters ca. 0.07 m.

————— PRO —————

4. **Pl. 2: 4** Inv. No. IΣ 69-3. A base of grey limestone, reused as a foundation stone, found at the southeastern corner of the Bastion at the Northeast Gate on May 14, 1969.³ The rear face is worn as though the block had once been used as a sill. At the centre of it is a socket ca. 0.06 m in diameter and ca. 0.02 m deep. The inscribed face is damaged on the left side. Punctuation marks after each word.

Height 0.52 m, width 0.485 m, thickness 0.39 m. Height of letters: line 1, 0.055 m; lines 2—7, 0.04—0.045 m.

CALLICRATEAE .
PHILESI . FIL .
SACERDOTI . IN PERPET .
PROVIDENTIAE . AVG .
ET . SALVTIS . PVBLICAE .
TRIBVLES . TRIB . CLAVDIAE .
BENE . MERITAE .

Text line 4: *Aug.* may be expanded either as *Aug(ustae)* or *Aug(usti)*.

A just slightly larger base (height 0.715 m, width 0.525 m, thickness 0.42 m. Height of letters 0.065—0.030 m) with identical dedication (apart from the different dedicating tribe) was found at Corinth at the beginning of this century.⁴

The tribe that set up the Corinthian inscription to the same priestess was *Agrippia*, thus named in honour of M. Vipsanius Agrippa. The *tribus* on our inscription, *Claudia*, has not previously been attested at Corinth. Although the final number of the local Corinthian tribes cannot be estimated, there are now altogether eleven known by name: *Atia*, *Agrippia*, *Aurelia*, *Calpurnia*, *Hostilia*, *Livia*, *Maneia*, *Vatinia*, *Domitia* and *Claudia*.⁵ It has been assumed that most of them, or possibly all, derived their names from the *nomina* of various relatives or friends of Augustus.⁶ If this supposition is correct *tribus Claudia* was most likely named in honour of M. *Claudius Marcellus*, Augustus' nephew, of whom he was very fond, or perhaps after his stepson *Tiberius Claudius Nero*, the future emperor Tiberius.

The name of the priestess, which consists of her *cognomen* and filiation only, indicates that she did not receive Roman citizenship. Priestesses, *flaminicae* or *sacerdotes*, were not uncommon in the imperial cult and were charged with the cult of living or deceased deified empresses. The cult of the personified virtues, which were since the establishment of the principate considered primarily as the imperial qualities, was closely connected with the imperial worship, entrusted equally either to priests or to priestesses. This is clearly confirmed by several examples at Corinth and elsewhere.⁷ She was appointed the priestess of *Providentia Aug(usta)* and *Salus publica*. Her function is specified as *in perpet(uum)*, which bears purely honorary significance.⁸

West's commentary on the identical inscription found at Corinth does not seem entirely satisfactory. Because of the association of *Providentia* and *Salus* he compared it to the inscription from Interamna⁹ and another one from Gortyn, Crete¹⁰ which commemorates the discovery of Sejanus' conspiracy, and thus he connected the Corinthian inscription with the same event. There are, however, two basic differences between the two mentioned inscriptions and Callicratea's. First of all, no established cult is involved in either of them; in both cases they are individual dedications only. Furthermore, the *Providentia* in question is not somewhat generalised *Providentia Aug(usta)* or *Aug(usti)*, but specifically stated to be the Providence of *Ti. Caesar Augustus* — and as both inscriptions were accompanied by the exact date, there is no doubt to which occasion they applied.

Here the situation is different. Although it is possible that Sejanus' fall might have led to the establishment of the cult of *Providentia* and *Salus* at Corinth,¹¹ it certainly soon developed into a much more general cult, where *Providentia Aug.* was worshipped as the Providence of any reigning emperor and *Salus publica* as the universal well-being of the empire.¹²

An altar was set up to *Salus populi Romani* together with *Concordia* and *Pax* in Rome under Augustus and another to *Providentia Augusta* under Tiberius.¹³ The latter was commemorated as the virtue of Augustus on the coins which Tiberius struck in his honour.¹⁴ Imperial cult was flourishing throughout the empire and was very much favoured also under Tiberius, so it is highly probable that the inscription is Tiberian — and if not the inscription itself, which is in any case not much later, then certainly the introduction of the cult in Corinth. It was at the end of his reign also that some kind of a provincial *koinon* was permanently established at Argos. There seems to be no reason to dispute the date proposed by West.

The municipal cult is rather well attested at Corinth, and the Isthmian Poseidon sanctuary with its famous festival, Caesarea and Imperial Contests, could have been a suitable and important centre of the imperial worship.¹⁵

5. **Pl. 2: 5, 3: 5 a** Inv. No. IΣ 69—4. Architrave block of white marble (IA 69—42, or Roadway block No. 42) found at the Northeast Gate on April 25, 1969.¹⁶ Inscription is on the bottom side of the block with traces of red paint on the letters. The moulded edge above and below the inscription is broken off. The lower moulding of the block is entirely preserved and is similar to that of blocks 6 and 7. The upper face is roughly picked, perhaps original. Punctuation marks between the letters. One should note a rather large interval between the second and the third word.

Height (perhaps original) 0.58 m, width 2.08 m, thickness (original) 0.50 m. Height of the inscribed space between the two moulded edges 0.13 m. Height of letters 0.094 m.

— — — quaestor PROVINCIAE . ACHAIAE . TRIBUnus plebis — — —

This is a fragment of a monumental inscription, not a dedication (in which case the restorations should be in dative) but rather a building inscription¹⁷ which preserved at least a part of a *cursus honorum* of a *quaestor* or a proconsular legate of Achaia who had donated the structure to which this architectural block belonged to the Isthmian sanctuary. Such a sequence of the offices is confirmed by the known careers of other *quaestors*. So was *L. [Ca?] ninus Sextius Florentinus* under Trajan or Hadrian *quaest. prov. A[c]haiae* and then *trib. pl.* Before the *quaestorship* he had been *III vir aur. agr. (aere) flando (feriundo)*, this having been his first office, and attained eventually the legateship of Arabia.¹⁸

Early in the reign of Hadrian, *Cn. Papius Aelianus Aemilianus Tuscillus* is known to have been *q(uaestor) prov[inciae | Achaiae]* and afterwards *tribunus plebi[s cand.?]*. The *quaestorship* is given as his first office.¹⁹ The same order is likewise observed on Greek inscriptions, where *C. Claudius Titianus Demonstratus* is stated to have been *ταμίης ἐπαρχείας Ἀχαιῶν* and *δήμαρχος κ[αὶ] ἀνδ[ρῶν]* (ca. A. D. 150) etc.²⁰

The alternative interpretation of our fragmentary inscription is offered by the *cursus* of the proconsular legate, namely *P. Pactumeius Clemens*, who is known to have served under Hadrian as the legate of *Rosianus Geminus*, his father in law, then the proconsul of Achaia; he was afterwards *tribunus plebis*.²¹ And lastly one . . . *ius L. f. . . us*, whose career has been dated to the reign of Augustus and who seems to have been both *quaestor* and legate: *q. et legat. | [provinc. Ac] haiae, tr. pleb.* etc.²²

The offices which they entered before the *quaestorship* or the legateship respectively are various (*III vir aur. arg. flando*; *δεξιμβερος*; *X vir stlitibus iudicand.*; *tr(ibunus) mil(itum)*); or alternatively nothing is given before the *quaestorship*. Therefore any further completion of the new fragment is excluded. As the date by the letter-forms is not reliable,²³ and as there is no other chronological indicator, the inscription can be only approximatively dated to the end of the first, or to the early second century A. D. This is, moreover, the period which offered most of the enumerated parallels.

6. **Pl. 4: 6** Inv. No. IΣ 524. Inscribed architrave block of white marble (IA 2105, or Roadway block No. 39) which formed the southern half of the sill of the Northeast Gate; found on May 23, 1967. The upper side is therefore much worn. The upper moulded edge above the inscription is broken off. As it has not been removed yet from the present position it has been neither photographed nor fully measured and one may expect to recover some more letters of the inscription. The upper and lower moulding is the same as that preserved on block 5. (In 1969 another letter was added to the ones already visible, namely the beginning Q.)²⁴

Height 0.55 m, width 2.16 m, thickness (original) 0.60 m. Height of letters ca. 0.09 m.

— — — QVOQVE . ANno? — — —

7. **Pl. 4: 7** Inv. No. IΣ 69—5. A fragment of white marble architrave block (IA 69—48, or Roadway block No. 27) found at the Northeast Gate on May 2, 1969.²⁵ The upper and lower moulding, although damaged and incomplete, closely resembles the moulding on block 6.

Height 0.33 m, width 1.15 m, thickness (original) 0.56 m. Height of letters 0.09 m. The space between the letters 0.27 m.

— — — SEXMestris? — — —

Approximately the same height of letters as that on No. 6 and the same space between the letters favour the possibility that both fragments belong to the same inscription.²⁶

Sexm[estris] was suggested by *L'année épigraphique* and would apply to *tribunus militum* or *praefectus cohortis*. It is equally possible to explain the letters as a name: *Sex(tus) M[—]*, though it is perhaps unusual that there is no punctuation mark after *SEX*.

The three architrave blocks were discovered close to one another along with many uninscribed blocks. However, the difference in spacing between the letters on the last two blocks and those on the first block makes it rather improbable that they belong to the same inscription, though they derive very possibly from the same architectural complex. Perhaps the inscription ran in two text lines, but it seems more likely that there were two inscriptions, one placed on each side of the building. This was doubtless a public building of some kind (monumental gate?, sanctuary?, portico?) because the inscription mentions a high Roman magistrate; but any preciser suggestion remains difficult until all the remaining pieces are recovered and studied in detail.

8. **Pl. 4: 8** Inv. No. IΣ 71—5. A piece of white marble slab with four fragmentary letters, probably Latin, found in the area of the East Field on April 22, 1971. Traces of a high crossbar on A can be seen at the top edge of the stone. Broken on all sides.

Height 0.16 m, width 0.155 m, thickness 0.023 m. Height of letters (estimated) 0.075 m.

— — — — — AI — — — — ?
 — — — — — RI — — — — ?

9. **Pl. 4: 9** Inv. No. IΣ 72—6. A fragmentary inscription on white marble, perhaps a tombstone, found in the Roman Bath on June 1, 1972. It is broken on all sides. Words are separated by punctuation marks.

Height 0.068 m, width 0.123 m, thickness (original) 0.021 m. Height of letters (excluding serifs) 0.035—0.037 m.

— — — — O . ET . OECVmenio? — — —

This form of letters is frequently attested at Corinth.²⁷ *Oecumenius* — if the completion is correct — is a very rarely attested name in the Roman empire.

10. Inv. No. IΣ 76—5. A fragmentary inscription on white marble, found in the Roman Bath on March 24, 1976. All faces except the front one are broken off. Traces of five letters are preserved.

Height 0.07 m, width 0.085 m, thickness 0.058 m. Height of letters 0.037 m.

— — — — — AIS . TI — — — — —

The letters are somewhat similar to those of No. 9, although the different thickness of the stone excludes the possibility that both fragments belong to the same inscription. They both come from Room I of the Bath Building.

To complete the list of the Latin inscriptions so far found at Isthmia, it is perhaps not superfluous to draw the attention to the only other Latin inscription known to have come from the site. It is a small, damaged altar of poros stone (IΣ 296), discovered among the scattered blocks of the Hexamilion Wall, dedicated to Heracles.²⁸

HERCVLi
SACR(um)
EX VISV

Although there is no other evidence for a cult of Heracles at Isthmia, as Broneer pointed out, Pausanias mentions a bronze statue of Heracles standing outside Corinth just beyond the Lechaion Gate and a naked wooden idol near the theatre said to have been the work of Daidalos.²⁹ The dedication was doubtless set up by a Roman resident in Corinth or a visitor from the Latin speaking part of the empire, but certainly not by a Greek.

¹ See P. A. Clement, *Αρχ. Δελτ.* 25 (1970) B 1, 161—167. For Hexamilion Wall: P. A. Clement, *Studies in Memory of Basil Lauridas*. Thessaloniki (1975) 159 ff. cf. R. L. Hohlfelder, *GRBS* 18 (1977) 173 ff.

² A. B. West, *Corinth* VIII 2 No. 56 p. 40 (= West).

³ For the preliminary publication of the text see P. A. Clement, *Αρχ. Δελτ.* 25 (1970) B 1, 167 Pl. 143. J. P. Michaud, *BCH* 94 (1970) 949 Pl. 135. *L'année épigraphique* 1971. 442 (= *AE*).

⁴ West No. 110.

⁵ J. H. Kent, *Corinth* VIII 3 p. 23 (= Kent).

⁶ West p. 91. Kent p. 104, 106. For *Manei* and *Hostilius* no suitable explanation has been found yet.

⁷ *Ti. Claudius Dinippus* was, for example, a priest of *Victoria Britannica*, whose cult was established in the colony under Claudius and was probably only of a short duration: Kent No. 158—163. West No. 86.

⁸ R. Étienne, *Le culte impérial dans la péninsule Ibérique d'Auguste à Dioclétien*, Paris (1958) 249.

⁹ ILS 157.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 158.

¹¹ Another occasion might have been possibly, although less likely, the execution of Agrippina or the discovery of Piso's conspiracy A. D. 65: G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, Handbuch d. Klas. Altertumswiss., München (1912)² 122 ff, 254 ff. W. H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der gr. und röm. Mythologie*, vol. III 3187, vol. IV 259—301.

¹² K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte*, Handbuch d. Altertumswiss. V 4 (1960) 322 and n. 4.

¹³ Wissowa, *o. c.* 336.

¹⁴ *RIC* I 95 No. 6.

¹⁵ West p. 30—31. Kent p. 28 ff and passim. P. A. Clement, *Φόρος*, Tribute to B. D. Meritt (1974) 38—39; but L. Robert, *Bulletin épigraphique* 1976. 248.

¹⁶ Clement, *Δοχ. Δεστ.*, l. c. Michaud, l. c. *AE* 1971. 440: «on peut penser à un [quaestor] provinciae Achaiae deventu trib[unus plebis]».

¹⁷ Inscriptions on other architrave (or epistyle) blocks found at Corinth always bear the name of the donor in nomina-

tive, cf. for example, West No. 120, 121, 122, 123, 131, 132. Kent No. 157, 197, 333; also 111, 112, 504 and 505.

¹⁸ *CIL* III 87 add. p. 968 = 14148, 10 (Petra). E. Groag, *Die römischen Reichsbeamten von Achaia bis auf Diokletian*, *Schr. der Balkankommission*, ant. Abt. 9 (1939) 116.

¹⁹ *CIL* II 2075 (Iliberris). Groag, *o. c.* 117.

²⁰ *IG* II² 4071 (Eleusis). Groag, *o. c.* 119.

²¹ *CIL* VIII 7059 = *ILS* 1067. Groag, *o. c.* 104.

²² *CIL* XI 1837. Groag, *o. c.* 100.

²³ Cf. West No. 58 (Nerva-Trajan).

²⁴ Clement, *Δοχ. Δεστ.*, l. c., Pl. 142. Michaud, l. c., Pl. 134. *AE* 1971. 441.

²⁵ Clement, l. c. Michaud, l. c. *AE*, *ibid.*

²⁶ This is also confirmed by the architectural features: Clement, l. c. 167.

²⁷ For example: Kent No. 214 (where assigned to the late first, or early second, century A. D.) No. 218, 257. J. Wiseman, *Hesperia* 38 (1969) 94, Pl. 30, 1.

²⁸ O. Broneer, *Hesperia* 27 (1958) 23 No. 4, Pl. 9 e.

²⁹ Paus. 2, 3, 2; 2, 4, 5.

FRAGMENTI LATINSKIH NAPISOV Z ISTMA

Povzetek

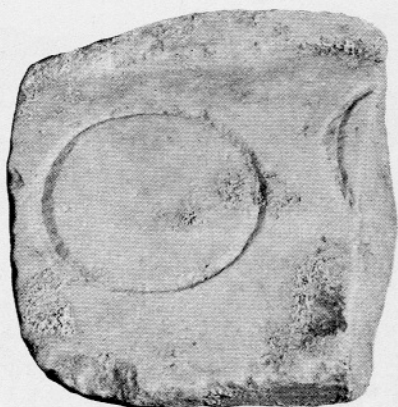
V današnji vasi *Κρήα Βρήση*, nedaleč od istmijskega prekopa na cesti Atene—Korint, se je v antiki vsaki dve leti zbrala množica obiskovalcev iz cele Grčije, da bi prisostvovala slovitim istmijskim igram v Pozejdonovem svetišču med Saronskim in Korintskim zalivom. Igre so že v začetku 6. stoletja pr. n. š. postale panhelenski festival. Za njihovo organizacijo je bil zadolžen Korint, in ko sta Cezar in kasneje Avgust v Korintu ustanovila rimsko kolonijo, so jim priključili igre na čast živečega vladarja, *Caesarea*.

Zgodovina raziskovanja tamkajšnjih arheoloških ostalin je stara, sistematična izkopavanja pa je prevzel po zadnji vojni ameriški arheološki inštitut pod vodstvom Oscarja Broneerja. Današnji obiskovalec si lahko ogleda poleg novega, modernega arheološkega muzeja Pozejdonovo svetišče, stadion, gledališče, rimske terme in ostanke istmijskega zidu in obrambnega sistema, ki je bil zgrajen ob koncu antike, da bi varoval Peloponez pred čedalje pogostejšimi barbarskimi vpadi. (O. Broneer, *Isthmia I*, Temple of Peloponez, 1971; *Isthmia II*, Topography and Architecture, 1973; E. R. Gebhard, *The Theatre at Isthmia*, 1973.)

Leta 1967 je po krajšem premoru Broneerjevo delo nadaljeval Paul A. Clement; v sezoni 1976 sem se udeležila njegovih izkopavanj in na pobudo profesorja Clementa obdelala fragmente latinskih napisov, ki so bili najdeni med leti 1967 in 1976 ob raziskovanju poznoantičnega obrambnega sistema in rimskih term.

Latinski napisi so večinoma zelo fragmentarni, ohranjenih je le nekaj črk, kjer interpretacija ni mogoča ali pa je več ali manj nezanesljiva: to so fragmenti 1, 2, 3, 8, 9 in 10 (glej pripadajoče fotografije).

Zelo zanimiv pa je edini v celoti ohranjen napis iz tiberijanske dobe, postavljen v čast svečenice Kalikrateje (op. 3), ki je že znana z napisa iz Korinta (op. 4). Bila je svečenica *Providentiae Augustae* in *Salutis publicae*; češčenje posebljenih vrlin,



1



2



3



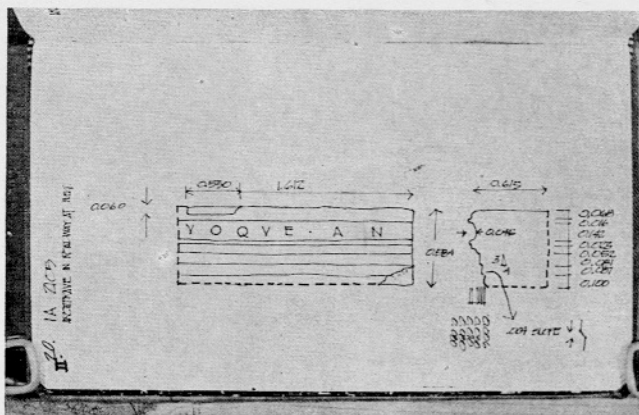
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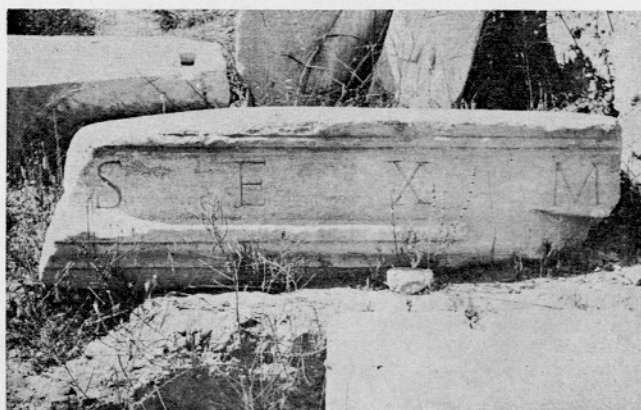
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5a



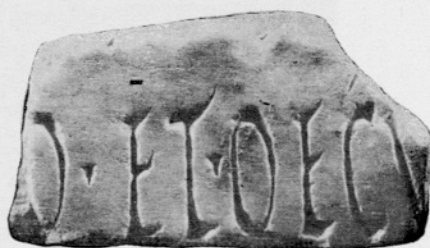
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8



9

ki so se pripisovale vladarju, je bila ena izmed oblik vladarskega kulta, ki je imel v rimskem Korintu brez dvoma velik pomen. Napis je dala postaviti *tribus Claudia*, ki je tu prvič izpričana. Doslej znano število lokalnih korintskih *tribus* se je tako dvignilo na enajst.

Zanimivi so tudi trije fragmentarni napisi na arhitravah, ki pripadajo isti zgradbi (napisi 5, 6 in 7; op. 16, 24 in 25). Poslopje, ki je moralo biti javnega značaja (portik ali svetišče?), je morda dal postaviti na napisu omenjeni višji rimski provincialni uradnik, kvestor ali prokonzulov legat.

Naj omenim še edini latinski napis s tega najdišča, ki je bil najden med Broneerjevimi izkopavanji. To je velik, vendar od vremena močno poškodovan oltar, postavljen v čast Herkulu *ex visu* (op. 28). Dasi je bil kult Herkula med najbolj razširjenimi in popularnimi v grškem svetu, je v območju Istmia izpričan samo s tem napisom; celo na celem korintskem področju ni za njegov kult ne arheoloških ne epigrafskih dokazov. O njegovem češčenju nam priča le Pausanias, ki v svojem Potopisu omenja dva Herkulova kipa v Korintu (op. 29).