

[Author] Critias Atheniensis (460-403 BC ca.)

[Work] Critias, fr. 3 Gent.-Pr. = fr. 5 West²

[Place of work] Athens

[Source] Plut. *Alc.* 33, 1: τὸ μὲν οὖν ψήφισμα τῆς καθόδου πρότερον ἐκεκύρωτο Κριτίου τοῦ Καλλαιίσχρου γράψαντος, ὥς αὐτὸς ἐν ταῖς Ἑλεγεῖαις πεποίηκεν ὑπομνησκῶν τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδην τῆς χάριτος ἐν τούτοις· ‘γνώμη δ’ ἥ — ἐπὶ τοῖσδεσι κεῖται’.

[Typology] Elegy

[Period] 450–400 BC

[Text] γνώμη δ’ ἥ σε κατήγαγ’, ἐγὼ ταύτην ἐν ἅπασιν

εἶπον καὶ γράψας τοῦργον ἔδρασα τόδε.

σφραγὶς δ’ ἡμετέρης γλώττης ἐπὶ τοῖσδεσι κεῖται.

[Metrics] Elegiac couplet

[Critical apparatus] 1 γνώμην N, probb. Valckner, Ziegler et West | δ’ om. N | ἦστε Y || 2 εἰπὼν Ziegler || 3 σφρηγὶς ci. Bethe ap. Diels | ἡμετέρας Cobet ap. Wilamowitz: -ης codd., probb. plurimi | γλώττης Y, probb. Diels, Diehl et alii

[Translation] This proposal which restored you, I among all

delivered and wrote this, and then I accomplished this deed;

the seal of my tongue is set on these things (verses *or* words)

[Comment]

The fragment is an excerpt (at least one pentameter is missing) of a ‘political’ elegy by Critias, perhaps from a single composition dedicated to Alcibiades and datable to 408 BC (cf. fr. 2 Gent.-Pr. [= fr. 4 W.²]). It should be noted that in this fragment too the vindication of the political action promoted by Critias in the Athenian social and civil context is expressed in terms of primacy. A technical terminology is used, taken from Athenian legal usage, which describes the different phases for the proposal of repatriation (public oration, writing and execution). The σφραγὶς (v. 3) placed as a seal on Critias’ work could be both the vindication of his public oration and the production of the poetic verses.

[Reference Editions]

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[Essential Bibliography]

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[Keywords]

Elegy, Critias, Alcibiades

[Anika Nicolosi]