CHAPTER NINE

REGILLA STANDING BY: RECONSTRUCTED STATUARY
AND RE-INScribed BASES IN FOURTH-CENTURY CORINTH

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While Annia Appia Regilla Caucidia Tertulla, the wife of Herodes Atticus, graces the title of this paper, she (and her statues) are really just innocent bystanders. This paper is about two statue base inscriptions and a rather convoluted tale of interpretation based on readings and re-readings of these inscriptions over the last 100+ years. The paper also considers the social fabric of ancient Corinth in different periods, and finally it asks the question why Regilla might have been honored long after her death and by whom. In a collection of essays on inequality, we are accustomed to expect that wealthy people will be honored for beneficence shown toward their city and other residents, but how does this equation change when the financial stakes no longer matter, and honors are bestowed for other reasons? As might be expected, even these secondary honors continue to reflect a fundamental inequality of Roman society.

The Inscriptions

One of the two bases bears an inscription that praises Regilla’s sōphrosynē, goes on at some length about her husband Herodes who is said to have set up the statue, addresses Regilla as if she were Tyche, and notes that the statue stands before a sanctuary.1 Hereafter, I will refer to this as the Regilla-Tyche base (fig. 9.1).

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\begin{align*}
[\text{'Ρηγίλλας τ}δ'\, ἀγαλμα.\, \text{φυὴν δ' ἔχαραξε\, τεχνεῖτης} \\
[\text{πάσαν σ}]{\text{ωφροσύνην ἐς} \, λίθον \, ἀραμένην.}} \\
[\text{'Αττικ}]{\text{ὸς \, Ἡρώδης}\, \text{μέγας \, ὄπασεν,\, ἔξοχος\, ἄλλων,}} \\
[\text{παντ}]{\text{τῆς\, ἀρετῆς\, \, ἐς\, άκρον\, εἱκόμενος,}} \\
[\text{δ']\, \text{ὄσιν\, Ἑλλήνων\, ἄλαχεν\, περίβωτον\, ἀπάντων}} \\
[\text{κρέσ̣{o}̣n\, \, δ']\, \text{αὐτὲ\, π(ά)ιν\, ὃνος\, Ἀχαιάδος}} \\
[\text{'Ρηγύλ}]{\text{λω\, ἡ\, Βουλή\, σε\, Τύχην\, \, ὡς\, εἰλάσκουσα,}} \\
[\text{εἰκὼς\, π}]\, \text{ρ(ός)}\, \text{τεμένι\, καταγάλαβον.}}
\end{align*}
\]

\[1\, \text{Corinth VIII.3 no. 128; SEG 13.226; Corinth Excavations Inventory No. I 1658.}\]
This is a statue of Regilla. An artist carved her nature extolling all of her moderation in stone. It was given by Herodes Atticus the Great whom she took as a companion, he stands out from all others in all virtues, much talked about among the Hellenes, a most excellent son (of Greece), the flower of Achaia.
O Regilla, the Boule as if calling you Tyche, has set up your statue before the sanctuary.

The second example is found on a reused statue base from the Peirene Fountain. It too describes Regilla as an image of sōphrosynē, but instead of reference to a sanctuary, this example places her “beside the streams of the source.” Hereafter, I will refer to this as the Regilla-Peirene base (fig. 9.2).

By the command of the Sysiphian Boule, beside the streams of the source, You see me, Regilla, an image of moderation, By decree of the Boule.

The Regilla-Tyche base was found on the west side of the Forum on March 22, 1935. According to the field notebook, the block was taken...