

Athenian Presence in Delphi

An Investigation of the Epigraphical Evidence from Sixth and Fifth Century Delphi and Athens



Thesis RMA 'History: Cities, States and Citizenship'

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Image front page: Detail of the dedicatory inscription of the Athenian Stoa in Delphi, own photo, March 21, 2012.

Preface

This thesis is a continuation of my MA-thesis of 2010, on the relationship between Athens and Delphi during the Archidamian War (431-421 BC). While writing that thesis, I started to really love the subject of Delphi and its sanctuary and the mixture and intermingling of religion and politics in ancient Greece, which can seem so weird to a Dutch person living in the 21st century. I already knew back then that if I would ever get the chance to expand that research I would not hesitate to do it. So, from the start of my second Master's program in Utrecht I knew what my topic for my thesis would be. And after I had done a course in Greek epigraphy, I also knew what kind of sources I wanted to use. Hence this master thesis on the epigraphical evidence from Delphi.

I am grateful to the Netherlands Institute at Athens for granting me a scholarship for a stay of three months in Athens. Without their support in the form of this scholarship, the topic of this thesis would have been near impossible for me to research, since libraries in the Netherlands lack a lot of specialist books and journals on epigraphy. Also, staying in Athens gave me the opportunity to visit the museums and above all the ancient site of Delphi itself. I appreciate the help the staff of the NIA gave to me during my stay very much, as well as the help offered by the staff of the Library of the British School at Athens, where I spent most of my days.

Most of all, I am very grateful to my parents, who have always supported me even when I wanted to get another Master's degree after I had finished my first.

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Abbreviations

In this thesis, the following abbreviations are used:

AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
ATL III	Benjamin Dean Meritt, H.T. Wade-Gery and Malcolm Francis McGregor, <i>The Athenian Tribute Lists III</i> (Cambridge, MA 1939)
BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>
CQ	<i>The Classical Quarterly</i>
C&M	<i>Classica et Mediaevalia</i>
FD	<i>Fouilles de Delphes</i>
Fontenrose	Joseph Fontenrose, <i>The Delphic Oracle. Its Responses and Operations with a Catalogue of Responses</i> (Berkeley 1978)
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
JHS	<i>The Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> (1873-)
Jeffery, LSAG	Lilian Hamilton Jeffery, <i>The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece</i> (Oxford 1961)
ML	Russell Meiggs and David Lewis (eds.), <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC</i> (Oxford 1969)
PW	H.W. Parke and D.E.W. Wormell, <i>The Delphic Oracle. Volume II: The Oracular Responses</i> (Oxford 1956)
Syll. ³	W. Dittenberger, <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , 3 rd edition (1915-1924)
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

With regards to ancient authors and their works, I follow the abbreviations found in the OCD³: Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 3rd edition, revised (Oxford 2003).

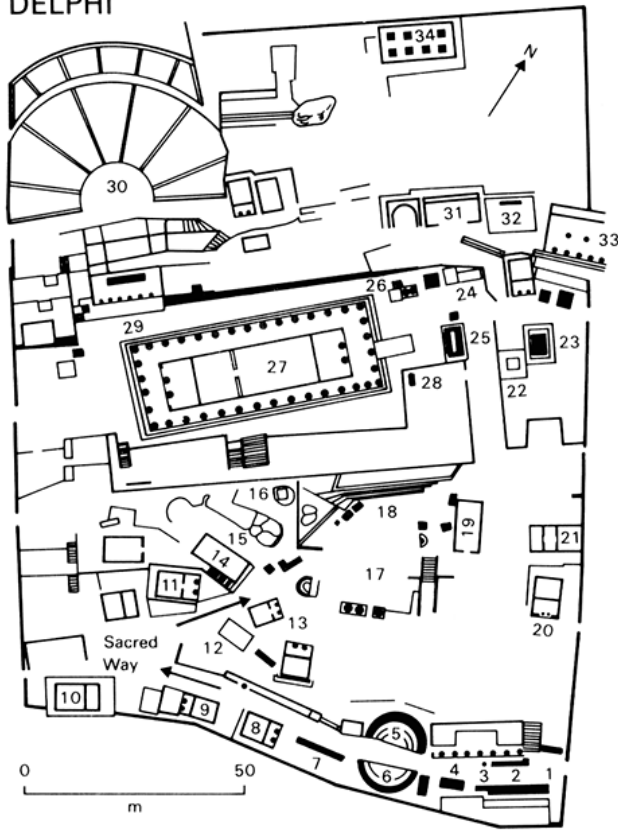
Images



Image 1. Possible routes to Delphi coming from Athens.

d-maps.com; modified.

DELPHI



- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Aegospotami Monument | 18 Stoa of the Athenians |
| 2 Monument of the Arcadians | 19 Treasury of the Corinthians |
| 3 Statue of Philopoemen | 20 Treasury of Cyrene |
| 4 Marathon Monument | 21 Prytaneion |
| 5 Kings of Argos | 22 Serpent column of Plataea |
| 6 Epigoni | 23 Chariot of the Rhodians |
| 7 Monument of the Tarentines | 24 Tripods of Gelon and Hiero |
| 8 Treasury of Sicyon | 25 Altar of the Chians |
| 9 Treasury of Siphnos | 26 Monument of Prusias II |
| 10 Treasury of the Thebans | 27 Temple of Apollo |
| 11 Treasury of the Athenians | 28 Monument of Aemilius Paulus |
| 12 Treasury of the Syracusans | 29 Dedication of Craterus |
| 13 Treasury of the Cnidians | 30 Theatre |
| 14 Council House | 31 Monument of Daochus |
| 15 Rock of the Sibyl | 32 Sanctuary of Neoptolemus |
| 16 Column of the Naxians | 33 Stoa of Attalus I |
| 17 Halos (threshing floor) | 34 Lesche of the Cnidians |

Image 2. Plan of Ancient Delphi.

<http://www.utexas.edu/courses/introtogreece/lect16/img12delphiplan.html>

Introduction¹

The sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi was one of the most renowned sites in ancient times. Not only is the sanctuary located in a magnificent and mystical surrounding, it was also the host of the Delphic oracle, which was in turn the most renowned oracle in the Greek world and outside of it as well, and the host of the Pythian Games, one of the four panhellenic Games and inferior only to the Olympic Games. The Panhellenic nature of this sanctuary provided a special location and several Greek poleis made an effort to build monumental buildings inside the sanctuary or to display dedications there in order to show their prominence and power.

Research Topic

In this thesis, the Athenian presence in Delphi will be investigated through the epigraphical evidence found there and in Athens. By Athenian presence I both mean the presence of the *polis*, the city as a whole, and of individual Athenians, since both categories could visit the sanctuary in Delphi and leave their mark there or could consult the Delphic oracle and leave that mark anywhere else, most often in inscriptions found in Athens itself.

With the scope of this thesis in mind, I have decided to focus on the early history of the Delphic oracle and the sanctuary of Apollo, which consists roughly of the sixth and fifth centuries. Even though the earliest history of Delphi starts much earlier, already in the Geometric period, I start in the sixth century since from this time onwards the activity in the sanctuary as well as that of the oracle is booming.

As one scholar points out, we must not let the story of the oracle become the story of the sanctuary in Delphi.² Delphi was more than just the oracle; it was also a place where states could interact, through the Pythian Games but also through the offerings along the Sacred Way. Therefore, in this thesis, I will not only look at the epigraphical evidence that mention the oracle – these

¹ All dates in this thesis are BC, unless otherwise indicated.

² Michael Scott, *Delphi and Olympia. The Spatial Politics of Panhellenism in the Archaic and Classical Periods* (New York 2010) 7.

inscriptions are all found in Athens – but, more importantly, also at the epigraphical evidence from Delphi itself, which are all monumental dedications to Apollo and which do not explicitly mention the oracle but instead mention Apollo. However, the oracle will still have an important place in this thesis, since its importance for the sanctuary and for the other states cannot be denied.

In the first chapter, several aspects of the history of the sanctuary of Apollo will be discussed before turning to the epigraphical evidence itself. The early history including the so-called Sacred Wars will be discussed as well as the Amphiktyony, the ‘international’ league that controlled the sanctuary from the sixth century onwards. Attention will also be paid to travelling to the sanctuary. What routes were available for an Athenian to go to Delphi and what kind of dangers could he have faced?

In the second chapter, I will discuss the epigraphical evidence from the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi, supplemented with a paragraph on the Temple of Apollo, rebuilt in the sixth century by the Athenian Alkmaeonid family, and a paragraph on the Athenian inquiries of the oracle, which are most often only commemorated in the literary sources. The epigraphical evidence includes an inscription found near the Treasury and the dedicatory inscription of the Stoa of the Athenians.

In my third chapter, the Delphic presence in Athens will be discussed. Since a relationship is never one-sided, I must also look at the mentioning of Delphi, the Delphic oracle or Pythian Apollo in inscriptions found in Athens. These inscriptions have a different nature than the ones found in the Delphic sanctuary itself, since these are not dedicatory inscriptions. However, they do reflect the presence of Athenians in Delphi, for example an inscription that mentions an Athenian inquiry of the Delphic oracle reflects the actual consultation in Delphi itself.

In the fourth chapter I will discuss the relationship between Athens and the Delphic sanctuary in the Peloponnesian War. Although this may seem unnecessary, I am convinced that it is the opposite, since many scholars have argued that Delphi was hostile to Athens during the Peloponnesian War and that the Athenians, therefore, were unable to visit the sanctuary and consult the oracle or make offerings to Apollo in this period. Some scholars use this point of view as a dating criterion for inscriptions from the fifth century and this fact makes this chapter necessary in my opinion. Above all, I will show in this chapter that Athens was not hindered at all to go to Delphi in the Peloponnesian

War. The consequences this different point of view has for dating the inscriptions mentioned in an earlier chapter will also be discussed here.

Methodology and Justification

As has been indicated above, I will focus on the epigraphical material, although I am certainly not leaving the literary sources aside. In this paragraph, I will make some remarks on epigraphy as a method of historical research in order to get things straight. With epigraphy I mean the study of inscribed texts, most often on stone, but also on other sorts of non-perishable material like for example *ostraka*, potsherds. In this thesis, the epigraphical texts are all inscribed on stone.

As is the case with every method of historical research, there are pros and cons to epigraphy. There are also some dangers one needs to be aware of when dealing with epigraphy. First of all, not every decree or decision was inscribed; those that were chosen to be inscribed are inscribed for a specific reason. Every word of an inscription was carefully thought about before putting it on stone. Therefore, the inscriptions are not perfect mirrors of the historical reality; this has to be taken into account when interpreting an inscription.

In addition, the number of inscriptions we have nowadays compared to the number of inscriptions that probably existed in ancient Greece is very low. It is, therefore, difficult and not to mention dangerous to make hard statements on the basis of inscriptions alone. Another difficulty with epigraphy as a method is the problem of dating the inscriptions. It is, unfortunately, more often than not unclear what the date of an inscription is. Dating based purely on letter forms is not sufficient and certainly not without problems. However, often there are no clear indications of the historical circumstances of the inscribed text and therefore a timespan of thirty, sometimes fifty, years is common with regards to dates of inscriptions.

This being said, there is still enough to be gained from using epigraphy in historical research. Most importantly: because the nature of the source is quite different from literary sources, it can shed a different light on history. So far, scholars dealing with Delphi and with the relationship between Athens and Delphi in the Archaic and Classical period have focused almost solely on the literary

sources, most importantly on Herodotus. This is in itself not wrong; however, I am convinced that studying the epigraphical evidence can contribute to our view of Delphi.

The literary sources about Delphi in the Archaic and Classical periods, especially Herodotus but also Thucydides, have thus been thoroughly studied by scholars in the past decades. It is my intention to add the epigraphical evidence to the debate, since this a neglected part of the scholarship about Delphi, although – or perhaps *because* – there is a wealth of epigraphical material found in the Delphic sanctuary.

Archaeological sources like votive offerings are outside the scope of this thesis, but I am convinced that, next to the epigraphical sources – which are for obvious reasons sometimes combined with archaeological objects –, they have the potential to contribute to the view on the relationship between Athens and Delphi.³ In the cases where an inscription is found on an archaeological object, mostly a monumental building, archaeology will be discussed, albeit shortly.

Some Remarks on the Used Inscriptions

Of great help for anyone dealing with Greek epigraphy is the online database of Greek inscriptions of the Packard Humanities Institute.⁴ It is with this database that my initial research began. The search for inscriptions from Delphi mentioning Athenians resulted in a great number of inscriptions. After narrowing the results down to the sixth and fifth century, only three were left. Since the Athenian presence in Delphi is also reflected in inscriptions from Athens itself, for example because a consultation of the oracle is mentioned, I have also searched for inscriptions from Athens mentioning Delphi, the Delphic oracle, Apollo Pythios and the Delphic Amphiktyony. This search led to several other inscriptions and, after narrowing it again down to the sixth and fifth centuries, four inscriptions were left.

Considering the scope of this thesis, this number of inscriptions is enough; however, for future research it can be very interesting to look at the later inscriptions, particularly because it is likely that there will be many private dedications among these inscriptions and only then can a comparison be

³ As opposed to the epigraphy, the archaeology of Delphi has been studied very thoroughly by scholars. For example, a recent publication, which also focuses on Olympia as a panhellenic sanctuary, is Michael Scott, *Delphi and Olympia* (New York 2010).

⁴ <http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions/main>.

made between private and public consultations and/or dedications in Delphi, which should be interesting, since then you can analyze the different relationship individuals or *poleis* had with Delphi. For this thesis, this is unfortunately not possible, since all the inscriptions found – in Delphi and in Athens – are public dedications or inscriptions mentioning public consultations of the oracle.

1. The Sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi

The Early History of Delphi

The site of the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi was occupied from the earliest history onwards. There was extensive Mycenaean settlement and continued occupation can be demonstrated for all but the last decades of the eleventh century. By the middle of the ninth century a substantial community was established. So the use of the site was residential before it became religious.⁵

Archaeological excavations of the site at Delphi have shown that the sanctuary is first attested at the end of the ninth century. It was only of local significance at this time. The early eighth century marks the appearance of bronze votive figurines and bronze tripods; however, the scale of votive activity appears to have been relatively limited during the whole of the eighth century and probably no sanctuary buildings were yet built. The oracle also began operations in the eighth century and this became the source of Delphi's power. Delphi and its oracle, starting from the late eighth century, played a prominent part in matters of colonization and codification of law.⁶

By the end of the seventh century Delphi was a place of considerable importance and much accumulated wealth. In the early sixth century the sanctuary's first *peribolos* walls were constructed and the sanctuary space seems to have been separated from the domestic space around it. In the following years through to the mid-sixth century, Delphi witnessed a sharp upturn in the number, type and range of dedications. Some of the most unusual dedications came from the Greek island and Asia Minor, such as the sphinx from Naxos or the Cnidian treasury.⁷

⁵ W.G. Forrest, 'Colonization and the Rise of Delphi', *Historia* 6 (1957) 160-175, there 171-173; Catherine Morgan, *Athletes and oracles: the transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the eighth century BC* (Cambridge 1990) 148; Robin Osborne, *Greece in the making, 1200-479 BC* (London 1996) 202-203; John Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World* (Cambridge 2005) 136.

⁶ W.G. Forrest, 'Colonization and the Rise of Delphi', 171-173; Hugh Lloyd-Jones, 'The Delphic Oracle', *Greece & Rome* 23 (1976) 60-73, there 60; Simon Price, 'Delphi and Divination', in: P.E. Easterling and J.V. Muir (eds.), *Greek Religion and Society* (Cambridge 1985) 128-154, there 129-131; A.M. Snodgrass, 'Interaction by design: the Greek city-state', in: C. Renfrew and J. Cherry (eds.), *Peer polity interaction and socio-political change* (Cambridge 1986) 47-58, there 53-55; Irad Malkin, *Religion and the Colonization of Ancient Greece* (Leiden 1987) 22; Morgan, *Athletes and oracles*, 106, 148; Osborne, *Greece in the making*, 202-203; Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred*, 138.

⁷ H.W. Parke, *Greek Oracles* (London 1967) 63; Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 46-47.

The seventh and sixth centuries were a period of major economic, social and political development for all the Greek *poleis*, and the even greater role in the Greek world that Delphi and its oracle began to play was reflected in the evolution of the cult itself. By the sixth century the sanctuary had become one of the unquestioned centers of the Greek world.⁸

The Delphic Oracle

Throughout most of its history, the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi thrived thanks to its oracle. The Delphic oracle was, almost from the start, the most renowned oracle in the entire Greek world – and perhaps also even outside the Greek world. This popularity came for a great part from the fact that Delphi was considered being neutral, it therefore had from the beginning the potential to play a Panhellenic role.⁹ In this part, I intend to answer several questions: for what reasons did people consult the oracle? When could the oracle be consulted? What was the procedure of consulting the oracle like? Were there differences between individual consultants and state delegations?

First of all, I will discuss the reasons for consulting the Delphic oracle. Both individual persons and (representatives of) *poleis* and other states would consult the oracle in the sixth and fifth centuries. One can imagine that the reasons for an individual to ask Apollo for help were different from the reasons of a *polis*. In his book about the Delphic Oracle, Joseph Fontenrose lists the various reasons for consulting the oracle:¹⁰

- i. Plague, famine, drought, catastrophe
- ii. Sickness of an individual
- iii. Exile, loss of country, captivity, need to change residence
- iv. Crime of others
- v. Crime of self
- vi. War or *casus belli*

⁸ Price, 'Delphi and Divination', 129-131; Panos Valavanis, *Games and Sanctuaries in Ancient Greece: Olympia, Delphi, Isthmia, Nemea, Athens* (Athens 2004) 180.

⁹ Catherine Morgan, 'Divination and Society at Delphi and Didyma', *Hermathena* 148 (Dublin 1989) 17-42, there 18; Michael Arnush, 'Pilgrimage to the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi: Patterns of Public and Private Consultation', in: Jaś Elsner and Ian Rutherford (eds.), *Pilgrimage in the Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity* (Oxford 2005) 97-110, there 97-98.

¹⁰ Fontenrose 40.

- vii. Portents, prodigies
- viii. Problems of rulership
- ix. Welfare of city or state
- x. Desire or plan to found a city or colony
- xi. Lack of children, desire for progeny
- xii. Desire to marry
- xiii. Wife or other woman's pregnancy, desire of knowing child's future
- xiv. Wish to know origin, who one's parents were
- xv. Death of kin or friends
- xvi. Disappearance, loss
- xvii. Contemplated enterprise or career
- xviii. Desire for reward
- xix. Test of oracle
- xx. Worship of the gods, desire to honor and please them
- xxi. Religious problems, e.g. whether to open sacred lands to cultivation, how to preserve the sanctity of shrines, etc.
- xxii. Interstate relations
- xxiii. Desire for information
- xxiv. Family welfare

In the early years of its operation, the Delphic oracle was available for consultation only once a year, on the seventh day of the Delphic month Bysios, which was the birthday of Apollo (Plut., *Mor.* 292E). Later, this was changed into nine times a year: one day every month except for the winter months, when Apollo was thought of being in Patara and not in Delphi (Plut., *Mor.* 292F). It is even said that at times three Pythiai held office at once.¹¹

¹¹ Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Oxford 1985) 115; Trevor Curnow, *The Oracles of the Ancient World* (London 2004) 56.

Some scholars have doubted that these nine days would be frequent enough, but there is no evidence to indicate how long a consultation might take, or how many could take place in a day, so without evidence to the contrary it is reasonable to assume that these nine days were the only opportunities to consult the Delphic oracle.¹²

On these nine consultation days, many people probably crowded the sanctuary. To manage this crowd and in order to prevent chaos, there was a hierarchical system for consulting the oracle. The inhabitants of Delphi, as inhabitants of the ‘hometown’ of the oracle, could consult the Pythia first. Second in line were those cities of individuals, who, as a token of friendship, were rewarded by Delphi with *promanteia*, the right to consult the oracle on the same terms as Delphi itself. Athens was rewarded with *promanteia* after the intervention of Perikles during the Second Sacred War in 448. This honor was inscribed on golden lions, gifts of king Croesus of Lydia.

After the Delphians and the ones granted with *promanteia*, it was the rest of the Greeks’ turn; their order was probably determined by drawing lots, whereby delegations from city-states took precedence over individuals. The last in the hierarchy were the so-called ‘barbarians’; people coming from outside of the Greek world.¹³ As has been said above, after the Second Sacred War (448-7) Athens was rewarded with *promanteia* and could hereafter consult the oracle on more favorable terms than before.

Hugh Bowden finds it likely that individuals might have found that there was no time left for them and that they might have had to wait a month before trying again. He states that it is likely that individuals other than Delphians rarely consulted the Delphic oracle, at least in the Classical period.¹⁴ However, there is absolutely no evidence for this and Bowden is therefore guessing when he states this. I suggest that, considering the popularity of the oracle in the entire Greek world during most of the archaic and the classical period, it is likely that people were willing to make the long journey to Delphi to consult the oracle.

¹² Hugh Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle. Divination and Democracy* (Cambridge 2005) 17.

¹³ Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle*, 17; Jon D. Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion* (Malden, MA 2005) 107.

¹⁴ Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle*, 17.

The exact procedure of consulting the oracle and of receiving the answers remains a bit mysterious, probably because it was familiar to everybody in antiquity and therefore the ancient writers did not feel the need to explain it.¹⁵ It was probably not the case that it was not allowed to talk about the procedure.¹⁶ What we know can be summarized as following:

‘The Pythia, a woman past the age of child-bearing, goes down into the *adyton* or inner sanctuary and sits on the tripod as Apollo is said to have done when he first occupied the shrine, while the inquirer who has paid the fee remains in the outer room, the *oikos* or *megaron* into which he is also described as going down. The enquirer then sacrifices a goat which is declared acceptable if it shivers on being doused with water. The inquiry is probably written. The Pythia then utters in a state of possession, and the utterance is interpreted and put into hexameter verse by the *prophetes*.’¹⁷

The consultant had to offer a sacred cake, whose cost was fixed at a high price, on the main altar outside. After he had passed the threshold into the cella of the temple, the enquirer had to sacrifice sheep or goats on the inner hearth. During this procedure, he was accompanied by the priests and by the *proxenos* – the local representative of his own city (Eur. *Ion*, 226-228; *Andr.* 1100ff). When the sacrifices were ended, the enquirer was admitted to the inner sanctuary.¹⁸

Apollo thus spoke at Delphi through the person of the Pythia, the priestess or prophetess. As the chosen instrument of Apollo, she was the conduit of divine knowledge.¹⁹ Scholars in the past have claimed that she did not speak or that her attendant prophets reformulated her utterances and converted them into comprehensible prose or verse. However, there is not one ancient source that supports this view. All the ancient sources suggest that the Pythia was the one who issued the oracular responses.²⁰ Also in the cases of blackmail, it is the Pythia, and not the priests, who is accused, which shows that the Pythia was really seen as the one who gave the oracles.²¹

¹⁵ Parke, *Greek Oracles*, 42.

¹⁶ C.R. Whittaker, ‘The Delphic Oracle: Belief and Behaviour in ancient Greece – and Africa’, *The Harvard Theological Review* 58 (1965) 21-47, there 22.

¹⁷ Based on: Diodorus Siculus 16.26.6, Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 38, Euripides, *Ion* 91, Euripides, *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 976, 1247, Sophokles, Frg. 1044, Herodotus 1.48, 5.92^e, 7.140-142, Plutarchus, *Moralia* 397a, 435b, 437a, Aristophanes, *Plutus* 39. Citation from J.S. Morrison, ‘The classical world’, in: M. Loewe and C. Blacker (eds.), *Divination and Oracles* (London 1981) 87-114, there 99.

¹⁸ H.W. Parke and D.E.W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle. Volume I: The History* (Oxford 1956) 32-33.

¹⁹ L. Maurizio, ‘Anthropology and spirit possession: a reconsideration of the Pythia’s role at Delphi’, *JHS* 115 (1995) 69-88, there 69, 79.

²⁰ Maurizio, ‘Anthropology and spirit possession’, 69.

²¹ Price, ‘Delphi and Divination’, 142; L. Maurizio, ‘The voice at the centre of the world: The Pythias’ ambiguity and authority’, in: A. Lardinois and L. McClure (eds.), *Making silence speak: women’s voices in Greek literature and society* (Princeton 2002) 38-54, there 38.

Who exactly the Pythia was is not clear. In later times it was an adult woman dressed as a young woman (Diod. Sic. 16.26). Perhaps in the early days she indeed was a young woman, but we cannot be certain about this. They were selected from the local population of Delphians. She was a local woman with no special family background or training. Once appointed she served for life and lived in a special house in the sanctuary. Some scholars claim that she had to remain chaste, however, there is no ancient evidence for this.²²

In addition to the Pythia, the priestess or prophetess, there were two priests appointed for life to serve Apollo. Also, there were five *hosioi* who had certain responsibilities in the sanctuary, but whose relationship to the oracle itself is not clear. There are also references in literary sources to one or more *prophetai*, although it is possible that the word *prophetes* was used to refer to any cult personnel at the sanctuary. There would also have been lower-status posts within the sanctuary, for example temple-cleaners.²³

The clearest evidence for the form of oracular responses from Delphi comes from a number of inscriptions recording the actual response of the Pythia. This evidence suggests that the most common form of question was: ‘would it be more profitable and better for us to...?’ This would normally lead to a response of either ‘it would be more profitable and better...’ or ‘it would not be more profitable and better...’.²⁴

Whether there was also a lot oracle in Delphi is unclear. Some scholars believe that the lot was used in Delphi either as a primary or as a secondary means of divination throughout its history.²⁵ Others are convinced that before Apollo came to Delphi, when Ge-Themis and Pytho were supposed to hold the shrine, prophecy by the drawing of lots was practiced in Delphi.²⁶ Sarah Johnston suggests

²² Maurizio, ‘The voice at the centre of the world’, 39 n. 6; Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion*, 104; Curnow, *The Oracles of the Ancient World*, 56-57.

²³ Maurizio, ‘Anthropology and spirit possession’, 83; Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle*, 16; Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion*, 104.

²⁴ Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle*, 22-24 and appendix 2 nos 22, 23, 26; Fontenrose 11-57; Lynda Walsh, ‘The Rhetoric of Oracles’, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 33 (2003) 55-78, there 59.

²⁵ Frank Eggleston Robbins, ‘The Lot Oracle at Delphi’, *Classical Philology* 11 (1916) 278-292, there 286; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 116; L.B. Zaidman and P.S. Pantel, *Religion in the Ancient Greek City* (Cambridge 1992) 127; E. Kearns, *Ancient Greek Religion. A Sourcebook* (Malden, MA 2010) 285 all think there was a lot oracle. Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece*, 29-31 is not certain about the existence of a lot oracle in Delphi.

²⁶ Leicester B. Holland, ‘The Mantic Mechanism at Delphi’, *AJA* 37 (1933) 201-214, there 203.

that lot divination was used when the demand for enthused responses was too high to be met.²⁷ Still other scholars, like Irad Malkin, are convinced that it is unlikely that oracles by lot were used in the Archaic period, but that perhaps there was a change in the Classical period.²⁸ However, there is no evidence and we cannot, therefore, determine which scholar is right.

It seems to have been the case that there were few differences between individual consultants of the oracle and official state delegations, except, of course, for the reasons for consulting the oracle. Both public delegations and private consultants made use of the same institutions, neatly summarized by Michael Arnush as follows:

1. Consultants liaised with a Delphic *proxenos* assigned to their *polis*, and the same *proxenos* probably dealt with both public and private consultants.²⁹
2. Delphi awarded privileges, such as the above-mentioned *promanteia*, and it seems likely that both state delegations and private citizens from the city in question could make use of these.
3. Both public delegations and private consultants presumably consulted the oracle at the same time.³⁰
4. Consultants of both types probably enjoyed a guarantee of inviolability in their journey to and from the sanctuary.³¹
5. Consultants of both types had to pay taxes in the form of a sacrifice and a special type of cake (*pelanos*) in order to gain access to the oracle. There does, however, seem to have been a considerable difference in the taxes public delegates and individual pilgrims paid to consult the oracle.³²

²⁷ Sarah Iles Johnston, *Ancient Greek Divination* (Malden, MA 2008) 55.

²⁸ Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece*, 29.

²⁹ Arnush, 'Pilgrimage to the Oracle at Delphi', 99. See also: Matthew Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece* (London 1997) 154-5 and n. 23.

³⁰ Arnush, 'Pilgrimage to the Oracle at Delphi', 99. See also: Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 153-4; Georges Roux, *L'Amphictionie Delphes et le temple d'Apollon au IVe siècle* (Paris 1979) 3.

³¹ Arnush, 'Pilgrimage to the Oracle at Delphi', 99. See also: Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 28. Cf. Thuc. 4.118.1-2 and 5.18.2.

³² Eur. *Ion* 226-9; Arnush, 'Pilgrimage to the Oracle at Delphi', 99. See also: Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 167-8.

The Delphic Amphiktyony

A pre-condition for the international position of Delphi was that the sanctuary, like Olympia, was in principle independent of the political struggles of the Greek cities. The local inhabitants of Delphi did not control the administration of the sanctuary; they simply provided the personnel. From the beginning of the sixth century an association of Greeks from central Greece and the northeast Peloponnese organized the sanctuary itself: the Amphiktyonic League or Amphiktyony.³³

Within the sanctuary, the League shared responsibility with the Delphic polis and the sanctuary priesthood. The Amphiktyony protected the sanctuary from envious designs of its neighbors. It frequently intervened as arbitrator in disputes between city-states. It could also impose fines for religious offenses. By tradition the Thessalians held the presidency of the League and, therefore, whoever controlled Thessaly controlled the Amphiktyony.³⁴

There is no agreement about the exact composition of the Amphiktyonic League during the sixth and fifth centuries, mostly because the earliest list of members we have comes from the fourth century and we therefore have no evidence for the Amphiktyony in the sixth and fifth centuries. There are several compositions of members of the Amphiktyonic League being mentioned by different – ancient and modern – authors.

The orator Aeschines mentions the Amphiktyonic League in his speech ‘On the Embassy’, dated to 343. He states the following: ‘To prove that they were Amphictyonic cities and thus protected by the oaths, I enumerated twelve tribes which shared the shrine: the Thessalians, Boeotians (not the Thebans only), Dorians, Ionians, Perrhaebi, Magnetes, Dolopians, Locrians, Oetaeans, Phtiotians, Malians, and Phocians. And I showed that each of these tribes has an equal vote, the greatest equal to the least: that the delegate from Dorion and Cytinion has equal authority with the Lacedaemonian delegates, for each tribe casts two votes; again, that of the Ionian delegates those from Eretria and

³³ Price, ‘Delphi and Divination’, 131; Jonathan M. Hall, *Hellenicity between ethnicity and culture* (Chicago 2002) 138,145; Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred*, 135; Richard Neer, ‘Delphi, Olympia and the art of politics’, in: H. Shapiro (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Archaic Greece* (Cambridge 2007) 225-264, there 226. Cicero, *On Rhetoric* 2.23, describes the council as the *commune Graeciae consilium*, the common council of Greece.

³⁴ Simon Hornblower, *The Greek World 479-323 BC 3rd Edition* (London 2002) 29; Valavanis, *Games and Sanctuaries in Ancient Greece*, 180; Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 35. For the presidency of Thessaly, see Syll.³ 175.

Priene have equal authority with those from Athens; and the rest in the same way' (Aesch., *On the Embassy* 116).³⁵

Pausanias, writing in the second century AD, also gives a list of members of the Amphiktyony. According to his list, the earliest League consisted of the Ionians, Dolopes, Thessalians, Aenianians, Magnesians, Malians, Phthiotians, Dorians, Phokians and Lokrians who border on Phokis, living at the bottom of Mount Cnemis (Paus. 10.8.1-2).³⁶ The composition of the League changed, however, in the fourth century when the Macedonians managed to enter the Amphiktyony (Paus. 10.8.2).

According to Michael Scott, in the classical period the Amphiktyony was composed of the following groups and *poleis*: 'The Dorians of the Peloponnese', 'the Ionians', 'Boeotians', 'Phokians', 'Lokrians of the West', 'Lokrians of the East', 'Dorians of the Metropolis', 'Malians', 'Aenianes', 'Achaians Phthiotes', 'Magnesians', 'Dolopes', 'Thessalians', 'Perrhoebians', Sparta, Troezen, Argos, Epidauros, Aegina, Phlionte, Sikyon, Korinth, Megara, Athens, Karystos, Eretria, Chalkis, Kirrha, Delphi, Anthela, Aia and Histia.³⁷

François Lefèvre, on the other hand, maintains a different composition of the council, since he states that Athens was the only *polis* beside Delphi who had her own vote in the Amphiktyony. The other *poleis* were represented by their *ethne*, for example Sparta, who was represented by the 'Dorians of the Peloponnese' and therefore had only an indirect vote in the council.³⁸

Sacred Wars

During antiquity, several struggles were fought over control of the sanctuary; these struggles are known as Sacred Wars. These wars were called 'Sacred', because they were fought in favor of Apollo and his Delphic sanctuary. In this section, I will only discuss the first two Sacred Wars, since they fall within the chronological timeframe of this thesis and the third and fourth Sacred War do not.³⁹

³⁵ Translation by Charles Darwin Adams (Loeb-edition).

³⁶ Translation by W.H.S. Jones (Loeb-edition).

³⁷ Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 35 n. 32.

³⁸ François Lefèvre, *L'amphictionie pyléo-delphique: histoire et institutions* (Paris 1998) 63.

³⁹ Kai Brodersen, 'Heilige Oorlog en Heilige Vrede in de Vroeg-Griekse geschiedenis', in: Martin Gosman and Hans Bakker (eds.), *Heilige Oorlogen. Een onderzoek naar historische en hedendaagse vormen van collectief religieus geweld* (Kampen 1991) 39-51, there 45; Jonathan M. Hall, *A History of the Archaic Greek World ca. 1200-479 BCE* (Oxford 2007) 276.

First Sacred War

A lot has been written about the so-called First Sacred War of the early sixth century. The war is conventionally dated to ca. 591, when the Pythian Games were supposedly reinstated. The tradition about the First Sacred War can be outlined as follows. It is said that the war has been provoked by the lawlessness of the Kirrhaneans and the Kragalidai – local populations who were harassing pilgrims to Apollo’s oracular shrine. The Amphiktyony, which met until then at the sanctuary of Demeter at Anthela, decided to intervene to wrest Delphi from the local control by sending an army in which the largest contingents were represented by the Thessalians, the Athenians under either Solon or Alkmaion, and the Sikyonians. The Amphiktyonic force eventually prevailed, destroying Kirrha (or Krisa), enslaving its inhabitants, and dedicating its land to Pythian Apollo, Artemis, Leto and Athena Pronaia.⁴⁰

There are scholars who argue that this First Sacred War was not a genuine Sacred War, but more a war of a regional character. Opposed to them are scholars who argue that the First Sacred War was indeed a genuine Sacred War fought over control of the Delphic sanctuary and that roughly from this moment the Amphiktyonic League controlled the sanctuary. There is, in addition, one scholar who does not fit one of these groups: Noel Robertson claims in an article published in 1978 that the First Sacred War never happened, that the main city of the conflict, Krisa/Kirrha, was not large enough in the Archaic period to have played the role the sources claim her to have played and, moreover, that the First Sacred War is a myth made up in the fourth century, when there was a real Sacred War being fought.⁴¹

Although I think that Robertson is too skeptical about the historicity of the First Sacred War, determining the circumstances remains problematic. The major problem is that virtually none of the literary evidence for the war predates the fourth century, with most of the sources clustering in the

⁴⁰ Hall, *Hellenicity*, 145-147; Hall, *A History of the Archaic Greek World*, 277-278. There is no agreement among scholars whether Kirrha and Krisa were two names for one city or that they were two separate cities.

⁴¹ Not a genuine Sacred War: Hall, *Hellenicity*, 145-147; Hall, *A History of the Archaic Greek World*, 276-281; Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 51-53. Genuine: Lloyd-Jones, ‘The Delphic Oracle’, 60-73; Parke and Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle. Volume I*, 99, 103; Parke, *Greek Oracles*, 63-64. Noel Robertson’s article: Noel Robertson, ‘The Myth of the First Sacred War’, *CQ* 28 (1978) 38-73.

340s and 330s – precisely the period in which the Third and Fourth Sacred Wars were being fought.⁴² Allusions that may or may not be to the war have been detected in late archaic poetry in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, lines 540-4, and in the last lines of the *Aspis* of Hesiodus. Otherwise, the first allusions are seen in Isokrates' *Plataikos* of 373-371. After the cluster of material from the 340s and 330s comes a long gap until the description of Pausanias, written in the second century AD.⁴³

Second Sacred War

The historicity of the so-called Second Sacred War (which evolved into the first Peloponnesian War) has never been questioned. The Second Sacred War broke out in 448/47, when an Athenian force wrested the sanctuary away from the Spartan-backed Delphians and gave it to the Phokians, under whose control it remained until the Peace of Nicias in 421 (Thuc. 5.18.2).⁴⁴

The only reference to this Sacred War is made by Thucydides:

‘Three years later a five years’ truce was made between Athens and the Peloponnese. (...) After this the Spartans engaged in the campaign known as the sacred war. They took over the temple at Delphia and gave it back to the Delphians. As soon as they had retired, the Athenians marched out, took the temple again, and gave it back to the Phocians.’ (1.112).⁴⁵

In the course of the Second Sacred War, both Sparta and Athens were granted *promanteia*, and this honor was inscribed on golden lions that stood in the sanctuary, gifts of Croesus, the king of Lydia.⁴⁶

⁴² John Davies, ‘The tradition about the first Sacred War’, in: S. Hornblower (ed.), *Greek Historiography* (Oxford 1994) 193-212, there 193-195; Hall, *A History of the Archaic Greek World*, 278. The sources from the 340s and 330s are: Speusippos, *Letter to Philip*, §§ 8-9 (FGrHist 69 F 2); Androtion, *Atthis* (FGrHist 324 F 58); Kallisthenes, *Table of Victors at the Pythian Games from Gylidas onwards and of those who managed the contest* (no surviving fragment); Kallisthenes, *On the Sacred War* (FGrHist 124 F I); Aeschines, *On the Embassy* 114-16; Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 107-13.

⁴³ Davies, ‘The tradition about the first Sacred War’, 193-195.

⁴⁴ W.G. Forrest, *A History of Sparta, 950-192 BC* (London 1968) 106; Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford 1972) 175, 423; Hornblower, *The Greek World*, 36; Lefèvre, *L’amphictionie pyléo-delphique*, 66; Pierre Sánchez, *L’Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes: recherches sur son rôle historique, des origines au IIe siècle de notre ère* (Stuttgart 2001) 106; Paul Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia. A Regional History 1300-362 BC* (London 2002) 196; Hall, *A History of the Archaic Greek World*, 276; P.J. Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World* (Malden, MA 2006) 51; Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 99-100.

⁴⁵ Translation by Rex Warner: *Thucydides. History of the Peloponnesian War. Translated by Rex Warner with an Introduction and Notes by M.I. Finley* (London 1972).

⁴⁶ Parke and Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle. Volume I*, 184-186; Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle*, 17.

Travelling to Delphi

In the remaining part of this chapter, I will explore the possible routes a person coming from Athens could have used in order to get to Delphi. These routes include the ones by land, through Boeotia, and by sea. The aspect of pilgrimage to the sanctuary will also be discussed.

The sanctuary at Delphi was located in the part of ancient Greece called Phokis, north across the Gulf of Corinth from the Peloponnese. It was easily accessible from the Peloponnese by sea, and from the east (Boeotia, Attika, Chalkis, Eretria) by road and it stood close to the north-south route that ran from Thessaly to the Peloponnese. Nearby was the port of Krisa, which made access to the oracle fairly easy for visitors who came by sea, although they still had to hike part way up Mount Parnassos, upon which the sanctuary had been built.⁴⁷

Sea travel was the most important form of transport for the Greeks and it is reasonable to assume that most of the Athenians travelling to Delphi used a route by sea. The ancient sailing season was from about April to October; summer was the main period of sailing activity. During late fall and winter, sailing was reduced to the absolute minimum, not merely because of the severity of winter storms, but more a matter of visibility.⁴⁸

There are two different routes by sea from Athens to Delphi imaginable, which are both indicated at Image 1. First there is the option of travelling to the Gulf of Corinth by road and from there to travel by sea (Route 1). This is probably the quickest way of getting to Delphi. An alternative route was to sail around the Peloponnese, which takes a lot more time, but it could have been necessary to use this route at times when the route to the Gulf of Corinth was not accessible for whatever possible reason (Route 2).

By land a person could travel on foot, on pack animals or by cart. A dense network of carriage roads has been discovered that crisscrossed the Greek landscape and ensured communication even between isolated settlements. Herodotus mentions a Sacred Road to Delphi which leads through Boeotia and Phokis (Hdt. 6.34.2); according to Matthew Dillon there was a special road between

⁴⁷ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 31; Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred*, 135; Johnston, *Ancient Greek Divination*, 38.

⁴⁸ Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton 1971) 270-271; Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 29.

Athens and Delphi which pilgrims used to travel to Delphi; whether this was the same road as Herodotus mentions is unclear.⁴⁹

One group of people travelling to Delphi by road was the *Pythais*. This was an Athenian delegation, not tied to any Delphic festival, which at irregular intervals – not necessarily in a Pythian year, when the Pythian Games were held – took sacrificial victims, first-fruits and perhaps a tripod to Apollo at Delphi.⁵⁰ The procession used to be dispatched in response to certain omens of lightning-flashes which were looked for on certain days during the three summer months.⁵¹ It was said that Apollo himself has used the land route the *Pythais* use when he was travelling from Delphi to Athens.⁵² A fourth-century *horos* in the Athenian agora marked out ‘the sacred road through which the *Pythais* journeys to Delphi’.⁵³ The earliest reference made to the *Pythais* comes from the fifth century. Aeschylus in his *Eumenides* mentions that Apollo travelled from Delos to Delphi via Attika and that ‘the children of Hephaistos [i.e. the Athenians], road-builders taming the wildness of the untamed land, escorted him with mighty reverence’ (Aesch. *Eum.* 8-16). Although the reference in Aeschylus does suggest that the *Pythais* were sent to Delphi already in the fifth century, we do not have other – epigraphical or literary – evidence for this.

A person travelling from Athens to Delphi by land would go through Boeotia (Route 3), an area that was not always an ally of Athens. Boeotia was an important area in the ancient Greek world, because it contains the main land routes between northern and southern Greece and some of the important ports for crossing the sea to the Peloponnese.⁵⁴ After the Peloponnesian War it was necessary for Athenians travelling to Boeotia to ask for permission to pass, since Boeotia and Athens had made a peace treaty apart from the Peace of Nikias, with own clauses (*Ar.*, *Birds* 188-189).

⁴⁹ W.R. Agard, ‘Athens and Delphi (800-484 BC)’, *The Classical Weekly* 17 (1924) 209-211, there 209; Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 34-35; Yanis A. Pikoulas, ‘Travelling by Land in Ancient Greece’, in: Colin Adams and Jim Roy (eds.), *Travel, Geography, and Culture in Ancient Greece, Egypt and the Near East* (Oxford 2007) 78-87, there 79, 82.

⁵⁰ D.M. Lewis, ‘Notes on Attic Inscriptions (II): XXIII. Who Was Lysistrata?’, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 50 (1955) 1-36, there 34; Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, 24; Robert C.T. Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens* (Oxford 2005) 84.

⁵¹ H.W. Parke, ‘The *Pythais* of 355 B.C. and the Third Sacred War’, *JHS* 59 (1939) 80-83, there 80.

⁵² Strabo 9.3.12; Isaeus 7.27. See also Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, 37.

⁵³ Parker, *Polytheism and Society*, 86. *Horos*: Gerald V. Lalonde, Merle K. Langdon and Michael B. Walbank, *Inscriptions, Horoi, Poletai, Leases of Public Lands. The Athenian Agora 19* (Princeton 1991) H 34.

⁵⁴ John M. Fossey, *Topography and Population of Ancient Boiotia Volume I* (Chicago 1988) 4; Robert J. Buck, *Boiotia and the Boiotian League, 423-371 BC* (Edmonton 1994) 1.

However, someone who wishes to could have avoided the route by land quite easily, namely by travelling by sea.

The establishment of Panhellenic contests in imitation of the Olympic festival in the sixth century testifies to the fact that pilgrimage was an established practice in the Greek world in or before that date. Most of the pilgrimages in the Greek world were undertaken by private individuals who, for one reason or another, decided to travel to a particular sacred site. According to Matthew Dillon in the archaic period individual pilgrimage would have predominated and the organization of official pilgrimages may have developed more gradually. There were also “official pilgrims” attending specific religious celebrations. Pilgrims often had to travel long distances. Such journeys were not without risks of various kinds, and the problems pilgrims faced en route highlight the importance attached to pilgrimage.⁵⁵

Because most pilgrims travelled by sea the primary danger in peacetime, except for the weather, came from pirates and enemy fleets. Presumably the zenith of the Athenian empire in the fifth century must have made the seas secure for pilgrims travelling to sanctuaries. But at times when there was no strong maritime control pirates may have been a serious danger and many pilgrims would have travelled to their destinations overland in these times.⁵⁶

Conclusion

Before the sanctuary of Apollo was established in Delphi in the late ninth century, the site was used as domestic space. From the early eighth century onwards the sanctuary grew in importance and by the sixth century it had become one of the unquestioned centers of the Greek world. The large Panhellenic Pythian Games were reinstated somewhere in the early sixth century and these were an important part of the sanctuary.

In addition to the Pythian Games, the most pivotal part of the sanctuary was the Delphic oracle. In the eighth century the oracle started to work and it helped a great deal with increasing the importance of Delphi. In addition, its reputation of being neutral was a precondition for the panhellenic status of the sanctuary. Both individuals and *poleis* consulted the Pythia, the woman

⁵⁵ Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, xvii 11, 27.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, 32-34.

through whom Apollo spoke, for various reasons, varying from questions about children and marriage to questions about war or colonization.

The sanctuary was controlled by a religious league, the Amphiktyony. Several *ethne*, tribes, and *poleis* had a vote in this council, and although the exact composition of the council remains unclear for most of the archaic and classical periods it seems clear that Athens had at least an indirect vote through “the Ionians”, but perhaps she even had her own, direct, vote.

During antiquity, several struggles were fought over control of the sanctuary, the Sacred Wars. The First Sacred War is usually dated to ca. 591, however, there are many problems surrounding this event, particularly with the sources, which all are, almost without exception, very late. The existence of the Second Sacred War of 448-447 has never been questioned. This war is particularly important for Athenian relations with Delphi, since afterwards Athens was granted *promanteia* and Athenians could, therefore, consult the oracle on more favorable terms.

There are three possible routes an Athenian could use for his travel to Delphi: First, completely by road, through Boeotia; second, by road to the Gulf of Corinth and from there by sea; and third, completely by sea, all around the Peloponnese. Most of the people would have travelled by sea, since this was the fastest and most common way of travel in antiquity. Of these three routes, the second one probably was the most popular, because it was the quickest way.

2. Athenian Presence in Delphi

Introduction

In this chapter, the Athenian presence in Delphi will be discussed. The focus will lie on the epigraphical evidence from sixth and fifth century Delphi, although the literary sources as well as some archaeological evidence will also be used. Three inscriptions will be discussed here, each provided with the necessary context. These inscriptions all date to the sixth or fifth century and were all found in Delphi. These inscriptions will shed a light on the relationship between Athens and the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi in the sixth and fifth centuries. Besides these inscriptions, I will also discuss the Temple of Apollo, which was rebuilt in the sixth century by an Athenian family. In addition, I will discuss the Athenian inquiries of the oracle separately, since most of these inquiries are known only from literary sources and just a few are known from inscriptions.

The Temple of Apollo

In 548 – according to Pausanias (10.5.13) – a great fire destroyed the early archaic Temple of Apollo and took with it many other monuments. Reconstruction after the destruction and collapse of the temple was slow to get going. The estimated cost of the rebuilding was put at three hundred talents. Of this large sum the Delphians themselves undertook responsibility for the fourth part. The other Amphiktyonic states were probably assessed to contribute the remainder: ‘When the Amphictyons paid three hundred talents to have the temple that now stands at Delphi finished (as that which was formerly there burnt down by accident), it was the Delphians' lot to pay a fourth of the cost. They went about from city to city collecting gifts’ (Hdt. 2.180).⁵⁷ It was the Alkmaeonids, however, a famous Athenian family, that took the contract, which, for reasons unknown, was not settled until 513.⁵⁸

The Alkmaeonids went far beyond the specifications by providing white Parian marble for the façade, where only poros limestone had been called for (Hdt. 5.62). This gesture offers an instance of

⁵⁷ Translation by A.D. Godley (Loeb-edition).

⁵⁸ Parke and Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle. Volume I*, 143; Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred*, 138; Neer, ‘Delphi, Olympia and the art of politics’, 247-249; Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 77. The Temple of Apollo is number 27 on the Plan of Ancient Delphi (Image 2).

the competitiveness of Greek aristocrats: the temple was intended as a rival to the Temple of Athena built at about the same time on the Akropolis at Athens by the family of the tyrants, the Peisistratids.⁵⁹ It is also likely that the building itself was constructed in order to keep the Alkmaeonid name and fame in wide circulation amongst the visitors of the great sanctuaries.

Unfortunately, there is no epigraphical evidence left of this act of the Alkmaeonid family. In addition, this event is one of the few cases of private involvement in Delphi by Athenians in the sixth and fifth centuries. Even though the Alkmaeonids were very powerful and they would later become the ruling family of Athens, they were not building the temple of Apollo on behalf of the *polis* Athens. Therefore, this counts as a private act instead of a public one. It is still, however, a very important event in the history of the relationship between Athens and Delphi, since rebuilding the most important temple of the Delphic sanctuary not only provides fame for the Alkmaeonids, but also for the *polis* Athens.⁶⁰

A Dedication near the Athenian Treasury (FD III.2.1)

The first inscription to be discussed is found near the Athenian treasury, located at the northwest corner of the Sacred Way.⁶¹ The Athenian treasury was one of seventeen treasuries in the Delphic sanctuary and also one of the earliest built there. In later times, the treasury was covered with inscriptions coming from or about Athenians. These, mainly honorary decrees concerning Athenian citizens, however, cannot be used for our current purpose; they all date to the fourth century or later and therefore are too late to be of use in this paper.⁶²

Pausanias attested that the treasury was erected as a memorial for the battle of Marathon (10.11.5): ‘The Thebans have a treasury built from the spoils of war, and so have the Athenians. Whether the Cnidians built to commemorate a victory or to display their prosperity I do not know, but the Theban treasury was made from the spoils taken at the battle of Leuctra, and the Athenian treasury from those taken from the army that landed with Datis at Marathon.’ Yet, the supposedly dedicatory

⁵⁹ Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred*, 143.

⁶⁰ Not directly after rebuilding the temple, since the Alkmaeonids were still banished from Athens at that time, but probably after Kleisthenes (a member of the Alkmaeonid family) came to power in Athens.

⁶¹ Number 11 on the Plan of Ancient Delphi (Image 2).

⁶² Elena C. Partida, *The Treasuries at Delphi. An Architectural Study* (Jonsered 2000) 50; G. Colin, *Inscriptions du trésor des Athéniens. Fouilles de Delphes III 2* (1909-1913).

inscription was not engraved on any portion of the treasury, but on a pedestal lying on the inner edge of the treasury's southern paved court.⁶³

This pedestal still stands in front of the Athenian treasury. One hypothesis about this pedestal says that it once carried the famous 'Marathon-offering': a group of bronze statues made by Pheidias and consecrated by Kimon to celebrate the victory led by Miltiades against the Persians. According to this hypothesis, these statues were set up near the treasury before being supplemented with three more figures, furnished with a new inscription in the third century and moved near the entrance of the sanctuary.⁶⁴

Some scholars have claimed that this inscription was the dedicatory inscription for the entire treasury, not just for the pedestal itself, thereby following Pausanias. Others, however, are convinced that the inscription commemorates the dedication of solely the base and that Pausanias was wrong in connecting the inscription to the treasury. The first group of scholars has used this inscription to date the treasury, something that is quite difficult to do otherwise since there are no clear indications of the date found on the treasury itself (not even the architecture or sculpture). However, since it is not clear at all if this inscription commemorates also the treasury or just the dedication on the pedestal itself, it cannot be used as a dating criterion for the treasury.

Even though it is not clear if this inscription has any value for the treasury itself, it still is an interesting case to investigate for my current purpose. The text of the inscription shows that the pedestal was dedicated after the victory in the battle of Marathon in 490. Because of the specific mention of the Battle of Marathon, it is reasonable to date this inscription and therefore the dedicated base, to some years after 490.⁶⁵ Although the actual word Marathon is no longer visible in its entirety, it seems reasonable enough to reconstruct the text as follows:

ἌθENAIOI τ[ὸ]ι Ἀπόλλων[ι ἀπὸ Μέρδ]ον ἀκ[ροθ]ίνια τῆς Μαραθ[ὸ]νι μ[άχε]ς⁶⁶

⁶³ Partida, *The Treasuries at Delphi*, 50.

⁶⁴ A.E. Raubitschek, 'Zu den zwei attischen Marathondenkmälern in Delphi', in: *Mélanges helléniques offerts à Georges Daux* (Paris 1974) 315-316; Partida, *The Treasuries at Delphi*, 51. See also Pausanias 10.10.1-2.

⁶⁵ Jean-François Bommelaer, *Guide de Delphes. Le Site* (Paris 1991) 136-137.

⁶⁶ FD III.2.1.

‘Athenians [dedicated] to Apollo the booty of the battle of Marathon taken from the Medes’

J.G. Frazer, in his commentary on Pausanias of 1913, sees the dedicatory inscription as a confirmation for Pausanias’ statement that the treasury was built from the spoils of the battle of Marathon.⁶⁷ He is not the only one. As has already been indicated above, modern scholarship about the Athenian treasury in Delphi can be divided into two camps. On the one hand there are the French scholars (and excavators of Delphi), who up until now maintain that the treasury and the pedestal were built at the same time and that therefore the dedicatory inscription on the pedestal is the dedicatory inscription of the treasury itself. On the other hand there are the German and most of the English-speaking scholars, who maintain that the two – treasury and pedestal – cannot be taken together and that the treasury antedates the battle of Marathon. The dedicatory inscription on the pedestal only explains the dedication of the pedestal and the spoils on display there, not the construction of the treasury.⁶⁸

Richard Neer even calls it ‘one of the great controversies of classical archaeology’.⁶⁹ In fact, Neer is one of few non-French scholars who say that the French are right in claiming that the Treasury and the pedestal are integral. He bases his arguments on the latest excavations of the French in Delphi, in 1989, when the French discovered that the plan of the treasury takes the pedestal into account from the earliest phase of construction.⁷⁰

Although it would contribute a great deal to our knowledge of the Athenian presence in Delphi in the sixth and fifth century when clarity can be given about this controversy, already this inscription is of importance. Let us assume for now that the dedicatory inscription on the pedestal only commemorates the pedestal itself. After they had defeated the Persians at the Battle of Marathon, the Athenians wanted to display the spoils taken from the enemy. No better place than Delphi, one would think. Here, in the Panhellenic Delphic sanctuary, displaying spoils taken from such a powerful

⁶⁷ J.G. Frazer, *Pausanias’s Description of Greece. Volume V* (London 1913) 279-281.

⁶⁸ M. Rups, *Thesaurus. A study of the treasury building as found in Greek sanctuaries* (Ann Arbor 1991) 131-132.

⁶⁹ Richard Neer, ‘The Athenian Treasury at Delphi and the Material of Politics’, *Classical Antiquity* 23 (2004) 63-93, there 67.

⁷⁰ Neer, ‘The Athenian Treasury at Delphi’, 67. The excavation reports of this latest excavation are not published and, therefore, I had no opportunity to consult them.

opponent as the Persians were, shows how powerful you are yourself. Not only the pilgrims and state representatives that came to Delphi to consult the oracle saw these dedications, also the many visitors of the sanctuary during the Pythian Games passed by on their ascent along the Sacred Way and could be – and probably were – amazed by this show of force.

Also noteworthy in this case is the fact that this is a dedication on behalf of the entire *polis* of Athens. Next to this public dedication in Delphi of the spoils taken from the Persian enemy at Marathon, the Athenian general Miltiades may have dedicated his helmet to Zeus after the Battle at Marathon. On his helmet Miltiades had the following text inscribed: Μιλτιάδης ἀνέ[θ]εκεν [τ]οῖ Δί, ‘Miltiades dedicated [me] to Zeus’ (IG I³ 1472). So Athens dedicated their spoils to Apollo in Delphi and Miltiades chose Olympia and Zeus for his private dedication.⁷¹ In addition, the Athenians as a whole have also dedicated spoils from the Persian Wars at Olympia. They dedicated to Zeus a bronze Persian helmet, inscribed with the text Διὶ Ἀθηναῖοι Μέδον λαβόντες, ‘To Zeus the Athenians [dedicated this helmet], taken from the Persians’ (IG I³ 1467). However, the largest of these – public or private – Athenian dedications after the Persian Wars was indeed the one in Delphi.⁷²

The Athenian Stoa (Syll.³ 29)

Somewhere in the fifth century, the Athenians built a portico close to the terrace wall of the temple of Apollo.⁷³ This stoa, together with the Athenian treasury, made the Athenian presence in Delphi in the fifth century highly visible, especially if you take into the account that these buildings were located on a place in the sanctuary which was full of prestige: along the Sacred Way, very close to the Temple of Apollo.

On the highest step of the stylobate of the stoa, a dedicatory inscription is visible containing the following text:

⁷¹ However, although it seems certain that this helmet was indeed of the great Miltiades, it is not certain at all if the helmet was dedicated after the Battle at Marathon. Especially the lack of the ethnic suggests that it dates to the period of Miltiades’ rule in the Chersonese, which would point to a date probably a decade before Marathon. See for more information: Emil Kunze, ‘Ausgrabungen in Olympia 1953/54’, *Gnomon* 26 (1954) 141-143, there 142; J.M. Cook and J. Boardman, ‘Archaeology in Greece, 1953’, *JHS* 74 (1954) 142-169, there 156; A. Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten* (München 1972) 32-33; H.-V. Herrmann, *Olympia. Heiligtum und Wettkampfstätte* (München 1972) 111-112; A. Mallwitz and H.-V. Herrmann, *Die Funde aus Olympia* (Athens 1980) N^o 57; Neer, ‘The Athenian Treasury at Delphi’, 80-81.

⁷² See for more information: Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 32-34; Herrmann, *Olympia*, 111-112; Mallwitz and Herrmann, *Die Funde aus Olympia*, N^o 58.

⁷³ Number 18 on the Plan of Ancient Delphi (Image 2).



Image 3. Dedicatory inscription of the Athenian Stoa

Bernard Haussolier, 'Fouilles à Delphes: le portique des Athéniens et ses abords', *BCH* 5 (1881) 1-19, there 12.

Ἀθηναῖοι ἀνέθεσαν τὴν στοᾶν καὶ τὰ ἰοπλ[α κ]αὶ τὰ κρωτέρια ἡελόντες τῶν πο[λεμίο]ν⁷⁴

'The Athenians dedicated the stoa, the *hopla* and the *akroteria*, having seized [these spoils] from their enemies'⁷⁵

The stoa is known to us through archaeological, epigraphical and literary sources. This relative wealth of evidence, one might think, would make a determination of the date of construction a straightforward task.⁷⁶ This is, however, not the case. Several scholars have suggested different dates and there is still no agreement about the date of the construction of the stoa.

Pierre Amandry argues, in the most comprehensive study of the stoa, part of the *Fouilles de Delphes*, that the stoa was built in the 470s and this dating has won almost universal acceptance. He also argues that the *hopla* are cables from the Persian bridges over the Hellespont and that the *akroteria* are from the ships that formed these bridges.⁷⁷ However, there are serious problems with Amandry's dating of the stoa to the 470s according to John Walsh, to which I will return later.

Russell Meiggs and David Lewis write that until recently it was assumed that the *hopla* of the inscription were arms, and the Athenian victory commemorated was thought to be either over the Boeotians and Chalkidians (c. 506) or the Aeginetans (between 500 and 480), or over the Persians at

⁷⁴ Syll.³ 29.

⁷⁵ John Walsh, 'The Date of the Athenian Stoa at Delphi', *AJA* 90 (1986) 319-336, there 321.

⁷⁶ Walsh, 'The Date of the Athenian Stoa at Delphi', 320.

⁷⁷ Pierre Amandry, *FD II. La Colonne des Naxiens et le Portique des Athéniens* (Paris 1953) 104.

Salamis (480).⁷⁸ Amandry's hypothesis about the *hopla* and the *akroteria* is not compelling according to the two scholars.⁷⁹ In addition, Meiggs and Lewis pose convincing questions about Amandry's thesis: 'Would the Mede not be called a Mede? If cables had been dedicated at Delphi would they not have been a joint-dedication by the Greeks?'⁸⁰

John Walsh has a different opinion about the date of the Athenian stoa. He states that the stoa was not built to display spoils taken in a conflict with Persia, and that the time for construction most consonant with the literary, epigraphical and archaeological evidence is the aftermath of the First Peloponnesian War.⁸¹ I will return to his article later in this paragraph, since it is my opinion that his arguments are very convincing and therefore need more attention.

Ove Hansen suggests that this dedication refers to 'all the Athenian wars before the *ante quem* c. 468' rather than to any particular event. He interprets τῶν πολε[μίο]ν as 'their – i.e. the Athenians – enemies'. Hansen thinks that it is unlikely that a large monument like the Athenian stoa in Delphi could have been dedicated to the memories of one specific war and have such an imprecise mention of that war as "the enemies".⁸²

According to Marie-Christine Hellmann, this dedication is probably affiliated with the victory of the Athenians over the Persians at Mykale or at Sestos. Therefore, a date of 480-470 is suggested by her. The *akroteria* mentioned in the inscription are the spurs or the ornaments of the stern, referring to a sea battle. In addition, Hellmann mentions that although porticoes were built from the end of the seventh century onwards, this inscription has the oldest attestation of the word στοά.⁸³

Most scholars are feeling very confident when claiming that the inscription, and therefore also the stoa, dates back to before the middle of the fifth century. They base their dates primarily on the letter forms; however, their epigraphical dating criteria are not sufficient. Ever since Harold Mattingly convincingly argued for a later date for inscriptions with a so-called three-bar sigma, dating based

⁷⁸ ML 25. Valavanis, *Games and Sanctuaries in Ancient Greece*, 223-224 also thinks that the displayed spoils in the stoa were from the Battle of Salamis in 480.

⁷⁹ ML 25.

⁸⁰ ML 25.

⁸¹ Walsh, 'The Date of the Athenian Stoa at Delphi', 319.

⁸² Ove Hansen, 'Epigraphica bellica. On the dedication of the Athenian portico at Delphi', *C&M* 40 (1989) 133-134.

⁸³ M.-C. Hellmann, *Choix d'inscriptions architecturales grecques, traduites et commentées* (Lyon 1999) 89-90, n° 28.

solely on epigraphical grounds is not viewed as adequate anymore and one has to take other considerations into account as well, like historical circumstances but also more practical considerations.⁸⁴

I will start with the lexicographical evidence. Who are the *polemioi*, ‘the enemies’? After Amandry’s identification of the occasion for the construction – i.e. Athenian victory over the Persians – , some doubt has been expressed. Meiggs and Lewis suggest summarily a number of reasons why Amandry’s thesis about the identity of the enemies is unlikely. One objection that they raise stresses the unlikelihood that Persians could have been referred to as *polemioi* in a dedicatory inscription. It was usual to name Persians when they were the source of spoils taken by Greeks. According to Walsh, all the evidence suggests that the dedications were taken from Greeks.⁸⁵

Another, and very important, objection to a date in the 470s as given by Walsh are the historical circumstances of that time. Athens was in an extremely weak position in the years following the destruction of the city by Xerxes in 480. The Athenians were most likely using their complete energy to rebuild their city and its fortifications. It is hard to see how they could have been in a position to construct a building, in this case a stoa, at Delphi.⁸⁶

Next are the letter forms, which are used by every scholar as proof that dating the stoa to the end of the First Peloponnesian War was impossible.⁸⁷ In this case it is not only a three-bar sigma, but also a crossed theta that causes trouble.⁸⁸ It used to be argued that every inscription that contained this crossed theta could not be dated later than 450. However, like John Walsh shows in his article, it is possible to come up with very valid and convincing arguments why the stoa was built after the middle of the fifth century and why the dedicatory inscription can still bear a crossed theta, even at this late date. To start, consider the practical side. The dedicatory text was inscribed on the highest step of the stylobate of the stoa, in quite big letters. The visitors of the sanctuary were meant to be able to read the text from the Sacred Way, so there was a great distance between the inscription and its reader.

⁸⁴ Mattingly’s articles are gathered in Harold B. Mattingly (ed.), *The Athenian Empire Restored. Epigraphic and Historical Studies* (Ann Arbor 1996).

⁸⁵ ML 25; Walsh, ‘The Date of the Athenian Stoa at Delphi’, 319, 321-323.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, 323.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, 324.

⁸⁸ Image 3. For the crossed theta, see also the image on the front page where it is clearly visible in ΑΘΕΝΑΙΟΙ.

With these considerations in mind, it makes sense that a choice was made for a crossed theta instead of a dotted theta, because seeing the letters from a distance makes it even more difficult to see the difference between an omicron (or omega, for which the omicron was also used in this period) and a theta. The small dot in the middle of the circle which indicates that it was a theta and not a omicron (or omega) could have been difficult to see from a distance and using a dot could therefore have been very confusing. A cross, on the other hand, would make it perfectly clear that the letter was indeed a theta.⁸⁹

In addition to these considerations, there are also other practical reasons why these letter forms were chosen at a later date. Although the script is Attic, not only Athenians would read the inscription. And although the crossed theta and the three bar sigma were already being substituted by the dotted theta and the four bar sigma in Athens and Attica, in the rest of the Greek world the older forms were still being used. Next to that, it takes some time before older letter forms are replaced by the newer ones, therefore, the fact that there were newer letter forms does not mean that the old ones were not used anymore.⁹⁰

A date in the 450s cannot therefore be excluded on the basis of letter forms. However, the arguments mentioned above do not prove anything positive about the date of the stoa, since that would be impossible on the basis of letter forms alone.⁹¹ In the remainder of his article, Walsh shows that both the literary as well as the archaeological evidence points towards a date in the middle of the fifth century for the construction of the stoa.⁹²

Pausanias describes the stoa in his book on Phokis; there he states the following: ‘The Athenians also built a colonnade from the wealth they acquired in the war, from the Peloponnesians and their allies in Greece. There are bronze shields too, and the figure-heads of ships; the inscription on them numbers the cities from which Athens sent first-fruits, Elis and Sparta, Sikyon and Megara, Achaian Pellene, Ambrakia and Leukas, and Corinth itself. From these sea-fights there was also a

⁸⁹ Walsh, ‘The Date of the Athenian Stoa at Delphi’, 325.

⁹⁰ Ibidem, 325.

⁹¹ Ibidem, 325-326.

⁹² Ibidem, 326-331.

sacrifice to Theseus and Poseidon at Rion. It seems to me this inscription refers to Phormion and his achievements' (Paus. 10.11.5).⁹³

Several scholars have claimed that Pausanias' statement about the stoa was completely wrong, since the stoa could not have been built as late as Phormio's victories in 429.⁹⁴ However, these scholars misread these lines in Pausanias, hereby connecting his statement about 'the inscription' with the construction of the stoa. His statement about Phormio only concerns the inscription on the bronze shields and figure-heads, not about the stoa itself. Pausanias explicitly states that the stoa was built from booty taken from the Peloponnesians; no mention of Persians at all!⁹⁵

The arguments that Walsh gives in his article are in my opinion very convincing. Therefore, it should not be taken for granted that this inscription could not date later than 445. It remains, however, very difficult to give an exact date to the building of the Athenian stoa, moreover since several historical events could have been the reason for the display of the spoils. The most we can say about the date of the stoa is that it is possible that the construction dates to after 450, thereby including the aftermath of the First Peloponnesian War as a possible date.

The Serpent Column (Syll.³ 31)

The third inscription from the sixth or fifth century mentioning Athens or Athenians is the inscription on the so-called Serpent Column. The allies who fought the war against the Persian invaders in 480-479 were inscribed by name on two monuments, the bronze Zeus at Olympia, whose inscription Pausanias reports (5.23.1-2), and the Delphic Serpent Column, which has been described as the most impressive collective gift in Delphi.⁹⁶ The golden tripod in Delphi, which the column supported, was destroyed by the Phokians in the Third Sacred War (Paus. 10.13.5), but the bronze column remained in Delphi until it was removed in the fourth century AD by the Roman emperor Constantine to his new capital Constantinople, where it still remains in the hippodrome of modern-day Istanbul.⁹⁷

⁹³ Translation by Peter Levi: *Pausanias. Guide to Greece. Volume I: Central Greece. Translated with an introduction by Peter Levi. Illustrated with drawings from Greek coins by John Newberry. Maps and plans by Jeffery Lacey* (London 1979).

⁹⁴ Amandry, *FD II*, 119.

⁹⁵ Walsh, 'The Date of the Athenian Stoa at Delphi', 326-328.

⁹⁶ ATL III, 95; Jeffery, *LSAG*, 102; Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred*, 150. Inscription on Serpent Column: Syll.³ 31. See Number 22 on the Plan of Ancient Delphi (Image 2).

⁹⁷ Ernest Stewart Roberts, *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy* (Cambridge 1887-1905) 259-260.

Beginning on the thirteenth coil, reckoning from below, is a laconic heading, followed by the names of those who ‘warred the war’, arranged on the next ten coils in triads. On two of the coils a fourth name has been subsequently added and the last coil contains only two names. For practical reasons, I have decided to reckon the coils from above, starting with the one with the heading, although this is not the first coil of the column.⁹⁸

coil 1.1	το[ῖδε τὸν] πόλεμον[ἔ]- πολ[ἔ]μεον·
coil 2.1	Λακεδ[αιμόνιοι] Ἄθαναῖο[ι] Κορίνθιοι
coil 3.1	Τεγεᾶ[ται] Σικυόν[ιο]ι Αἰγινᾶται
coil 4.1	Μεγαρῆς Ἐπιδαύριοι Ἐρχομένιοι
coil 5.1	Φλειάσιοι Τροζᾶνιοι Ἐρμιονῆς
coil 6.1	Τιρύνθιοι Πλαταιῆς Θεσπιῆς
coil 7.1	Μυκανῆς

⁹⁸ For the addition of the Tenians (coil 7), see William Kendrick Pritchett, *The Liar School of Herodotus* (Amsterdam 1993) 147-148.

	Κεῖιοι
	Μάλιοι
	Τένιοι
coil 8.1	Νάξιοι
	Ἐρετριῆς
	Χαλκιδῆς
coil 9.1	Στυρῆς
	Φαλείοι
	Ποτειδαῖοι
coil 10.1	Λευκάδιοι
	Φανακτοριῆς
	Κύθιοι
	Σίφιοι
coil 11.1	Ἄμπρακιῶται
	Λεπρεῶται

‘By these [the] war was fought. Lakedaemonians, Athenians, Corinthians, Tegeans, Sikyonians, Aiginetans, Megarians, Epidaurians, Orchomenians, Phleiasians, Troizenians, Hermionians, Tirynthians, Plataians, Thespians, Mykanians, Ceians, Malians, Tenians, Naxians, Eretrians, Chalkidians, Styrians, Haleians, Potidaians, Leukadians, Anaktorians, Kythnians, Siphnians, Ambrakiots, Lepreans.’

Herodotus makes reference to this thank-offering: ‘Having brought all the loot together, they set apart a tithe for the god of Delphi. From this was made and dedicated that tripod which rests upon the bronze three-headed serpent, nearest to the altar; another they set apart for the god of Olympia, from which was made and dedicated a bronze figure of Zeus, ten cubits high; and another for the god

of the Isthmus, from which was fashioned a bronze Poseidon seven cubits high' (9.81.1).⁹⁹ He states that the monument was made from booty of the battle of Plataia (9.81.2), but that the names included all who had helped defeat the barbarian (8.82.1).¹⁰⁰ It seems likely that the list was drawn up in 479, and this is confirmed to some extent by Thucydides' narrative in 1.132.2-3.¹⁰¹

It has been suggested that the names on the list fall into three groups, headed respectively by Sparta and her two chief allies, Athens and Corinth. Roughly, the first group would consist of the Peloponnese, the second of the Aegean and the third of the Corinthian allies. This arrangement of names does not indicate the hegemony of particular cities within any region.¹⁰²

Matthias Steinhart argues that there is no sign of Spartan influence to be found in the inscription, since both the alphabet and the dialect are Phokian. He also suggests that the arrangement of the names of the allies on the column corresponds to the geographical principles that can be seen in the lists of the *theorodokoi*.¹⁰³

Marcus Tod, in his collection of Greek historical inscriptions, states that after the victories of Plataia and Mycale the Spartans dedicated, on behalf of themselves and their allies, thank-offerings to Apollo at Delphi, to Zeus at Olympia and to Poseidon at the Isthmus. Like others after him, Tod states that it is clear that the list does not refer exclusively to the engagement at Plataia, though the monument was dedicated from the booty there captured, for the six island states took no part in that battle. He follows Thucydides (1.132) in relating it to the whole of the Great Persian War. The order of the names appears to be determined partly by military and partly by geographical considerations. It is also noteworthy for Tod that the Spartans place the name of the Athenians next to their own; according to him a clear acknowledgment of the important part played by Athens in the recent struggle.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Translation by A.D. Godley (Loeb-edition).

¹⁰⁰ Hdt. 8.82.1 comments on the fact that the name of the Tenians was added later 'on the tripod at Delphi among those that had vanquished the foreigner': ἐν Δελφοῖσι ἐς τὸν τρίποδα ἐν τοῖσι τὸν βάρβαρον κατελοῦσι.

¹⁰¹ ATL III, 95.

¹⁰² ATL III, 96, 99; P.A. Brunt, 'The Hellenic League against Persia', *Historia* 2 (1953) 153-163, there 146-147.

¹⁰³ Matthias Steinhart, 'Bemerkungen zu Rekonstruktion, Ikonographie und Inschrift des platäischen Weihgeschenkes', *BCH* 121 (1997) 33-69, there 53-59. The *theorodokoi* were those people who received the *theoroi*, the sacred envoys of the panhellenic games and festivals.

¹⁰⁴ Marcus N. Tod, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford 1946) N° 19.

Ove Hansen also argues that this dedication was originally intended to commemorate the battle of Plataiai. However, later the names of the Tenians and the Siphnians who did not take part in that battle were added, presumably on their request. Hansen explains this as a result of an ambiguity in the heading, which, according to him, should be restored as Τό[νδε τὸν] πόλεμον [ἐ]πολ[έ]μεον rather than as Το[ίδε τὸν] πόλεμον [ἐ]πολ[έ]μεον: ‘the war/battle just past there fought ----’. This wording made the Tenians and the Siphnians think that the monument commemorated the Persian wars in general. The other states, acknowledging the ambiguity of the title, permitted the names of the island-states to be included.¹⁰⁵

Russell Meiggs and David Lewis also write that this thank-offering was made after the victory of the Greeks at Plataia. They also state that the total number of states commemorated is thirty-one. Pausanias (5.23) records twenty-seven names as engraved on the offering at Olympia, but the list was probably the same there as at Delphi. According to these two scholars, it is clear that the list does not refer exclusively to the battle at Plataia and that it is best to follow the title in referring it to the whole of the Great Persian War down to Plataia but not including the campaign at Mykale, which brought in new allies.¹⁰⁶ They thus have a different opinion than Tod, who includes the campaign at Mykale.

This thankoffering can be seen as part of large commemoration of the battles of Salamis and Plataia. The Delphic celebration of these battles was the most insistent and developed than at other sanctuaries. This focus on Delphi has been associated with the possible medising of the Delphic sanctuary. The decision to commemorate insistently at Delphi the defeat of the Persians may then have been prompted by the need to reiterate the power of central Greece both within and over its sanctuaries.¹⁰⁷ However, not only is the evidence for the sanctuary itself very slim and only based on some unencouraging oracular responses given to the Athenians (Hdt. 7.140), the use of this evidence is also not without problems.¹⁰⁸ To state that a neutral and independent sanctuary like Delphi is biased only because it has given some unfavourable oracles to one *polis* seems to me far-fetched. It seems to

¹⁰⁵ Ove Hansen, ‘On the inscription on the Serpent Column in the Hippodrome of Istanbul’, *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 16.6 (1991) 84-85.

¹⁰⁶ ML 27.

¹⁰⁷ Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 81-82.

¹⁰⁸ See Price, ‘Delphi and divination’, 152-153.

me, therefore, that this thank-offering cannot be seen as a response to the medising of the Delphic sanctuary during the Persian Wars.

One could argue that this inscription has less value for the present paper than the ones discussed previously, namely the inscription found next to the Treasury and the dedicatory inscription of the Athenian Stoa, because this is not a solely Athenian dedication. However, although this inscription is indeed of *different* – not less – value for this paper, this list of the allies who fought in the Persian Wars is still important, because this inscription is certainly also evidence of the Athenian presence in Delphi. In addition, because this is not a dedication from Athenians alone, but a joint dedication from the Greek allies who fought against the common Persian enemy, it shows the panhellenic character of the Delphic sanctuary and the possibilities that character brings along for making dedications.

Athenian Inquiries of the Delphic Oracle

A different category of the Athenian presence in Delphi is the inquiries of the oracle made by Athenians in the sixth and fifth centuries. These inquiries are collected and published by Herbert Parke and Donald Wormell in 1956 and by Joseph Fontenrose in 1978. According to the catalogue in Parke and Wormell (PW), there are 25 Athenian inquiries known from the sixth and fifth centuries.¹⁰⁹ Fontenrose lists 20 Athenian inquiries in the same period.¹¹⁰ Three of these inquiries will be discussed more elaborately in the next chapter about Delphic presence in Athens, since there is epigraphical evidence for them.¹¹¹ Of the rest of the inquiries by Athenians in the sixth and fifth century, only literary evidence survives.

Fontenrose classifies the oracular responses in Historical (H), Quasi-Historical (Q) and Legendary (L) responses. I only take the first two categories into account, although it can also be interesting to study the legendary responses. Of the 20 Athenian inquiries Fontenrose lists, 5 are considered to be historical. The earliest one is dated to *c.* 440-430 and is recorded in the Prytaneion

¹⁰⁹ PW N^{os} 13, 62, 82, 89, 90, 94, 95, 102, 113, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 133, 135, 155, 162, 164, 165, 166, 559, 560, 572, 578.

¹¹⁰ Fontenrose N^{os} H1, H2, H8, H9, H10, Q65, Q111, Q125, Q131, Q133, Q142, Q146, Q147, Q154, Q164, Q180, Q181, Q189, Q193, Q194.

¹¹¹ PW 124 = Fontenrose H2; PW 164 = Fontenrose H9; PW 165 = Fontenrose H10.

Decree (IG I³ 131). There is no specific mention of an oracle, but according to Fontenrose there can be little doubt that the inscription means the Delphic Apollo.¹¹²

The next inquiry is also known through indirect testimony, again it is recorded in an inscription (IG I³ 7). The question asked was probably whether it is better to perform the sacred acts, which are indicated in the response ‘it is better to put on the goddess’ *peplos* and to sacrifice and make first offerings to the Moirai, Zeus Moiragetes and Ge ...¹¹³

A different inquiry concerns the restoration of the Delians to Delos by the Athenians in 421. According to Thucydides this was done because of a Delphic oracle (Thuc. 5.32.1). It is probable that Athenian misfortunes in battles suggested restoration of the Delians, whom the Athenians removed from Delos a few years earlier, and that the Athenians asked the Delphic oracle whether it was better to do so.¹¹⁴

Somewhere between mid-fifth century and 400, Athens issued a decree concerning the offering of first-fruits to the Eleusinian goddesses Demeter and Kore (IG I³ 78). It is mentioned several times in this decree that the Athenians and their allies have to offer their first-fruits according to ancestral custom and to an oracle from Delphi. There is also indirect evidence for this inquiry; Isokrates mentions this inquiry (Isokrates 4.31)¹¹⁵

Around 420 the Athenians inscribed a decree about instructions concerning the cult of Apollo in Athens (IG I³ 137). These instructions may be part of an oracle given to the Athenians, but – as is unfortunately often the case – the inscription is fragmentary and what remains of the text does not make it clear.¹¹⁶

So far the historical responses, according to Fontenrose. There remain 16 quasi-historical responses to Athenian inquiries, 10 of which are ‘not genuine’ or ‘doubtful’ in Fontenrose’s opinion. Six are probably genuine and these I will discuss here. The earliest response dates to 596, when the Athenians were ordered by the oracle to cleanse the city because of the plague. There are two sources for this inquiry, Diogenes Laertes (1.10.110) and Plato (*Laws* 642d). The outcome was that the

¹¹² Fontenrose H1 = PW 123.

¹¹³ Fontenrose H2 = PW 124. For the inscription, see next chapter.

¹¹⁴ Fontenrose H8 = PW 162.

¹¹⁵ Fontenrose H9 = PW 164. For the inscription, see next chapter.

¹¹⁶ Fontenrose H10 = PW 165. For the inscription, see next chapter.

Athenians summoned Epimenides from Crete to perform the purifactory rites. According to Plato Epimenides went to Athens ten years before the Persian Wars (i.e. 500), Diogenes on the other hand dates the cleansing of Athens in the forty-sixth Olympiad, in 596; Fontenrose states that the latter date is more probable for Epimenides' lifetime.¹¹⁷

The next inquiry dates to the middle of the sixth century, around 560. The occasion was the plan to colonize Thracian Chersonese, which is the ancient name for the Gallipoli peninsula in modern Turkey. The oracle responded to the question 'who is the best man to make leader?' with the response that they (i.e. the Athenians) should appoint Miltiades commander; if they do so their enterprise would succeed. There is only indirect evidence for this inquiry (Nepos, *Mil.* 1.2-3).¹¹⁸

In 510/9 the Athenians under Kleisthenes asked the Delphic oracle to choose ten names out of a hundred in order to have eponyms for the ten tribes of the new constitution. The names chosen were Erechtheis, Kekropis, Aigeis, Pandionis, Athamantis, Antiochis, Leontis, Oineis, Hippothontis and Aiantis. Several ancient authors mention this event: [Aristotle], *Ath. Pol.* 21.6; Aristeides 13.192, 46.215; Pausanias 10.10.1; and Pollux, *Onomasticon* 8.110.¹¹⁹

During the battle of Marathon in 490, a warrior appeared wearing rural dress and whielding a plowshare. After seeing the warrior, the Athenians decided to consult the oracle and it responded with the advice that they should honor the hero Echetlaos (Paus. 1.32.4). The fact that Herodotus does not mention this phantom warrior or the oracle in his account of Marathon is remarkable, however, Fontenrose still considers it as unimpeachable.¹²⁰

The last quasi-historical response considered genuine by Fontenrose is dated to around 430, when Athens suffered from the plague following the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. The question is not stated, but the response was that the Athenians should set up an image of Apollo. For this response the only testimony comes from Pausanias (1.3.4).¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Fontenrose Q65 = PW 13.

¹¹⁸ Fontenrose Q111 = PW 62.

¹¹⁹ Fontenrose Q125 = PW 80.

¹²⁰ Fontenrose Q142 = PW 90.

¹²¹ Fontenrose Q189 = PW 125.

Conclusion

The Athenians consulted the oracle in Delphi on various occasions in the period between 700 and 500 and there is Athenian building activity in the sanctuary in the same period. First of all, the temple of Apollo was rebuilt in the second half of the sixth century by the Athenian family of the Alkmaeonids, the enemies of the Peisistratids and during that time exiled from Athens. This increased their fame, but probably later – when Kleisthenes (member of the family) came to power in Athens – also that of Athens itself.

Athens also dedicated spoils from the battle of Marathon on a pedestal along the Sacred Way next to their treasury and they built a stoa from the booty taken from their enemies, probably not the Persians, somewhere in the first half of the fifth century. After the Persian Wars the Greek allies erected two monuments, one in Olympia and one in Delphi. They inscribed the names of the allies on the so-called Serpent Column, thereby commemorating their role in the conflict against the Persians. Athens is the second ally mentioned, after Sparta.

It is noteworthy that the Athenians did not build any monumental buildings or dedications after some years before the Peloponnesian War, which broke out in 431. On the other hand, this can be explained. First of all, it makes sense to make dedications in a panhellenic sanctuary after waging war against a non-Greek enemy. However, matters are more complicated when a war between Greeks is involved, as we have seen above probably was the case with the Athenian stoa. Moreover, we should not expect any major war dedication after the middle of the fifth century, since the major war Athens fought in the last half of the fifth century was the Peloponnesian War, whereby Athens was defeated by Sparta. Therefore, Athenians had no large victory to commemorate and/or spoils to dedicate.

3. Delphic Presence in Athens

Introduction

In this chapter, I will look at the evidence of Delphic presence in Athens. This will be either the mentioning of Delphic Apollo or the Delphic oracle in Athenian inscriptions or the presence of Delphic persons in Athenian inscriptions. Although this thesis is about the Athenian presence in Delphi, the mentioning of Delphi or of Delphic Apollo in inscriptions found in Athens should not be forgotten, since the Athenian presence in Delphi is also reflected by epigraphical evidence found in Athens. This is the case with inscriptions that mention (an Athenian inquiry of) the Delphic oracle.

One inscription found in Athens and one found in Eleusis (with an Athenian copy) mention the Delphic oracle. These inscriptions, therefore, can be used as evidence for the Athenian presence in Delphi. However, one needs to bear in mind that an unknown period of time has elapsed between the actual consultation of the oracle and inscribing the text of the inscription. These inscriptions are therefore not direct evidence of the Athenian presence in Delphi, but indirect evidence. For this reason, it is difficult to make absolute statements about the presence of Athens in Delphi, but these inscriptions can be used as indicators of the Athenian presence, but also of the value Delphi and its oracle had for Athens in the time the texts were inscribed on stone.

Besides the inscriptions that mention the Delphic Oracle, two other inscriptions found in Athens will also be discussed in this chapter. These inscriptions deal with an alliance with the Delphic Amphiktyony and with regulations concerning the cult of Apollo. The last inscription may refer to an oracle issued by Delphi; however, this is not certain.

The Praxierydai Decree (IG I³ 7)

The first inscription from Athens that deals with Delphi in some way is the so-called Praxierydai Decree, which is usually dated to 460-450. This decree outlines the duties of a *genos* known as the Praxierydai, whose members were entrusted with the task of attending to the statue of Athena Polias.

They were instructed to dress the statue with the *peplos*. The stele with the inscription was set up on the Akropolis “[behind] or [south of] the Old Temple”. After the preamble there is an oracle from Delphi which adds a cautionary sacrifice and then, in larger letters, a series of ritual prescriptions expressed by infinitives that add a purification rite.¹²²

The text of the decree is as follows:

Fragment a

[ἔδοχσεν τῆ]ι βο[λ]ῆ[ι καὶ τοῖ δέμοι ..6... ἐπρυτάνε]-
 [υε, ..6...]ς ἐγραμμ[άτευε, ...7... ἐπεστάτε, ..5..]
 [. εἶπε πε]ρὶ ὄν δέο[νται Πραχσιεργίδαι, τὲν μαντεῖ]-
 αν τῷ θεῷ καὶ τὰ πρό[τερον αὐτοῖς ἐφρεφισμένα ἀνα]-
 5 [γράφσ]αντας ἐν στέ[λει λιθίνει καταθῆναι ἐμ πόλει]
 [ὄπισ]θεν τῷ νεῷ τῷ ἀρχ[αί]ο· ἦοι δὲ πολεταὶ ἀπομισθο]-
 [σάν]τον· ν τὸ δὲ ἀργύριον[ν ἐς τὲν ἀναγραφὴν ἔναι ἀπὸ]
 [τὸν] τῆς θεῷ κατὰ τὰ πάτρι[α· ἦοι δὲ ταμίαι τῆς θεῷ καὶ]
 [ἦοι] κολακρέται διδόντον [αὐτοῖς τὸ ἀργύριον vacat]
 10 [τά]δε ἡ Ἀπόλλων ἔχρεσεν ν[όμιμα Πραχσιεργίδαις]
 [ἀμ]φιεννύσιν τὸν πέπλον τ[ῆν θεὸν καὶ προθύοσιν]
 [Μοί]ραις, Διὶ Μοιρ<α>γέτει, Γ[εῖ - - - - -]
 [τά]δε πάτρια Πραχσιεργίδαις· 9]
 [.. 8-9 ...]ιτο[.....21.....]

lacuna

Fragment bc

¹²² Henry R. Immerwahr, *Attic Script. A Survey* (Oxford 1990) 108; Robert Garland, *Introducing New Gods. The Politics of Athenian Religion* (Ithaca 1992) 100; Michael H. Jameson, ‘Religion in the Athenian Democracy’, in: Ian Morris and Kurt A. Raaflaub (eds.), *Democracy 2500? Questions and Challenges* (Dubuque 1998) 171-195, there 181; Noel Robertson, ‘The Praxiergidai Decree (IG I³ 7) and the Dressing of Athena’s Statue with the *Peplos*’, *GRBS* 44 (2004) 111-161, there 111, 127.

- 15 [.....28-29..... π]αρέ-
 [χεν ... 11-12 Πραχσιεργί]δαις νννν
 [.....21-22..... τὸ] δὲ κóιδιον
 [.....18-19..... διδό]ναι κατὰ τὰ ν
 [πάτρια 15-16 π]αρέχεν νννν
- 20 [. 5-6 ..]ε[.....14....]ι· [ν]εὼ δὲ Θαργελι-
 [ὄν]α σεμε[νάμενον ἄχρι τῆς τ]ρίτες διδόναι
 [ν] κατὰ τὰ πάτρ[ια κλειῖδας τὸ]ν ἄρχοντα ννν
 [ν] Π[ρ]αχσιεργί[δαις· ? vacat] vacat
 [ν τὸς] Πραχσιερ[γίδας τὸ] ἥδος] ἀμφιεννύ[ν]-
- 25 [αι] δίμνον χι[τῶνα ἔ] μνᾶν ἀπο]τίενεν vacat
 vacat vacat

Translation by Robert Garland¹²³:

The Council and the Demos [resolved]. In the [...] prytany, [...] was
 Secretary, [on the motion of ...]. In the matter of the requ[est of the
 Praxiergidai] that they inscribe [the oracle of the g]od and the for[mer
 5 decree] on a [stone] *stèle* and [erect it on the Acropolis] || [be]hind the
 ancient temple. [Let the *poletai* author]ise payment. The money
 [for the inscription] is to come from the goddess in
 accordance with ancestral practice. [The *tamiai*
 of the goddess and] the *kolakretai* are to give [them
 10 the money] ... || Apollo sanctioned [the following] *n[omima*
 for the Praxiergidai:] when they put the *peplos* [on the goddess
 and perform the preliminary sacrifice to the Moir]ai, Zeus
 Moiragetes and Ge ... [The following] are

¹²³ Garland, *Introducing New Gods*, 101.

the *patria* of the Prax[iergidai] ... [six lines missing] ...

20 For the month of Thargelion the temple is to be sea[led off until the *tjrite*
to the Praxiergi[dai] ... so that they can dress the statue in ... A
fine of [... is to be imposed on those who fail to comply with these
regulations].

The date of this decree depends on the lettering, which is unorthodox according to Henry Immerwahr. It is of a kind to be expected in the second quarter of the fifth century, therefore an early dating of 460-450 – or even just 460 – is preferred by most scholars. According to Henry Immerwahr, the alphabet is irregular Attic and therefore a date of circa 460-450 has to be preferred over a later date.¹²⁴ Martin Ostwald states that it is unfortunate that the only criterion for dating the decree is the lettering, and that we can say no more on its basis than that it was enacted shortly before the middle of the fifth century, probably about 460-450.¹²⁵ In addition to the early dating in the period 470-450, Harold Mattingly has suggested a later date in the 420s. Russell Meiggs, in turn, rejected this late date.¹²⁶

François Sokolowski divides this inscription in three so-called ‘documents’. The first is the decree concerning the publication of the text on a stele. The second part deals with the oracle of Apollo on the subject of the role of the Praxiergidai during the ceremony of the dressing of the statue of Athena Polias. The third and final part concerns the rights of the Praxiergidai. With regards to the date of the inscription, Sokolowski states that it is difficult to specify; he places this decree in the second half of the fifth century.¹²⁷

Although this inscription is quite fragmentary and we therefore cannot know the exact content of the decree, one duty stands out. The Delphic oracle has directed the *genos* of the Praxiergidai to

¹²⁴ Antony Erich Raubitschek, *Dedications from the Athenian Akropolis. A Catalogue of the Inscriptions of the Sixth and Fifth Centuries BC* (Cambridge, MA 1949) 323; Immerwahr, *Attic Script*, 108; Noel Robertson, ‘Pandora and the Panathenaic Peplos’, in: Michael B. Cosmopoulos (ed.), *The Parthenon and its Sculptures* (Cambridge 2004) 87-113, there 106 n. 44.

¹²⁵ Martin Ostwald, *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of Law. Law, Society, and Politics in Fifth-Century Athens* (Berkeley 1986) 145-6.

¹²⁶ H.B. Mattingly, ‘The Financial Decrees of Kallias’, *Proceedings of the African Classical Associations 7* (1964) 35-55, there 37; R. Meiggs, ‘The Dating of Fifth-Century Attic Inscriptions’, *JHS 86* (1966) 86-98, there 98 n. 44.

¹²⁷ LSCG N° 15.

‘dress with the peplos’ and to sacrifice to the Moirai, Zeus and Ge (lines 11 and 12).¹²⁸ Robert Garland states that the primary purpose of this decree would seem to have been to promulgate important modifications in the robing ceremony of the statue of Athena Polias which are here being introduced in accordance with a recent oracular pronouncement from Apollo. A secondary purpose was to record in writing responsibilities and practices of the Praxiergidae, connected with the Plynteria, among other things.¹²⁹

The oracle, which is mentioned in the inscription, has presumably been neither published nor formulated before its inclusion in the present decree. According to Ostwald, it is likely that this oracle was a recent oracle and that it may have been what prompted the Praxiergidai to request the *boule* and *demos* to publish a comprehensive document ratifying all the religious functions of the *genos* for the cult of Athena.¹³⁰ According to Noel Robertson, the oracle is ‘obviously recent’ and the sanction by Delphi concerns something new, unless we suppose that the traditional duties of the Praxiergidae had suddenly become an issue. Delphi was commonly asked to sanction new departures in public worship, at Athens as elsewhere; therefore, this decree fits into the general picture.¹³¹ Robertson therefore agrees with Garland that it concerns a modification of the current practice of dressing the statue of Athena Polias.

A Treaty between Athens and the Amphiktyony (?) (IG I³ 9)

To the middle of the fifth century – about 458/457 – belongs a fragment of an Attic decree that has been interpreted by previous scholars as either a treaty between Athens and Phokis or between Athens and the Delpic Amphiktyony. In any case, it is a quite controversial document.¹³²

The first editors of this text saw in this decree an alliance between Athens and Phokis after the Second Sacred War of 448/447.¹³³ Benjamin Meritt then made changes in the text and interpreted it as

¹²⁸ Robertson, ‘Pandora and the Panathenaic Peplos’, 106.

¹²⁹ Garland, *Introducing New Gods*, 100-102.

¹³⁰ Ostwald, *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of Law*, 147; Robertson, ‘The Praxiergidai Decree (IG I³ 7)’, 118.

¹³¹ *Ibidem* 118, 127.

¹³² Lefèvre, *L’amphictionie pyléo-delphique*, 66 n. 203.

¹³³ Amongst others: Herbert Nesselhauf, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Delisch-Attischen Symmachie. Klio Beiheft xxx.17* (1933) 6-8; Tod, *A Selection of Greek Historical*, N^o 39; Georges Daux, ‘Athènes et Delphes’, *Athenian Studies presented to William Scott Ferguson. Harvard Studies in Classical Philology Supplementary Volume I* (1940) 37-69, there 45. Charles Fornara is more careful, he gave this text the title ‘Athenian Compact

an alliance between Athens and the members of the Amphiktyonic League that was made before the middle of the fifth century. Meritt thought that the alliance reflected Athenian policy when, after the Battle at Tanagra (457), the Spartans had withdrawn into the Peloponnese and the victory over the Boeotians at the Battle at Oenophyta (457) had given Athens control of Central Greece. Athens' main concern would then be to gain the support of Apollo at Delphi and become the acknowledged leader of Greece.¹³⁴

The text of the decree according to Meritt is as follows:

[ἔδοχσεν τει βο]λει καὶ τῶ[ι δέμ]
 [οι, ...ντις ἐπρ]υτάνευε, Αἰ[...]
 [... ἐγραμμάτ]ευε, Μένυλλ[ος ἐ]
 [πεστάτε,]ιες εἶπε· χσ[υνθ]
 5 [έκας ἔναι καὶ χ]συνμαχίαν [τῶι]
 [ς μετέχοσι τῆς] Πυλαίας ἄπα[σι·]
 [hόρκος δὲ δὸνα]ι τοῖς Ἄμφι[κτί]
 [οσι hoῖσπερ μέ]τεσστιν τῶ h[ιε]
 [ρῶ, ἐμμενῆν τε ὀ]μόσαντας ἐν [τῆ]
 10 [ι χσυνμαχίαι νὲ τ]ὸν Ἄπόλλο [κα]
 [ἰ τὲν Λετὸ καὶ τὲν] Ἄρτεμιν ἐ[χσ]
 [όλειάν τε ἐμῖν α]ὐτοῖς ἐπαρ[ομ]
 [ένος ἐὰν παραβαί]νομεν· φσε[φί]
 [σματος δὲ γενομένο] τριῶν ἐ[με]
 15 [ρῶν πρέσβες πέμφσαι] ἐς Πύλ[ας]
 [hoὶ ἀπαγγελοῖσι τὰ ἐφσε]φισ[μέ]

Involving the Delphic Amphictyony or Phocis': Charles William Fornara, *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War* (Baltimore 1977) N^o 82.

¹³⁴ Benjamin D. Meritt, 'Athens and the Amphiktyonic League', *The American Journal of Philology* 69 (1948) 312-314; Benjamin D. Meritt, 'Athens and the Amphiktyonic League' *The American Journal of Philology* 75 (1954) 369-374, there 372-3; Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*, 418.

[να - - - - -]

Translation by Meritt:¹³⁵

‘Resolved by the Council and Demos; Aiantis (or Leontis) was the phyle in prytany, Ai[---] was secretary, Menyllos was presiding officer, [----]ies made the motion: (1) that there be a covenant and alliance with the members of the Pylaia; (2) To pledge oaths to the Amphiktyons who share in the control of the sanctuary, having sworn by Apollo, Leto, and Artemis, that we will remain firm in the alliance, and calling down the curse of utter destruction upon ourselves if we transgress; (3) To send envoys to Pylai within three days after this vote is taken who shall report the decision ---.’

Adolf Wilhelm also made changes to the text at the same time as Meritt, without the two scholars having information about each other’s work. He agrees with Meritt that the document gives the terms of a treaty which Athens proposed to ratify with the members of the Delphic Amphiktyony, that there is no mention of Phokis, that there is no reference to the archonship of Ariston and they also agree about the preserved letters of the text. Wilhelm does differ from Meritt in his restoration of the opening clause and of the oath in lines 13ff.¹³⁶ He reads the text as follows:

[ἔδοχσεν τεῖ βο]λεῖ καὶ τῶ[ι δέμ]
[οι, ...ντὶς ἐπρ]υτάνευε, Αἰ[σιμ-]
[ίδες ἐγραμμάτ]ευε, Μένυλλ[ος ἐ]
[πεστάτε, Διδυμ?]ίεσ εἶπε· χσ[υνθ]
5 [έσθαι μὲν τὲγ χ]συνμαχίαν [κατ-]
[ἀ ἡὰ ἡοι ἀπὸ τῆς] Πυλαίας ἄπα[γγ-]
[έλλοσιν ἡάπασ]ι τοῖς Ἄμφι[κτί]
[οσι ἡοῖσπερ μέ]τεσστιν τῶ ἡ[ιε]

¹³⁵ Meritt, ‘Athens and the Amphiktyonic League’, 313-314.

¹³⁶ Adolf Wilhelm, ‘IG I2 26’, *Mnemosyne* 2 (1949) 286-293; Meritt, ‘Athens and the Amphiktyonic League’, 369.

[ρὸ καθ' ἱερῶν ὀ]μόσαντας ἐν[με-]
 10 [νὲν τῷ ὄρκοι νὲ] τὸν Ἀπόλλο [κα]
 [ἰ τὲν Λετὸ καὶ τὲ]ν ἼΑρτεμιν εἰ[δ-]
 [ἔ μέ, ἐχσὸλειαν ἑαυ]τοῖς ἐπαρ[ομ]
 [ένος· Ἄρκος· ἐνμε]νόμεν φσε[φί]
 [σμάσι τοῖσι περὶ πα]τριῶν [ἡ ἔ-]
 15 [πὶ τὲς νῦν γεγενημέν]ἑς Πύλ[αί-]
 [ας οἱ Ἀμφικτίονες ἐφσε]φίσ[αν-]
 [το τοῖς μέτεσσιν τῷ ἱερῷ ?]

After Meritt and Wilhelm, several other scholars have commented on this text. Martha Sordi also thinks that this text commemorates an alliance between Athens and the Amphiktyonic League. She places this alliance before the Battle of Tanagra (457), because, according to her (although she gives no reasons why), the Amphiktyonic League ceased to exist after 458/57. Sordi does acknowledge that it is strange that this alliance seems to be formed between the Amphiktyony and one of its members; however, she does not further explain this. She further states that this alliance of 457 with the Amphiktyony gave Athens permission to intervene in Delphic affairs and to entrust the sanctuary to the Phokians.¹³⁷

Simon Hornblower also interprets this text as an alliance between Athens and the Amphiktyony and dates it to the 450s. He further states that this was a continuation of Themistokles' policy of trying to win influence at Delphi. Delphi by land was to be what Delos already was by sea, a religious force for Athenian imperialism.¹³⁸ Russell Meiggs suggests that the alliance with the Amphiktyonic League could only have been made after the Battle at Oenophyta in 457. Only after this battle was Athens strong enough to secure the alliance, according to Meiggs.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Martha Sordi, 'La foundation du collège des naopes et le renouveau politique de l'Amphictionie au IVe siècle', *BCH 81* (1957) 38-75, there 62-63.

¹³⁸ Hornblower, *The Greek World*, 34-35.

¹³⁹ Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*, 175 and n.3.

The newest *Inscriptiones Graecae* edition of the text has given this text the title ‘Foedus Atheniensium cum Amphictionia’ (Athenian treaty with the Amphiktyony) and has published the following text:

[ἔδοχσεν τεῖ βο]λεῖ καὶ τῶ[ι δέμ]
 [οι, ...ντῖς ἐπρ]υτάνευε, Αἰ[....]
 [... ἐγραμμάτ]ευε, Μένυλλ[ος ἐ]
 [πεστάτε,]ίεσ εἶπε· χσ[υνθ]
 5 [έσθαι μὲν τὲγ χ]συνμαχίαν [καθ-]
 [άπερ hoi ἐκ τῆς] Πυλαίας ἀπ[αγγ-]
 [έλλοσιν háπασ]ι τοῖς Ἄμφι[κτι-]
 [οσι hoiσπερ μέ]τεσστιν τῶ h[ιε-]
 [ρῶ, ἐμμενῆν τε ὀ]μόσαντας ἐν [τῆ-]
 10 [ι χσυνμαχίαι νὲ τ]ὸν Ἄπόλλο [κα-]
 [ῖ τὲν Λετὸ καὶ τὲν] Ἄρτεμιν ἐ[χσ-]
 [όλειαν τε καὶ hα]υτοῖς ἐπαρ[ομ-]
 [ένος ἐὰν παραβαί]νομεν· φσε[φί-]
 [ζεσθαι δὲ κατὰ τὸ πα]τριῶν π[ερ-]
 15 [ῖ hαπάντον hα hoi ἐκ τ]ῆς Πυλ[αί-]
 [ας ἀπαγγέλλοσιν hεφσε]φισ[μέ-]
 [να - - - - -]

Georges Roux thinks that it is unlikely that this decree concerns an alliance between Athens and the Amphiktyony. What would be the significance of a military alliance between Athens and an ‘international’ organization whereof she herself is a member? Roux, therefore, proposes a different and quite convincing hypothesis about this decree. The decree is contemporary to the Second Sacred War. The Amphiktyony was no *symmachia*, a military league. In order to protect the peace between

the members of the league and to guarantee the rights of the Delphians in their sanctuary a *symmachia* could have been formed of the members of the league. An amphiktyonic decree organizing the alliance needs to be ratified by the participating cities and IG I³ 9 could be part of the Athenian ratification decree.¹⁴⁰

In addition to his new hypothesis, Roux is more careful than Meritt, Wilhelm and the newest IG-edition with his text edition. He only reconstructs those parts of the text that are formulaic and/or certain, which seems to be the best one can do, since other reconstructions would simply be guesses. Roux's text is as follows:

- [Ἔδοχσεν τῆι βο]λῆι καὶ τῶ[ι δέμ-]
 2 [οι ... ντις ἐπρ]υτάνευε, Αἰ[...]
 [... ἐγραμμιάτ]ευε, Μένυλλ[ος ἐ-]
 4 [πεστάτε]ίεσ εἶπε· χσ[υνθ-]
 [.....χ]συνμαχίαν [.....]
 6 [.....] Πυλαίας ΑΠΑ[...]
 [.....]ι τοῖς ΑΜΦΙ[.....]
 8 [.....μέ]τεσστιν τῶ η[ιε-]
 [ρῶ καθ' ἱερῶν ὀ]μόσαντας ΕΝ[...]
 10 [.....νὲ τ]ὸν Ἄπόλλο [κα-]
 [ἰ τὲν Λετὸ καὶ τὲν] Ἄρτεμιν Ε[...]
 12 [.....α]ὐτοῖς ἐπαρ[.....]
 [.....] ΝΟΜΕΝ φσέ[φι-]
 14 [σμα] ΤΡΙΩΝΙ [.....]
 [.....] ἐς Πυλ[αί-]
 16 [αν (?)] φισ[.....]

¹⁴⁰ Roux, *L'Amphictionie, Delphes et le temple d'Apollon*, 45-46.

Antony Raubitschek agrees with Roux about his interpretation of the nature of this decree; he states that there is no mention of Athens at all, instead there is only mention of members of the Amphiktyony. Therefore, this means that a treaty was to be concluded between the members of the Delphic Amphiktyony, of which Athens was one, and that the inscription records the acceptance on the part of Athens of this treaty that had presumably been suggested to the Amphiktyonic Council by an Athenian delegate.¹⁴¹ So far this interpretation of the treaty is quite similar to Roux's interpretation; Roux only adds the *symmachia* to his hypothesis. Raubitschek furthermore sees in the alliance part of a grand Athenian design, initiated by Perikles, to convert the Delian League from an instrument of war to an instrument of peace, carrying out the principles of the Amphiktyonic League.¹⁴²

Hermann Wankel thinks all the above-mentioned interpretations are uncertain and too dangerous to make. He uses the interpretation of Roux as an example when he states that 'diese fragmentarische Inschrift entzieht sich jedoch einer einigermaßen sicheren Ergänzung und historischen Auswertung'.¹⁴³

The most recent discussion of this text is by Pierre Sánchez in his book about the Amphiktyony of Pyles and of Delphi. Sánchez thinks that Roux is right with his reservations about the text. He adds to this that no hypothesis can be made certain and that we do not have the right to rely on such a problematic text as IG I³ 9 to interpret the role of the Amphiktyonic League at the age of the Second Sacred War. He even prefers to put aside this discussion completely.¹⁴⁴

Both Hermann Wankel as well as Pierre Sánchez are right in their reservations about the use of this inscription. It is a problematic text – why would Athens make an alliance with the Amphiktyonic League? – and its value for the interpretation of fifth-century Greek history is probably very little. As can be seen in the multiple editions of this text discussed above, the reconstructed parts cannot be taken for granted and this makes this decree even more problematic.

¹⁴¹ Antony Erich Raubitschek, 'The Peace Policy of Pericles', *AJA* 70 (1966) 37-41, there 40.

¹⁴² Raubitschek, 'The Peace Policy of Pericles', 40-41; Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*, 419.

¹⁴³ Hermann Wankel, 'Bemerkungen zur delphischen Amphiktyonie im 4. Jh. und zum 4. Heiligen Krieg', *ZPE* 42 (1981) 153-166, there 158 n. 23.

¹⁴⁴ Sánchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 111.

The Eleusinian First-fruits Decree (IG I³ 78)

The next inscription is the famous first-fruits decree found in Eleusis (with fragments of a copy found in Athens). This inscription commemorates the decree passed by the Athenian *boule* and *ekklesia* to give first-fruits to the goddesses Demeter and Persephone in their sanctuary in Eleusis. All the Athenian allies are ordered to do this and the other Greeks are asked to offer their first-fruits to the two goddesses. This offering of the first-fruits is done in accordance with ancestral custom and according to an oracle issued in Delphi:

ll. 4-5: ἀπάρχεσθαι τοῖν θεοῖν τῷ καρπο κατὰ τὰ πάτρια καὶ τὲν μαντεῖαν τὲν ἐγ Δελφῶν
Ἰθηνάϊος¹⁴⁵

‘The Athenians shall offer first fruits of their harvests to the two goddesses [i.e. Demeter and Persephone], in accordance with ancestral custom and the oracle from Delphi’¹⁴⁶

The sentence ‘in accordance with ancestral custom and the oracle from Delphi’ is repeated twice later on in the decree, in lines 25-26 and in line 34. This recurrent formula means that the tribute to the goddesses of Eleusis is an old custom in regard to which the sanction of Delphi was asked for – perhaps this was done at that very time in order to find a reason for the request to ‘the other cities’ (lines 30/31) which were not pledged by the Athenian πάτρια.¹⁴⁷

Unfortunately, even though the inscribed text is complete – which is very rare –, it is not possible in any way to date this inscription with certainty. Numerous scholars have tried in the past; various dates in the fifth century are suggested. Maureen Cavanaugh has composed a useful list of publications in which attempts have been made to date the Eleusinian First-fruits decree. There are

¹⁴⁵ Since this decree is quite long, the full text of this decree is shown in the Appendix; here only the relevant lines are given. An English translation of this decree can be found in Naphtali Lewis, *Greek Historical Documents. The Fifth Century BC* (Toronto 1971) 21-23.

¹⁴⁶ Lewis, *Greek Historical Documents*, 21.

¹⁴⁷ F. Jacoby, *Atthis. The Local Chronicles of Ancient Athens* (Oxford 1949) 239 n. 17.

sixty-seven publications on this list and twenty-nine different dates given by these publications. The dates mentioned by Cavanaugh vary from 459 to 416/415.¹⁴⁸

Already from 1880 onwards, attempts have been made to date the First-fruits decree. Almost every one of these early publications support an early date of this decree, because this decree seems to fit in Perikles' imperialistic policy. However, already in 1896 one scholar argued for a date around the Peace of Nikias, which dates to 421 and concludes the Archidamian War (431-421), the first phase of the Peloponnesian War (431-404).¹⁴⁹

The scholars who first proposed a date for the First-fruits decree, assumed that there existed a connection with the Panhellenic Congress of Perikles and they therefore suggested a date of around 445. We do not have epigraphical evidence for this Congress of Perikles and it is therefore very difficult to date it. 445 is the earliest date for the First-fruits decree according to the standard epigraphical interpretation of the appearance of the four-barred sigma, however, there is no particular reason for dating the Panhellenic Congress to 445. The connection between the First-fruits decree and the Panhellenic Congress is therefore not at all certain. Cavanaugh suggests to regard both the Congress as the First-fruits decree as different expressions of the same Periklean policy to promote Panhellenism, or common action under Athenian leadership. There is neither need nor reason to cluster these events within the same year.¹⁵⁰

The attempts to date the First-fruits decree solely on the basis of epigraphic criteria and/or calendar equations have failed, according to Cavanaugh. The body of evidence on which such judgments can be made is lacking, and renders these efforts methodologically unsound. Cavanaugh suggest that a more fruitful approach to the dating of the decree will be found in considering the boards of officials involved with the administration of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore in the fifth century.¹⁵¹ Cavanaugh concludes her analysis by stating that it is still not possible to give a precise

¹⁴⁸ Maureen B. Cavanaugh, *Athens and Eleusis: documents in finance, religion and politics in the fifth century BC* (Atlanta 1996) 30-36.

¹⁴⁹ Cavanaugh, *Athens and Eleusis*, 30-36.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, 81-84.

¹⁵¹ *Ibidem*, 71-72

date for this inscription. However, she does give 432 as *terminus ante quem* for this decree and dates the text to circa 435.¹⁵²

Benjamin Meritt discusses the date Margherita Guarducci gave to this decree, which is 425/4, and argues for a date of either 415/4 or 414/13. Meritt's argumentation is twofold: he uses reasons of historical propriety and calendric reasons. To start with the calendar, the decree provides in lines 53-54 that the incoming archon is to intercalate the month Hekatombaion. This means that, if Guarducci is right with her date, the year 424/3 would have had two Hekatombaions and in consequence thirteen months in total. However, it is most nearly certain that both 424/3 and 423/2 were ordinary – and not intercalary – years, and that no intercalation took place between Hekatombaion of 424 and Hekatombaion of 422. Next to this, Meritt argues that it would have been difficult to have heralds sent to all Greek cities wherever possible (lines 30/31), not only the allies, calling for the first-fruits during the Peloponnesian War that was going on. This must have been done in time of peace.¹⁵³

William Kendrick Pritchett also commented on this text and since he wrote his book several years after Cavanaugh his book is therefore – obviously – not included in her list of publications. He leans to the conclusion Russell Meiggs gives in his book about the Athenian Empire, namely that one of the last years of the Archidamian War (431-421) provides a rather more convincing setting than an earlier year.¹⁵⁴ Like Pritchett, Victor Hanson commented on this inscription after the publication of Cavanaugh's book. Hanson dates the text to 422, but he is not completely sure about this, considering the question mark he adds to the date.¹⁵⁵ Another later publication about this decree is the article of Christopher Tuplin. He dates the first-fruits decree to 415.¹⁵⁶

Ove Hansen remarks on this decree: 'This decree represents one of the greatest epigraphical ironies among Attic inscription from the fifth century BC. One should normally regard the possibility of dating a text which is virtually intact as being very fine, but even though the Eleusis-copy is indeed

¹⁵² Ibidem, 81-84, 92-93.

¹⁵³ B.D. Meritt, *The Athenian Year* (Berkeley 1961) 39-41.

¹⁵⁴ William Kendrick Pritchett, *Athenian Calendars and Ekklesia* (Amsterdam 2001) 171.

¹⁵⁵ Victor Davis Hanson, *Warfare and Agriculture in Classical Greece. Revised Edition* (Berkeley 1998) 144-145.

¹⁵⁶ Christopher Tuplin, 'Untersuchungen zur Religionspolitik und politischen Propaganda Athens im Delisch-Attischen Seebund by Bernhard Smarczyk', *Gnomon* 71 (1999) 420-424, there 421.

intact – the Athenian one is only a small fragment – we lack evidence for an Athenian year with the peculiar intercalary month Hekatombaion which could fix the date without any doubt.¹⁵⁷

Harold Mattingly argues against a late date for this decree, because of the absence of archon-dating. It seems to him a decisive argument against any date after 421: ‘The stele is complete and there are no cuttings indicative of a crowning member, on which the archon’s name might have been separately cut’.¹⁵⁸ Mattingly is also convinced that any date before the Archidamian War, which broke out in 431, can be ruled out; therefore, for this decree he proposes a date between 431 and 421.¹⁵⁹

Most of the later scholars suggest a date during or around first phase of the Peloponnesian War. We will see in the next chapter that there are no objections to this date considering the historical circumstances. It is also in this phase of the war that Athens was doing very well and one can imagine that Athens tried to strengthen her grip on her allies and other Greeks and to establish her supremacy by issuing this decree. This decree has to be issued in a time when Athens was strong enough to dominate her allies. Therefore, next to Mattingly’s argument against a date after 421 one can add the argument that after 421, Athens was not strong enough anymore to dominate her allies in this way and that she was certainly not in a position to ask other Greeks to offer their first-fruits in Eleusis.

Regulations Concerning the Cult of Apollo (IG I³ 137)

The next inscription has been found in Athens and deals with regulations concerning the cult of Apollo in Athens. This inscription has been dated around 430, although one scholar dates the decree to ca. 420-410.¹⁶⁰ The inscription concerns the organization of a celebration after an oracle of Apollo. The celebration is organized because Apollo through – most likely – the Delphic Oracle has proclaimed himself *exegetes* of Athens.¹⁶¹ The relief above the inscriptions shows the Delphic omphalos and its two golden eagles, to the right and the left are Apollo and a female figure.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Ove Hansen, ‘On the date of the Athenian decree regulating the offering of first-fruits at Eleusis’, *Eirene* 27 (1990) 47-48, there 47.

¹⁵⁸ H.B. Mattingly, ‘Athens and Eleusis: Some New Ideas’, in: H.B. Mattingly (ed.), *The Athenian Empire Restored. Epigraphic and Historical Studies* (Ann Arbor 1996) 325-345, there 325.

¹⁵⁹ Mattingly, ‘Athens and Eleusis’, 327.

¹⁶⁰ Marion Meyer, *Die Griechischen Urkundenreliefs. MDAI(A) Beiheft 13* (Berlin 1989) No A10; LSCG Suppl. No 8. Meyer dates the decree at least a decade later than the rest of the scholars.

¹⁶¹ James H. Oliver, ‘Jacoby’s Treatment of the Exegetes’, *The American Journal of Philology* 75 (1954) 160-174, there 167.

¹⁶² Oliver, ‘Jacoby’s Treatment of the Exegetes’, 167.

The text of this decree is as follows:

3 vv. erasi

[.4-5.]ἷς ἐπρυτάνευε·

[ἔδοχσεν τεῖ βο]λιεῖ καὶ τοῖ δέμοι· Ἀντικρατίδες ἐγγ[αμμά]-

[τευε ..c.8...]ος ἐπεστάτε, Φιλόχσενος εἶπε· τοῖ [Ἀπόλλο]-

[νι ...8.... ἐπ]ειδὲ ἀνεῖλεν ἑαυτὸν ἐχσεγετὲ[ν ..6-8..]

5 [.5.. Ἀθηναίο]ις θρόνον τε ἐχσελῆν ἐν τοῖ πρ[.8-10...]

[.....12.....]ε[.]ντας hos κάλλιστα καὶ κα[...9-11...]

[...10.... νε]μόντον οἱ ἐπιστάται πα[.]ΛΓ[...10-12...]

[...8.... τοῖ θεοῖ, ἀναλίσκοντες μέχ[ρι12-14....]

[.....14.....] ὄθεμπερ ἐς τὰ ἄλ[λα15-17.....]

10 [...9.... μὲ ὀλ[έζονος ἐ δραχμῆ]ς17-19.....]

Translation by Antje Kolde: ¹⁶³

‘(Un tel) était prytane. Il a plu au Conseil et au Peuple, Antikratides était secretaire, (un tel) était president, Philoxenos a fait la proposition: (on sacrifiera) à Apollon, attendu qu’il a ordonné qu’il serait lui-même interprète (..) pour les Athéniens et qu’il enlèverait le siege dans le (..) les plus beaux possible et (..) que les proposés distribuent (..), dépensant pour le dieu jusqu’a (..) d’où justement pour les autres (..) pas moins de ? drachmes (..)’

According to François Sokolowski in his *Lois Sacrées des Cités Grecques*, the fact that this decree mentions the Delphic oracle suggests that this document dates to the period before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, since Athens could not go to Delphi during the War.¹⁶⁴ Sokolowski

¹⁶³ Antje Kolde, *Politique et religion chez Isyllos d’Épidaure* (Basel 2003) 350.

¹⁶⁴ LSCG Suppl. No 8.

therefore dates this inscription to before the Peloponnesian War; the argument that Delphi was inaccessible to Athens during the Peloponnesian War is the only criterion for dating this inscription, Sokolowski does not give other reasons.

However, I have great trouble with Sokolowski's argument, since I am convinced that Athens was not hindered to go to Delphi in order to consult the oracle during the Peloponnesian War; an opinion unlike that of many scholars. This issue will be discussed in a separate chapter, since this decree is not the only one that is dated by some scholars with this assumption about the relationship between Athens and Delphi in the Peloponnesian War in mind.

Other scholars do not share Sokolowski's opinion about the date of this inscription. Carol Lawton thinks a date during the Peace of Nikias is more likely than Sokolowski's date. She further mentions that the proposer Philoxenos is usually identified as the son of Eruxis who was ridiculed in Attic comedy in the late 420s, see for example Aristophanes' *Wasps* line 84.¹⁶⁵ Antje Kolde dates this decree to around 422-416, which is the period between shortly before the Peace of Nikias until the Sicilian Expedition.¹⁶⁶

Herbert Bloch states that we should not interpret the word *exegetes* as 'helper', but as 'interpreter of religion', since if viewed against the background of the Peloponnesian War, a declaration of all-out support for the Athenians would be far from what Georges Daux had convincingly argued according to Bloch; namely, that there were normal relations between Athens and Delphi during the Peloponnesian War. All-out support, then, cannot be considered as normal according to Bloch.¹⁶⁷

Conclusion

Besides looking at inscriptions from the Delphic sanctuary itself, the Athenian presence in Delphi can also be investigated by looking at Athenian inscriptions mentioning Delphi and/or its oracle. The earliest mention of Delphi in Athenian inscriptions dates to the fifth century. Both Delphi, the Delphic oracle and Apollo are mentioned several times in the fifth century, whereby each inscription has its

¹⁶⁵ Carol L. Lawton, *Attic Document Reliefs. Art and Politics in Ancient Athens* (Oxford 1995) 114-115 N° B67.

¹⁶⁶ Kolde, *Politique et religion*, 350.

¹⁶⁷ H. Bloch, 'The Exegetes of Athens: A Reply', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 62 (1957) 37-49, there 44.

own value to the current topic. Like is the case with most of the Greek inscriptions, it is almost impossible to give certain dates to the inscriptions discussed in this chapter. With regards to inscriptions mentioning Athenian consultations of the oracle, one also has to keep in mind that an unknown period of time has elapsed between the time of the consultation of the oracle and the time when the text was inscribed.

There are two inscriptions that mention an Athenian consultation of the Delphic oracle explicitly and that therefore are evidence for the Athenian presence in Delphi, albeit indirect evidence. One of these inscriptions is the Praxiergidai Decree, which is usually dated to 460-450. It deals with an oracle by Apollo that regulates the dressing of the statue of Athena Polias with the *peplos*, to be executed by the clan of the Praxiergidai. Apparently, the Praxiergidai consulted the oracle in Delphi and heard there that they should dress the statue of Athena with the *peplos*. In addition, they should sacrifice to the Moirai, Zeus Moiragetes and Ge (...). The Athenian *boule* and *demos* then decreed that the oracle should be executed and the duties of the Praxiergidai were inscribed on stone.

The other inscription that deals with an Athenian consultation of the Delphic oracle is the famous First-fruits Decree from Eleusis. This decree obliges Athens and her allies to offer first-fruits 'according to ancestral custom and a Delphic oracle'. It furthermore asks the other Greeks to do the same, although Athens knew she could not force them to do so. Although it is unknown exactly when this consultation of the oracle took place, it seems reasonable to assume that it was a recent oracle and not an old one being re-used.

Of different value for the present paper are the other two inscriptions discussed in this chapter. They do not deal with direct involvement of Athens in Delphi, as is the case with the Athenian consultations of the Delphic oracle. The decree that concerns regulations for the cult of Apollo has different value than the two inscriptions mentioned above, since it is not certain if Apollo proclaimed himself *exegetes* of Athens through the Delphic oracle. It is, however, likely that this indeed was the case, especially considering the relief above the inscription, which shows the Delphic omphalos. In the end, however, since we cannot be certain about the nature of the proclamation of Apollo in this inscription, this decree cannot be used as evidence for Athenian presence in Delphi, unfortunately enough.

The other inscription that is of different value for this present paper than the inscriptions that mention an Athenian consultation have, but that is still important is the decree concerning an alliance of Athens with the Delphic Amphiktyony. Although the earliest editors thought it was an alliance between Athens and Phokis, the current consensus about this inscription is that it deals with an alliance between Athens and the Delphic Amphiktyony and that it dates to the mid-fifth century. This inscription does not tell us anything about the actual Athenian presence in Delphi, however, it does tell us that the Athenians were on good terms with the Amphiktyony and were active members of the league, otherwise no alliance of whatever sort would have been made between the two (even though it is likely that the alliance was formed between more members of the Amphiktyony).

4. Athens and Delphi in the Peloponnesian War

Introduction

One of the most controversial periods in the sixth and fifth centuries regarding the relationship between Athens and the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi is the period of the Peloponnesian War (431-404). Most scholars have argued that the sanctuary as well as the oracle at Delphi were hostile to Athens and not neutral during the Peloponnesian War and that, therefore, Athenians were not able to go to Delphi in order to consult the oracle or to make dedications to Apollo.¹⁶⁸

The Peloponnesian War was a conflict between Sparta and her allies on one side and Athens and her allies on the other side and lasted from 431 until 404. The Peloponnesian War is traditionally divided by scholars into three phases: First, the Archidamian War from 431 until 421; second, the Sicilian Expedition by Athens in 415-413; and third, the Dekeleian War (Strabo 9.396) or Ionian War (Thuc. 8.11.3) which ended in 404. During the first phase of the Peloponnesian War the Athenians were quite successful; however, the Sicilian Expedition and the third phase were less successful for the Athenian side. Athens would eventually lose the war and Sparta would become the new superpower of the Greek world.¹⁶⁹

As is the case with most wars, this conflict did not come into being out of nothing. During the entire fifth century, the tension between Sparta and Athens was rising and this culminated in the so-called First Peloponnesian War of 461 until 446. Delphi was very important for both Sparta and Athens in this war; the Second Sacred War mentioned in chapter 1 was part of this conflict. The First

¹⁶⁸ An (incomplete) list of these scholars and their publications: A.W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides Volume III* (Oxford 1956) 596; Parke and Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle. Volume I*, 194; G. Zeilhofer, *Sparta, Delphoi und die Amphiktyonen im 5. Jahrhundert vor Christus* (Neustadt a.d. Aisch 1959) 67-68; W.R. Halliday, *Greek Divination: a study of its methods and principles* (Chicago 1967) 64; H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus: Dodona, Olympia, Ammon* (Oxford 1967) 136; Lloyd-Jones, 'The Delphic oracle', 70; R.S.J. Garland, 'Religious Authority in Archaic and Classical Athens', *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 79 (1984) 75-123, there 80; R.C.T. Parker, 'Greek States and Greek Oracles', in: P.A. Cartledge and F.D. Harvey (eds.), *Crux: Essays presented to G.E.M. de Ste. Croix on his 75th birthday* (Exeter 1985) 298-326, there 325; N.D. Smith, 'Diviners and Divination in Aristophanic Comedy', *Classical Antiquity* 8 (1989) 140-158, there 152 n. 51; R. Brock, 'Thucydides and the Athenian purification of Delos', *Mnemosyne* 49 (1996) 321-327, there 322; Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle*, 62; Arnush, 'Pilgrimage to the Oracle at Delphi', 102.

¹⁶⁹ The Archidamian War was named after the Spartan king Archidamos II, who warned against the war. The third and last phase of the war was called Dekeleian or Ionian, because there was much fighting off the coast of Ionia in these years and because Dekeleia in Attika was fortified by the Spartans between 413 and 404. See: Hornblower, *The Greek World*, 151-152.

Peloponnesian War was characterized by conflict for control of a Panhellenic sanctuary. Corinth and Argos were struggling for control of the Nemean Games in Nemea and, as has been said before, Sparta and Athens were fighting over control of or influence at Delphi.¹⁷⁰

Some scholars have used the above-mentioned assumption about the supposedly hostile relationship between Athens and Delphi as an argument for dating epigraphical material; for example François Sokolowski, who claims that IG I³ 137 has to be dated before the Peloponnesian War solely because Athens would never have been able to consult the oracle during the war. However, it is my intention to show in this chapter that there is no reason to assume that the relationship between Athens and Delphi was not normal during the war and that using this – in my opinion wrong – assumption for dating inscriptions is dangerous, not to mention incorrect.

The problem with the relationship between Athens and Delphi starts with the interpretation of the oracle that Delphi gave to the Spartans before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War and which said that the Delphic god would help the Spartans, wanted or unwanted, and that victory would be theirs; at least, this is what Thucydides *seems* to tell us (1.118.3). Except for the testimony of Thucydides, there is no other evidence for this oracle. However, even if we assume this oracle to be given in exactly this way, it does not have to mean that Delphi was hostile to Athens and that Athenians were barred from the sanctuary and the oracle.

Also for the so-called First-fruits decree, solving this controversy about Athenian access to Delphi can be of importance. In this case, it will not give any suggested date certainty, but it will leave the option open of a date during the first part of the Peloponnesian War – the so-called Archidamian War (431-421). Like with IG I³ 137, it is possible that for this inscription some scholars have used the assumption that Athens was not able to go to Delphi during the Peloponnesian War as an argument against a date between 431 and 404.

Thucydides

Since Thucydides described the Peloponnesian War, he is our best source for the relationship between Athens and Delphi during the Peloponnesian War, although also other literary sources can and will be

¹⁷⁰ Hornblower, *The Greek World*, 158.

used, for example Aristophanes' comedies. Most scholars who claim that Delphi was inaccessible for Athens during the Peloponnesian War point to the oracle given to Sparta at the outbreak of the war: 'If they fought with all their might, victory would be theirs, and that he [i.e. Apollo] himself would be on their side' (Thuc. 1.118.3). For this oracle only indirect evidence exists; besides being mentioned by Thucydides, this oracle is also mentioned by Plutarch (*Mor.* 403b), the Greek sophist Philostratus (*VS* 1.5.575) and the Roman emperor Julian (*Or.* 8.250c).

If this oracle was historical, as Joseph Fontenrose argues, it could have been the case that Apollo and Delphi chose the Spartan side in the Peloponnesian War and that the Athenians did not feel welcome in Delphi during the war because Apollo had chosen the other side in the conflict. However, it is doubtful if the Athenians knew about this oracle at the time. It was probably custom to announce an oracle and it is likely that the Spartan representatives announced the oracle in their city after returning from Delphi.¹⁷¹ However, whether the Athenians also heard about the oracle is doubtful. Thucydides described that at the outbreak of war there was no communication between Sparta and Athens, except through heralds (Thuc. 2.1). It is, in my opinion, not very likely that the Spartans would have made such an effort as to announcing the oracle in Athens, when the situation in the whole of Greece was already very tense. Therefore, I am convinced that this oracle did not affect the relationship between Athens and Delphi at the time, since the Athenians did not know about the oracle and therefore did not consider Delphi as being biased.

Next to this, there seems to be no reason to conclude that Delphi was indeed biased solely based on this oracle. The Spartans needed to ask the gods for permission to start a war against the Athenians, since that would mean breaking the Thirty Years' Peace the two *poleis* made after the First Peloponnesian War.¹⁷² With this oracle Apollo gives this permission, but this does not mean that he was taking sides.

After reading Thucydides, no other conclusion can be drawn than that Delphi was not biased during the Peloponnesian War and, moreover, that Apollo gave oracles to *both* sides of the conflict. These oracles to both sides during the war will be discussed next. In addition to the oracle about the

¹⁷¹ Thucydides describes in 1.25.2 how in circa 435 the inhabitants of Epidamnus announced a Delphic oracle after their consultation.

¹⁷² Rhodes, *History of the Classical Greek World*, 51.

outbreak of war, the Spartans received an oracle about the colonization of Herakleia Trachinia in 426 (Thuc. 3.92). One of the reasons for Sparta to colonize Herakleia Trachinia could have been to improve their position in the Amphiktyonic League.¹⁷³ Sparta did not have a direct vote in the Amphiktyony; they fell into the category of ‘Dorians of the Metropolis’ (Thuc. 1.107.2). From 343 onwards, Herakleia had one of the two Malian votes. By controlling Herakleia, Sparta may have been able to control this Malian vote and thereby had access to a direct vote in the Council. However, we do not have complete lists of the members of the Amphiktyony before 343, therefore, it is not certain if Herakleia had one of the two Malian votes directly from their foundation. The fact that Sparta consulted the Delphic oracle for this specific issue was not unusual; as we have seen in the first chapter about the sanctuary of Delphi, the oracle was often consulted with regards to colonization. This oracle is therefore no evidence for the possibly biased nature of Delphi.

The Athenians, on the other hand, also consulted the oracle several times during the Peloponnesian War. One of these consultations probably took place during the winter of 427/426. In the winter of 426, the Athenians carried out ceremonies of purification on the sacred island of Delos. According to Thucydides and Diodorus Siculus, the Athenians purified the sacred island after they had consulted an oracle because of the plague (Thuc. 3.104; Diod. 12.58.6-7).

Thucydides is not our only source for this oracle and for its origin. In addition, Pausanias mentions it when in his first book about Attika he describes two statues of Apollo on the Kerameikos. One of these was Apollo Alexikakos, Apollo as ‘averter of evil’, made by the fifth-century sculptor Kalamis. The god received this name because by an oracle from Delphi he stopped the plague which afflicted the Athenians at the time of the Peloponnesian War (Paus. 1.3.4). Although it is not sure if the oracle that Thucydides and Diodorus Siculus mention is the Delphic oracle, Pausanias does indeed state that the oracle originates from Delphi. Next to that, it is also likely that it was a Delphic oracle; not only was the Delphic oracle the most renowned of the Greek world, the connection of both Delos and Delphi with Apollo should not be left aside.

¹⁷³ This is suggested amongst others by Simon Hornblower: S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides. Volume I* (Oxford 1991) 502; S. Hornblower, ‘The Religious Dimension to the Peloponnesian War, or, what Thucydides does not tell us’, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 94 (1992) 169-197, there 190.

The Athenians did not stop here. In 422 they banned the Delians from their island, because the island had to be uninhabited (Thuc. 5.1.1; Diod. 12.73.1). However, apparently the Athenians were still not satisfied with the result. After a year they went to Delphi and asked Apollo if it would be better for the city if they brought the Delians back to their island.¹⁷⁴ Thucydides tells us: ‘they [i.e. the Athenians] brought the Delians back again to Delos – a move suggested both by Athenian misfortunes in battle and by an oracle from the god in Delphi’ (Thuc. 5.32.1). Apparently, Apollo voiced his dissatisfaction about the banishment and had told the Athenians to bring the Delians back.

Next to these oracles given to either Sparta or Athens (hereby leaving the question out whether these oracles were genuinely Delphic or not), two other fragments of Thucydides deal with the Delphic oracle. These are the parts about the armistice of 423 (Thuc. 4.118.1) and the peace treaty that is part of the Peace of Nikias of 421 (Thuc. 5.18.2). Both contain clauses concerning unhindered travel to Delphi and the right to consult the oracle without fraud or fear.

The agreement of the armistice begins with religious conditions and the first clause concerns Delphi: ‘With regard to the temple and oracle of the Pythian Apollo we agree that all who wish should have the right to consult the oracle without fraud and without fear, according to the established laws of each man’s country. This had been agreed by the Spartans and by the allies present, and they undertake to send heralds to the Boeotians and Phocians and to do their best to persuade them to subscribe to the agreement’ (Thuc. 4.118.1).

In 421 the Peace of Nikias was concluded. This peace was supposed to last for fifty years and was named after the Athenian leader Nikias. Like the agreement of the armistice two years earlier, the treaty accompanying the Peace of Nikias starts with religious conditions: ‘With regard to the Panhellenic temples, everyone who wishes, according to the customs of his country, to sacrifice in them, to travel to them, to consult the oracles, or to attend the games shall be guaranteed security in doing so, both by sea and by land. At Delphi the consecrated ground and the temple of Apollo and the Delphians themselves shall be governed by their own laws, taxed by their own state, and judged by their own judges, both by the people and the territory, according to the custom of the place’. (Thuc. 5.18.2)

¹⁷⁴ Fontenrose H8 = PW 162.

It is for these two clauses, next to the first oracle given to Sparta, that previous scholars have concluded that Delphi was inaccessible for Athens in the period before the armistice and the peace treaty and that this clause was put into the treaty especially for Athens. However, this does not have to be the case, it is very likely that it was ‘the resumption of normal peace-time arrangement’ as Gomme states.¹⁷⁵ In addition, the second part of the first clause of the peace treaty of 421 can be seen as a critique on Athens for intermingling in the affairs of Delphi, as she had repeatedly tried to put Delphi under Phokian control, for example in the Second Sacred War.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, it is hard to see how this clause could have been inserted for the benefit of Athens.

After his description of the affair with the purification of Delos in book 5, Thucydides makes no reference to Delphi and its oracle. Also in other sources no Athenian consultation of the Delphic oracle is found for the remainder of the Peloponnesian War. However, this does not have to mean that there were no Athenian consultations; we simply lack the evidence for them. The reference to Delphi and the need to ask permission to cross Boeotia in Aristophanes’ *Birds* (performed in 414) shows that there at least was still the wish to go to Delphi, so it is likely that consultations continued after the Archidamian War (Ar., *Birds*, 188-189).

Different Opinion

Contrary to most scholars, I am convinced that there is no evidence to think that Athens was barred from the sanctuary in Delphi during the Peloponnesian War. The Athenians were free to consult the oracle, which they almost certainly also did, and they could travel to Delphi without being hindered. The Boeotians could cause trouble as regards to the journey to Delphi, since after the Boeotians rejected to sign the treaty accompanying the Peace of Nicias, the Athenians had to ask their permission to cross Boeotia on their way to Delphi (Ar., *Birds*, 188-189). However, this could be easily avoided by travelling by sea – something which most people would do anyway, since this was the easiest and fastest way to travel to Delphi.

I am certainly not the only one with this opinion about the relationship between Athens and Delphi in the Peloponnesian War and, therefore, my opinion is not new. According to Peter Rhodes,

¹⁷⁵ Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, 667-668.

¹⁷⁶ Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, 472-473.

‘during the war the Athenians neither stayed away from Delphi nor were debarred from visiting it’.¹⁷⁷ According to Simon Hornblower, it may have been dangerous for Athenians to travel to Delphi, but there was no real exclusion of Athens or her allies.¹⁷⁸ Michael Flower states that the Athenians were not officially barred from consulting Delphi at any point during the war and points to the consultations of 421 and 415. Flower also states that next to consultations of the oracle, dedications also continued.¹⁷⁹

Also earlier scholars already have stated that relations were normal between Athens and Delphi during the Peloponnesian War. As early as 1940 a scholar voiced this opinion. Georges Daux considers the relationship between Athens and Delphi in the Peloponnesian War as normal and he uses epigraphical evidence to support his claim.¹⁸⁰ In the 1970s, William Pritchett writes that the important point is that Delphi was giving oracles to *both* sides. According to him, the fact that Delphi gave oracular responses to, and received dedications from, both sides suggest that her role remained religious and that Delphi therefore stayed out of the political conflicts going on in Greece in the fifth century.¹⁸¹ This is a very important argument in favor of normal relations between Athens and Delphi during the Peloponnesian War. If Delphi was biased, as scholars have claimed, and favored Sparta over Athens, why would Athenians still go to Delphi and consult the oracle or make dedications there? Delphi had to be neutral, otherwise it would not make sense that *both* sides went to Delphi and consult the oracle.

Consequences for Dating Inscriptions

Although there are several other scholars who have stated the same as I do in this chapter, this – positive – view on the relationship between Delphi and Athens during the Peloponnesian War has not become the accepted point of view. This is unfortunate, since one only needs to read the sources carefully to see that there is no evidence for bad relations between Athens and Delphi. Even more unfortunate is the fact that the accepted point of view – Delphi was inaccessible for Athenians – has

¹⁷⁷ Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World*, 85.

¹⁷⁸ Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, 363.

¹⁷⁹ M.A. Flower, ‘Athenian Religion and the Peloponnesian War’, in: O. Palagia, *Art in Athens during the Peloponnesian War* (Cambridge 2009) 1-23, there 4.

¹⁸⁰ Daux, ‘Athènes et Delphes’, 37-69, especially 46-48.

¹⁸¹ W.K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War. Volume III: Religion* (Berkeley 1979) 299. Normal relation: Daux, ‘Athènes et Delphes’, 46-48.

lead scholars to claim that certain inscriptions cannot date to the Peloponnesian War simply because Athenians could not go to Delphi in this period according to them.

The most important consequence of the different opinion about the relationship between Athens and Delphi during the Peloponnesian War I support for dating inscriptions from the fifth century is that a date in the Peloponnesian War cannot be excluded solely on the basis of the supposedly inaccessibility of Delphi for Athens, as we have seen in the previous chapter. In other words, one needs different types of arguments to rule out a date in the Peloponnesian War – epigraphical, historical, lexicographical, etc. The argument of the inaccessibility of Delphi that Sokolowski uses is no longer valid in my opinion.

Conclusion

Contrary to what the accepted view amongst most scholars wants us to believe, the relationship between Athens and Delphi during the Peloponnesian War was normal. They were able to go to Apollo's sanctuary in Delphi, even though the Boeotians perhaps could have hindered them – but travelling to Boeotia was not the only way to go to Delphi. The sanctuary itself and also Apollo were not hostile to Athenians and they did not favor Sparta. This can be seen in the fact that both sides of the conflict consulted the oracle during wartime.

The famous oracle that the Spartans received at the outbreak of hostilities in 431 also does not tell us what most scholars would like it to say. It says that the Spartans have Apollo's permission to break the peace – they needed divine approval for that! Apollo does not take sides here, which would have been the case if both the Spartans and the Athenians consulted the oracle about the upcoming conflict and only Sparta received a positive oracle. Besides, it is likely that nobody in Athens knew about this oracle at the time; therefore, next to the fact that Apollo was not favoring the Spartans, the Athenians did not think that he was, because they did not learn about this oracle at the time.

It also does not have to be the case that since it was regulated in the armistice of 423 and the peace treaty of 421 that everyone should have free and unhindered access to Delphi and the other panhellenic sanctuaries that in the period before access was not free and unhindered. The fact that it is

mentioned in the treaties does indicate that both sides considered it as important, but it does not prove anything about the situation in the period before.

As a consequence of the normal relations between Athens and Delphi during the Peloponnesian War, the rejection of dates for inscriptions that fall in this period solely on the basis of supposedly bad relations is not justified. Scholars will therefore need other arguments to reject a date in the Peloponnesian War for certain inscriptions.

Conclusion

The sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi was one of the most important places for Greeks as well as for non-Greeks from the archaic period onwards. It was not only the location of the Pythian Games, one of the four major Panhellenic athletic and musical games, Delphi also hosted the famous oracle of Apollo and this contributed a great deal to the fame and glory of Delphi. From the seventh century onwards, Apollo through the Pythia answered various questions of people from different *poleis* and from non-Greek states about all sorts of topics, ranging from personal questions about marriage and pregnancy to questions about state-affairs such as war and the foundation of colonies.

The sanctuary of Apollo was not controlled by the inhabitants of the nearby town of Delphi; the Delphians only provided the personnel for the sanctuary. From the early sixth century onwards the sanctuary was controlled by a religious league, called the Amphiktyony or Amphikyonic League. This Amphiktyony was divided into several tribes and cities, and each held two votes in the council. The Amphikyonic League protected the sanctuary from envious designs of its neighbors. It intervened as an arbitrator in disputes between *poleis* and it could also impose fines for religious offenses. The Amphiktyony made sure that Delphi was independent of the political struggles of the Greek cities and this made the international position of Delphi possible. That an independent league was necessary for the protection of the sanctuary can be seen in the several Sacred Wars fought in the history of the Delphic sanctuary.

One of the Greek *poleis* that consulted the oracle and that placed dedications to Apollo in the sanctuary itself was Athens. Also individual Athenians consulted the oracle at Delphi. On some occasions the Athenians commemorated the consultations of the oracle by inscribing them on stone or by mentioning them in inscriptions containing decrees. Also monumental dedications to Apollo placed in the sanctuary itself were accompanied by dedicatory inscriptions. This epigraphical evidence has been the focus of this thesis, since there has been surprisingly little scholarly attention for the epigraphical evidence from and about Delphi.

We have seen that from the middle of the sixth century until perhaps the aftermath of the First Peloponnesian War in 448 the Athenians have built and dedicated several things in the Delphic sanctuary. To start with, the Temple of Apollo was rebuilt in the second half of the sixth century by the Athenian family of the Alkmaeonids. Any dedicatory inscription on this temple is now lost. While this act can be seen more as a private than a public dedication, Athens also placed public dedications in Delphi. After the battle of Marathon in 490 the Athenians dedicated near their (probably) earlier built Treasury spoils taken from the Persians (FD III.2.1) and sometime between 480 and 448 the Athenians built and dedicated their stoa (Syll.³ 29), which was built along the Sacred Way against the terrace wall of Apollo's temple. Besides these three, no Athenian dedication in Delphi has been found dating to the fifth century.

Does the absence of large, public Athenian dedications at Delphi late in the fifth century show that Athens and Delphi were on bad terms in that period? No, not quite. First of all, we need to keep in mind that arguments from silence are often not very convincing or valid. Second of all, it is possible that not all of the epigraphical material from the sixth and fifth centuries has been found. Next to that, during the Peloponnesian War relations between Athens and Delphi were normal and consultations of the oracle and probably also private dedications continued. It was not the case that Delphi was hostile to Athens and biased; in addition, the Athenians did not feel unwelcome in Delphi and they continued to go there.

However, it does probably show that the relationship between Athens and Delphi was changing, or perhaps that the relationship between Athens and the rest of the Greek world was changing. In the sixth and early fifth century Athens used Delphi to display and increase their might and power. The rebuilding of the Temple of Apollo by the Alkmeonid family can also be seen in this light. Athens also tried to gain (indirect) control over the sanctuary by enabling the Phokians to take control during the Second Sacred War of 448-447. Afterwards the Athenians were rewarded with *promanteia*, which enabled them to consult the oracle on more favorable terms than before.

In this period Athens definitely was on good terms with the sanctuary, since both the treasury, the dedication near the treasury as well as the stoa were built on a location in the sanctuary which was full of prestige: along the Sacred Way and, moreover, very close to the Temple of Apollo, the most

important and most sacred part of the sanctuary. The location of dedications and buildings like treasuries also contributed to the prestige of the dedicators. It is, in fact, a circle: Athens had enough prestige to get permission to build her monumental dedications at the very heart of the sanctuary, close to the Temple of Apollo; this location made sure that the dedication were seen by almost all the visitors of the sanctuary and this in turn increased Athens' prestige even more.

During the Peloponnesian War of 431-404 the Athenians started to lose most of their power, even though the first phase of this war was quite successful for Athens. It is understandable that this lost of power had consequences for their relationship with a Panhellenic sanctuary like Delphi. They lacked the funds and the reasons (large victories) for making large-scale dedications, something they still had for example in the period after the battle of Marathon in 490, resulting in the dedication of spoils taken from the Persians near the treasury in Delphi.

Next to the dedicatory inscriptions found on monuments in the Delphic sanctuary itself, some inscriptions found in Athens show us when the Athenians paid the Delphic oracle a visit during the sixth and fifth century and, moreover, for what reason they went to the oracle. The two inscriptions that deal with an Athenian consultation of the Delphic oracle show that these specific consultations were concerned with religious matters: one with the dressing of the cult statue of Athena Polias by the Praxiergidai (IG I³ 7) and the other with the offering of first-fruits to Demeter and Persephone in Eleusis (IG I³ 78). Both inscriptions date to the fifth century, although especially with the Eleusinian First-fruits Decree there is no certain date.

The other inscriptions found in Athens also deal with religion, albeit not with a consultation of the Delphic oracle and they are, for various reasons, of different value for this paper than the two inscriptions that are concerned with an Athenian consultation of the Delphic oracle. The decree with regulations concerning the cult of Apollo (IG I³ 137) is relevant, but it is unfortunate that it is not certain if Apollo proclaimed himself *exegetes* of Athens through his oracle in Delphi or that he used one of his other oracles. If it was indeed the case that Apollo used Delphi, then this decree can be used as indirect evidence of Athenian presence in Delphi, just like the First-fruits Decree and the Praxiergidai Decree.

The last Athenian inscription discussed in this thesis is the decree about the alliance with the Delphic Amphiktyony (IG I³ 9). This is a very problematic text and several different editions of this text have been published. Also the nature of the alliance is unknown; scholars have speculated about this in the past. Of these different suggestions, Roux's hypothesis about this inscription seems to me the most plausible. The Amphiktyony was no *symmachia*, a military league. In order to protect the peace between the members of the league and to guarantee the rights of the Delphians in their sanctuary a *symmachia* could have been formed of the members of the league and this decree was part of the Athenian ratification decree. So, although the Amphiktyony was a religious league, responsible for the Delphic sanctuary, this decree probably points to the formation of a military league.

Can we say something about the difference between public and private dedications and/or consultations in Delphi in the sixth and fifth century? On the basis of the epigraphical evidence discussed in this thesis little, because it seems that we only have evidence for public dedications or consultations. It is indeed true that the (epigraphical) evidence that is discussed only concerns public consultations and dedications. Perhaps the rebuilding of the Temple of Apollo by the Alkmaeonids can be seen as a private act, since the family were banished from Athens and were acting not on behalf of the *polis* Athens, but on behalf of themselves, to increase their own fame.

However, it would be an argument from silence to conclude that there were no private Athenian consultations and/or dedications in Delphi during the sixth and fifth centuries because there is no evidence for them. It is very likely that individuals travelled to Delphi to ask Apollo for guidance or to dedicate something to him, especially since Athens received the right of *promanteia* after the intervention of Perikles during the Second Sacred War in 448/447; unfortunately we do not have evidence for these individual consultations or dedications.

Opposed to this, for the fourth century we do have a lot of inscriptions concerning private consultations and/or dedications to Apollo and inscriptions that indicate the presence of individual Athenians in Delphi, like the ones on the Athenian treasury. It is not very likely that opposed to the fourth century there were no private consultations and/or private dedications in the sixth and fifth centuries. Unfortunately, since we lack evidence for private dedications and consultations in the sixth

and fifth centuries it is impossible to make a comparison between the presence of Athens as a *polis* and the presence of individual Athenians in Delphi in the sixth and fifth centuries.

Then how can the epigraphical evidence of the Athenian presence in Delphi be interpreted? Most importantly, it needs to be seen in the light of the Panhellenic nature of Delphi. Panhellenic sanctuaries were very suitable to display your strength as a *polis*, since they received visitors from all over the Greek world and beyond. The treasury, the dedication near the treasury and the stoa were all built to display the wealth Athens had gained from various wars. To say it more bluntly, Delphi was the podium for major Athenian show-off.

If we follow John Walsh in his interpretation of the dedicatory inscription of the stoa, for which he has given convincing arguments, the stoa was built after the First Peloponnesian War to show off an Athenian victory over their fellow-Greeks. So, not only victories on common enemies such as the Persians, victories over each other as well were commemorated by Greek *poleis* in Panhellenic sanctuaries.

While in the sixth century the Athenian Alkmaeonid family, who at that time was still banished from Athens, had used the Delphic sanctuary to receive fame by rebuilding the Temple of Apollo, hereby going far beyond of what was asked with regards to materials, later the Athenians used Delphi not only to display their power but also to increase it. This can be seen in the First-fruits decree from Eleusis, where the Athenians relied on their ancestral custom but also on an oracle from Delphi in order to force their allies to offer their first-fruits in Eleusis and in order to give more value to their request to the other Greeks to do the same. Even though it is not sure at all to when the decree has to be dated and when the actual consultation of the oracle took place – although it seems reasonable that it was a recent oracle –, this decree at the very least shows the importance and value of Delphi for Athens.

In addition, the epigraphical evidence shows us not only that Athenians were present in the Delphic sanctuary for example to show off their might or to increase their prestige, it also gives more certain answers on when and why Athenians consulted the Delphic oracle. While literary references to consultations are sometimes rather vague and it is hard to determine whether a reference in the ancient literary sources to a Delphic oracle is genuine or not, a reference to a consultation in epigraphical

evidence is more persuasive. Joseph Fontenrose does not place the epigraphical references in the 'Historical' category of responses without reason. It still remains difficult to determine when exactly the consultation took place, but at least it is very clear that a consultation actually had taken place, most of the time it is clear what the answer of Apollo was and, moreover, why the consultation took place. The Praxiergidai Decree is an example of this; from this decree we learn for what reason the Praxiergidai had consulted the Delphic oracle and also what Apollo's answer was.

Last but not least, the shared thank-offering of the Greeks set up in the Delphic sanctuary after the Persian Wars – next to the similar one that was placed in Olympia – shows another possible use of dedications in Panhellenic sanctuaries. It was not always about showing off your strength to the rest of the world, the most important and most basic reason to put up a dedication in a sanctuary was to thank the god of the sanctuary for his or her help or advice and to keep your relationship with said god on good terms for future events. Also the dedications that can be interpreted as instruments for showing of Athenian power to the rest of the Greek world or for increasing Athens' prestige, like the Athenian stoa, were monuments dedicated to Delphic Apollo and these dedications were also placed in Delphi to thank Apollo for his help. They are all in essence tokens of gratitude for Apollo.

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Appendix

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[Τιμο]τέλ[ε]ς Ἀχαρνε[ύς] ἐγραμμάτευε.
[ἔδοχσ]εν τεῖ βολεῖ καὶ τοῖ δέμοι· Κεκροπίς ἐπρυτάνευε, Τιμοτέ-
[λες ἐ]γραμμάτευε, Κυκνέας ἐπεστάτε· τάδε οἱ χσυγγραφεῖς χσυνέ-
[γρ]αφσαν· ἀπάρχεσθαι τοῖν θεοῖν τῷ καρπῷ κατὰ τὰ πάτρια καὶ τέ-
5 ν μαντείαν τὴν ἐγ Δελφῶν Ἀθηναῖος ἀπὸ τὸν ἑκατὸν μεδίμνον [κ]-
ριθὸν μὲ ἔλαττον ἔς ἑκτέα, πυρῶν δὲ ἀπὸ τὸν ἑκατὸν μεδίμνον μ-
ἐ ἔλαττον ἡμιέκτεον· ἐὰν δὲ τις πλείο καρπὸν ποιῆι ἔς τ[οσοῦτο]-
ν ἔς οὐλίξο, κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον ἀπάρχεσθαι. ἐγλέγεν δὲ [τὸς δε]μ-
άρχος κατὰ τὸς δέμος καὶ παραδιδόναι τοῖς ἱεροποιοῖς τοῖς
10 Ἐλευσινόθεν Ἐλευσινάδε· οἰκοδομῆσαι δὲ σιρὸς τρεῖς Ἐλευσίν-
ι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια ἡπότο ἂν δοκεῖ τοῖς ἱεροποιοῖς καὶ τοῖ ἀρχ[ι]τ-
έκτονι ἐπιτέδειον ἔναι ἀπὸ τῷ ἀργυρίῳ τῷ τοῖν θεοῖν. τὸ[ν δὲ κα]-
ρπὸν ἐνθαυθοῖ ἐμβάλλεν ἡὸν ἂν παραλάβοσι παρὰ τὸν δεμάρ[χον],
ἀπάρχεσθαι δὲ καὶ τὸς χσυμμάχος κατὰ ταυτά· τὰς δὲ πόλες [ἐγ]λ[ο]-
15 γέας ἡελέσθαι τῷ καρπῷ, καθότι ἂν δοκεῖ αὐτέσι ἄριστα ὁ καρπὸ-
[ς] ἐγλεγέσεσθαι· ἐπειδὰν δὲ ἐγλεχθεῖ, ἀποπεμφσάντων Ἀθέναζε·
τὸς δὲ ἀγαγόντας παραδιδόναι τοῖς ἱεροποιοῖς τοῖς Ἐλευσι-
νόθεν Ἐλευσινάδε· ἐ[ὰ]ν δὲ μὲ παραδέχονται πέντε ἡμερῶν νννν
ἐπειδὰν ἐπαγγελεῖ, παραδιδόντων τὸν ἐκ τῆς πόλεος ἡόθεν ἂν [ἔ]-
20 [ι] ὁ κα[ρπ]ός, εὐθυνόσθον ἡοι ἱεροποιοῖ χιλίαισιν ν δραχμῆσι [ἡ]-
[έκασ]τος· καὶ παρὰ τὸν δεμάρχον κατὰ ταυτά παραδέχεσθαι. [κέρ]υ-
[κα]ς δὲ ἡελομένε ἡε βολὲ πεμφσάτο ἐς τὰς πόλες ἀ[γ]γέλλον[τας] [τὰ]

[νῦν] ηεφσεφισμένα τοῖ δέμοι, τὸ μὲν νῦν ἔναι ἠος τάχιστα, τὸ δὲ [λ]-
 οἰπὸν ἠόταν δοκεῖ αὐτεῖ. κελευέτο δὲ καὶ ἠο ἠεροφάντες καὶ [ὀ]
 25 δαιδῶχος μυστερίοις ἀπάρχεσθαι τὸς ἠέλλενας τῶ καρπῶ κατὰ
 τὰ πάτρια καὶ τὲν μαντείαν τὲν ἐγ Δελφῶν. ἀναγράφσαντες δὲ ἐ[μ]
 πινακίοι τὸ μέτρον τῶ καρπῶ τῶ τε παρὰ τὸν δεμάρχον κατὰ τὸ[ν δ]-
 [ε]μον ἠέκαστον καὶ τῶ παρὰ τὸν πόλεον κατὰ τὲν πόλιν ἠεκάσ[τεν]
 [κ]αταθέντον ἔν τε τοῖ Ἐλευσινίοι Ἐλευσίνοι καὶ ἐν τοῖ βολ[ευν]ε-
 30 [ρ]ίοι. ἐπαγγέλλεν δὲ τὲν βολὲν καὶ τῆσι ἄλλεσι πόλεσιν [τ]ε[σι] ἠε-
 [λ]λενικῆσιν ἀπάσεσι, ἠόποι ἂν δοκεῖ αὐτεῖ δυνατὸν ἔναι, λέγο[ν]-
 τας μὲν κατὰ ἠὰ Ἐθναῖοι ἀπάρχονται καὶ οἱ χσύμμαχοι, ἐκέ[νοι]-
 [ς] δὲ μὲ ἐπιτάττοντας, κελεύσοντας δὲ ἀπάρχεσθαι, ἐὰν βόλονται,
 [κ]ατὰ τὰ πάτρια καὶ τὲν μαντείαν τὲν ἐγ Δελφῶν. παραδέχεσθαι δ-
 35 ἔ καὶ παρὰ τούτον τὸν πόλεον ἐὰν τις ἀπάγει τὸς ἠεροποιὸς κα-
 τὰ ταῦτά. θύεν δὲ ἀπὸ μὲν τῶ πελανῶ καθότι ἂν Εὐμολπίδαι [ἐ]χshe]-
 [γῶ]νται, τρίττοιαν δὲ βόαρχον χρυσόκερον τοῖν θεοῖν ἠεκα[τέρ]-
 [αι ἀ]πὸ τὸν κριθῶν καὶ τὸν πυρῶν καὶ τοῖ Τριπτολέμοι καὶ τοῖ [θε]-
 οῖ καὶ τεῖ θεᾶΙ καὶ τοῖ Εὐβόλοι ἠιερεῖον ἠεκάστοι τέλεον καὶ
 40 τεῖ Ἐθναῖοι βῶν χρυσόκερον· τὰς δὲ ἄλλας κριθὰς καὶ πυρὸς ἀπ-
 οδομένος τὸς ἠεροποιὸς μετὰ τῆς βολῆς ἀναθέματα ἀνατιθέν-
 αι τοῖν θεοῖν, ποιεσαμένος ἠαττ' ἂν τοῖ δέμοι τοῖ Ἐθναῖον δοκεῖ-
 ι, καὶ ἐπιγράφεν τοῖς ἀναθέμασιν, ἠότι ἀπὸ τῶ καρπῶ τῆς ἀπαρχῆ-
 ς ἀνεθέθε, καὶ ἠελλένον τὸν ἀπαρχόμενον· [τοῖ]ς δὲ ταῦτα ποιῶσι
 45 πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ ἔναι καὶ εὐκαρπῖαν καὶ πολυκαρπῖα[ν, ἠοί]τινες ἂν
 [μ]ὲ ἀδικῶσι Ἐθναῖος μεδὲ τὲν πόλιν τὲν Ἐθναῖον μεδὲ τὸ θεό. V
 [Λ]άμπον ἔιπε· τὰ μὲν ἄλλα καθάπερ αἰ χσυγγραφαὶ τῆς ἀπαρχῆς τῶ
 καρπῶ τοῖν θεοῖν· τὰς δὲ χσυγγραφὰς καὶ τὸ φσέφισμα τόδε ἀναγ-

ραφσάτο ho γραμματεὺς ho τῆς βολῆς ἐν στέλαιν δυοῖν λιθίνοι-
 50 ν καὶ καταθέτο τὲν μὲν Ἐλευσίην ἐν τοῖ ἱεροῖ τὲν δὲ ἑτέραν [ἐ]-
 μ πόλει· ἦοι δὲ πολεταὶ ἀπομισθοσάντων τὸ στέλα· ἦοι δὲ κολ[ακρ]-
 ἔται δόντων τὸ ἀργύριον. ταῦτα μὲν πε[ρ]ὶ τῆς ἀπαρχῆς τὸ καρ[π]ῶ[τ]-
 οῖν θεῶν ἀναγράφει ἐς τὸ στέλ[α], μῆνα δὲ :::: ἐμβάλλεν ἑκατονβ-
 αιῶνα τὸν νέον ἄρχοντα τὸν δὲ βασ[ι]λέα ἠορίσαι τὰ ἱερά τὰ ἐν τ[ῶ]-
 55 ι Πελαργικοῖ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν μὲ ἐνὶ ἡδρῦεσθαι βομὸς ἐν τοῖ Πελα-
 ργικοῖ ἄνευ τῆς βολῆς καὶ τὸ δέμο, μεδὲ τὸς λίθος τέμνεν ἐκ τὸ [Π]-
 ελαργικῶ, μεδὲ γῆν ἐχσάγεν μεδὲ λίθος. ἐὰν δὲ τις παραβαίνει ν
 τ:::ούτον τι, ἀποτινέτο πεντακοσίας δραχμίας, ἐσαγγελλέτο δὲ ἡ-
 [ο] βασιλεὺς ἐς τὲν βολῆν. περὶ δὲ τὸ ἐλαίον ἀπαρχῆς χυγγράφ-
 60 σας Λάμπων ἐπιδειχσάτο τῆ βολῆ ἐπὶ τῆς ἐνάτης πρυτανείας·
 ἡ δὲ βολὴ ἐς τὸν δῆμον ἐχσενενκέτο ἐπάναγκες.

Translation by N. Lewis:¹⁸²

The council and assembly decree – (the tribe) Kekropis was in prytany, Timoteles was secretary, Kykneas was chairman, the drafting committee submitted the following –

The Athenians shall offer first fruits of their harvests to the two goddesses (Demeter and Persephone), in accordance with ancestral custom and the oracle from Delphi: from every hundred medimnoi of barley not less than 1/6 medimnos and from every hundred medimnoi of wheat not less than 1/12 medimnos; if anyone reaps a harvest of greater, equal or lesser amount, he shall offer first fruits in the same proportion. The demarchs shall collect by demes and shall deliver (their collections) to Eleusis, to the commissioners of sacrifices there. From the funds of the two goddesses three grain pits shall be built at Eleusis according to ancestral custom, wherever the commissioners of sacrifices and the architect think suitable, and they shall store there the harvest that they receive from the demarchs.

¹⁸² Naphtali Lewis, *Greek Historical Documents. The Fifth Century BC* (Toronto 1971) 21-23.

The allies shall also offer first fruits in the same way, and the cities shall choose collectors of the harvests in such manner as they decide the grain will best be collected. When it has been collected they shall send it to Athens, and those who bring it shall deliver it to Eleusis, to the commissioners of sacrifices there. If they do not accept it within five days after notice from the deliverers from the city whence the harvest come, the commissioners of sacrifices shall be fine a thousand drachmas each; and they shall accept from the demarchs also on the same terms.

The council shall choose heralds and send them to the cities to announce the present decree to the assemblies, for the present occasion as soon as possible and in the future whoever it thinks best.

The hierophant and the torchbearer at the mysteries shall bid the Greeks to offer first fruits of their harvest in accordance with ancestral custom and the oracle from Delphi. (The commissioners) shall record on a tablet the measure of the harvests (received) from the demarchs for each deme and that from the cities for each city, and they shall deposit it in the Eleusion at Eleusis and in the council chamber.

The council shall send messengers also to all the other Greek cities where in its judgment it is possible, to tell how the Athenians and their allies offer first fruits and, without enjoining it upon them as a duty, to exhort them to offer first fruits if they so desire in accordance with ancestral custom and the oracle from Delphi. The commissioners of sacrifices shall accept on the same terms also from these cities, if any contribute.

They shall sacrifice from the pelanos as the Eumolpids prescribe, and from (the proceeds of) the barley and the wheat an ox-ram-goat triad with gilder horns to each of the two goddesses, an unblemished sheep each to Triptolemos and the god (Hades) and the goddess (Persephone) and Euboulos, and an ox with gilded horns to Athena. The commissioners shall sell the remaining barley and wheat and, together with the council, shall make and dedicate such votive offerings to the two goddesses as the Athenian assembly decrees; and they shall inscribe upon the votive offerings that they were dedicated from the first fruits of the harvests and the names of the Greeks who offered the first fruits. Those who act thus shall have many blessings and good and abundant harvests, whosoever do not wrong the Athenians or the city of Athens or the two goddesses.

Lampon moved –

In addition to the drafting committee's motion concerning the offering of first fruits of the harvests to the two goddesses, the secretary of the council shall inscribe the motion and this decree on two stone stelae and shall place one in the sanctuary at Eleusis and the other on the acropolis. The commissioners shall let the contract for the two stelae, and the kolakretai shall furnish the money.

[A number of technical administrative details follow.]